
Using Mnemonics to Learn

Mnemonics are memory devices that help learners recall larger pieces of information.

Mnemonic 1: Music

You can make a song or jingle using any type of music you choose for any list of items. Music mnemonics work best with long lists.

Example: Children may learn the alphabet by singing the “ABC” song.

Mnemonic 2: Names

The first letter of each word in a list of items is used to make a name of a person or thing.

Example: **ROY G. BIV** = Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet
(colors of the spectrum)

Mnemonic 3: Expressions or Words

The first letter of each item in a list is arranged to form a phrase or word.

Examples:

1. In English, the seven coordinating conjunctions are:
For, **A**nd, **N**or, **B**ut, **O**r, **Y**et, **S**o = **FANBOYS**
2. The order of math operations is:
Parentheses, **E**xponents, **M**ultiply, **D**ivide, **A**dd, **S**ubtract = **PEMDAS**, which can be remembered as **PLEASE EXCUSE MY DEAR AUNT SALLY**

Mnemonic 4: Spelling

Relate the spelling of words to other words that have similarities.

Example: A principal at a school is your pal, and a principle you believe or follow is a rule.

Mnemonic 5: Rhymes

Make information to be recalled into a poem.

Examples:

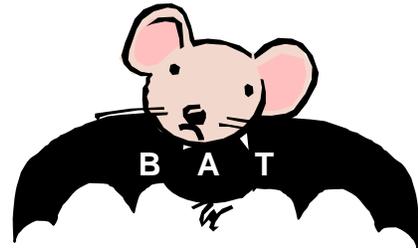
1. You'd probably like your doctor to know the difference between cyanate and cyanide: Associate **cyanate** with "**I ate**" and **cyanide** with "**I died.**" (Cyanide is a deadly poison.)
2. In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.
3. "I before e except after c" helps you spell "relieve" and "receive."

Mnemonic 6: Images

The information in an image mnemonic is constructed in the form of a picture that promotes recall of information when you need it. The sillier the image mnemonic is, the easier it is to recall the related information. These images may be mental or sketched into text and lecture notes. Do not worry about your artistic ability--as long as you know what your sketch means.

Example: **BAT** = depressant drugs: **B**arbiturates, **A**lcohol, and **T**ranquilizers

Visualize or sketch a depressed and sleepy bat that took **B**arbiturates, **A**lcohol, and **T**ranquilizers.



Mnemonic 7: Connections

Information to be remembered is connected to something already known.

Example: Remembering the direction of longitude and latitude is easier to do when you think that **LAT**itude lines that run east and west are like the rungs of a ladder you can climb. Or remember that there is an **N** in **LONG**itude and an **N** in **N**orth. There is no **N** in latitude. Latitude lines must run east to west, then.