

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE MEMORY



Choose one place to record all your appointments, dates, birthdays etc. This could be a diary, a calendar or the calendar on your phone. Having more than one can be confusing so try to stick with one!



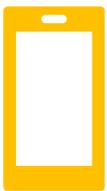
Put up a notice board, white board or memo board in a prominent place. Pin important notices and messages on it.



Write your daily or weekly timetable on a notice board and put it in a prominent place.



Keep a 'TO DO' list for each day either on your notice board, in your diary or on your mobile phone.



Use Alarms on your mobile phone to remind you to do something important e.g. take tablets, check oven. Mobiles can also store phone numbers, addresses, emails and task lists



Keep a small message book in your pocket so that you can write down messages or jobs you need to remember.



Keep important items in the same place in the house e.g. keys, mobile phone, glasses, so that you can find them easily. Always put them back in the same place.



Use brightly coloured 'post it' notes to prompt you around the house. For example, Lock front door; switch off oven.



Have an 'In-tray' for important letters and bills, so you know that these have to be dealt with.



Have a specific filing system for important documents.



Use a Dictaphone or voice recording on your mobile phone to keep verbal messages, especially if you find writing or remembering conversations difficult.



Use pill dispensers – various types are available, some with timers and alarms.



Write on back of your hand – it can provide a useful trigger.

INTERNAL WAYS TO IMPROVE MEMORY

REPETITION

We are more likely to remember something if we **repeat it**. In order to do this, we need to rehearse something we have heard in our head over and over. For example, if someone tells you their name, ask them to repeat it, then try to repeat it in your head several times. Re-test yourself after a short interval.

CLUSTERING

To help you remember several pieces of information, you can **cluster or categorise** similar things together. For example, if you go to the shops and have a list of items to remember, cluster together the frozen items, the cleaning products, the fruit and vegetables.

To practice clustering ask someone to put together a tray of approx. 10-12 random objects for you, covered with a cloth. Remove the cloth to reveal the objects for 60 seconds, then cover them back over. When looking at what's in front of you, categorise the items under different themes. For example, you may have several stationary related items, self-care items, tools or foods. When you recall what was on the tray, work through each category recalling what was in each.

MAKING ASSOCIATIONS

Making associations – this is when you **link** something you need to remember with something personal. For example, associate a new name to a meaning.... Colin with the curly hair or Fiona that drives the Ford!

Or try to remember items on a list by **associating** them with similar things such as milk, yoghurt and cheese as 'dairy' or soap, washing up liquid, shampoo as 'things that make bubbles'.

To remind you to do things leave **associated objects** in prominent places, for example, pills by your breakfast cereal to remind you to take your medication, or boots by the door to remind you you're meeting a friend for a walk.

MENTAL MAPS

Making mental maps – this can be done by **mentally visualising** what you need to remember. Imagine you are drawing you map on a blackboard in your mind with links to pictures of what you need to remember.