

## TEACHING & LEARNING

# QUICK TIPS

## The Memory Palace

The problem with new information is that it fades away rather quickly. If you want to retain it for later recall, you have to make a conscious effort. Traditionally, this meant time-consuming rote memorization. However, there are far more effective ways to accomplish this.

Most of the different mnemonic techniques operate under the same set of principles. There are two types of memory: short-term and long-term. To retain new information, you have to somehow link it to already existing long-term memories. "Linking" happens when you are able to "place" new info within already established mental landscapes. These landscapes are the mental representations of the world we inhabit: our commuting routes, our current homes, our childhood homes, our favorite playgrounds, parks, etc. Because evolution fine-tuned our brains for spatial pattern-recognition, linking new info to space helps it to move more quickly into long term memory. This technique is known as the memory palace.

1. Picture in your mind a common route in as much detail as you can.
2. As you are acquiring new info for the first time (say students' names), place it along your "mental" route for later recall.
3. Use other mnemonic strategies such as adding colorful features, personalities, and/or connecting the items you want to remember to things you know well (maybe songs, painting, etc).
4. Retrieve the information item-by-item as you walk through your mental route.
5. Repeat a couple times

### Reference:

Foer, Joshua. 2012. Moonwalking with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything. Penguin Books.

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