

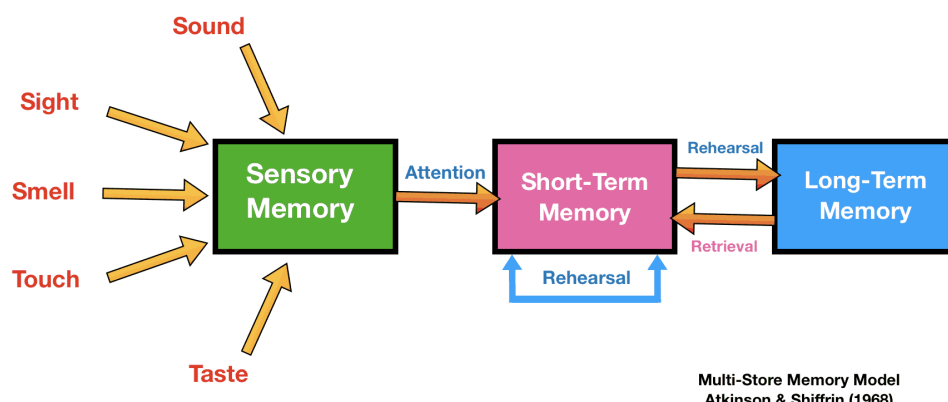
HOW DO WE REMEMBER THINGS?

Every day you are asked to remember things. At school, you have to remember facts for a Graduate Test. At home, you remember how to tie your shoelaces. At netball practice, you remember which part of the court you are allowed to cross into. How does your brain remember things? And why is it sometimes, you can't remember an answer even if you have learned the knowledge before?

KEY WORDS:

- Sensory – to do with the five senses: sight, touch, smell, hearing and taste.
- Attention – taking notice of something
- Retrieval – finding
- Rehearsal – practising and revising
- Recall – remembering
- Forgetting – not knowing or remembering

In 1968, two psychologists called Mr Atkinson and Mr Shiffrin tried to explain how our memory works. This picture is called the Multi-Store Model of Memory:



When you see, hear, smell, touch or taste something it is in your Sensory Memory. Imagine this as a very small box in your mind which can't hold much information.

If you give something enough attention, it enters a second box. This box is called your Short Term Memory and can hold a little bit more information, but it has lots of holes in the bottom where things can fall out – when you forget things.

If you practice, revise and 'rehearse' this information, it gets put into your Long Term Memory. This box is HUGE and can hold lots and lots of information. When you need to recall something, you can retrieve it from your Long Term Memory, because it has been practised enough to stay there.

EXAMPLE

Here's an example that could apply to you at school. In geography, you are asked to remember the capital cities of 10 countries.



1. You listen to your teacher saying the names of the countries and their capital cities – you hear them. You look at a map with the capital cities labelled – you see them. This information is in your Sensory Memory. If you walk away from the learning now, you could easily forget which capital city belongs to each country.
2. You decide to pay attention to this new information. You make flashcards with the country on one side and the capital city on the back in order to test yourself. You create a poster to remind you of them too. The information is now in your Short Term Memory. If you don't practice these flashcards and revise the poster, you could forget the correct answers.
3. You work hard and practice your flashcards a little bit each day, and don't let any of the answers fall out of the holes in Short Term Memory. The information eventually enters the Long Term Memory box and is becoming stuck in your brain. You can easily recall which capital city is in each country without forgetting.
4. A week later, you have a Kahoot quiz in Geography. You have rehearsed the information well and you pass with full marks because you can easily retrieve the capital cities from your Long Term Memory.

FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxuCWFHjjo4> (from 1 minute 53 seconds)

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What are the 3 memory stores called?
2. What is the model called?
3. In which year was the model created?
4. Which two psychologists created the model?
5. Define the word rehearsal.
6. Suggest a synonym for the verb 'recall'.
7. Which memory store has the smallest capacity?
8. Which memory store can hold the most knowledge?
9. List 2 examples of ways to revise.
10. What happens if you don't rehearse information in your Short Term Memory?