



FUNCTIONAL MEMORY STRATEGIES FOR EVERY DAY LIFE

Memory strategies work best when they are meaningful to you. As you review each strategy below, challenge yourself to think of a real-life example from your own daily routine.

For each strategy, ask yourself:

1. When would I use this in my day?
2. What specific situation would this help me with?
3. How can I make this part of my routine?

Write it down



Writing information reduces the need to rely on memory alone.

- Use a calendar or planner to track appointments, social events, and important dates
- (Helpful when your doctor asks about recent visits or changes.)
- Keep notes in your phone for quick access
- Make checklists/to-do lists (daily tasks, grocery lists, errands)
- Write down questions for your doctor ahead of appointments
- Use apps and technology to support memory:
 - Reminders/alarms
 - Medication tracking
 - Blood pressure or blood sugar logs



Association

Connect new information to something you already know.

- Example: If you meet someone named Tom, think of another Tom you know



Repetition

Repeating information helps move it into long-term memory.

- Repeat names, dates, or instructions out loud
- Review important information multiple times
- Bring up upcoming events in conversation



Visualization

Create a mental picture to make information more memorable.

- Picture directions or locations in your mind
- Use images or visual aids when possible



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Categorization

Group similar items together to make them easier to remember.

- Example: "I need apples, oranges, chicken, and beef" →
- "I need 2 fruits and 2 meats"



Talk it out

Verbalizing information strengthens memory.

- Tell a story or create an example
- Use humor or conversation to make information more memorable
- Ask a trusted person to help reinforce important details



Use cues

External reminders can prompt your memory.

- Visual cues: sticky notes, written reminders, calendar alerts
- Auditory cues: phone alarms or timers
- Tactile cues: placing an item somewhere noticeable (e.g., by the door)



Set locations

Keep important items in the same place every time.

- Choose logical, consistent locations (e.g., keys by the door)
- This reduces the need to search or rely on memory



Establish routines

Routines reduce the need to remember each step.

- Build consistent morning and evening routines
- Create routines for common tasks

Examples:

- Taking medication every morning after breakfast
- Checking your calendar daily
- Paying bills on the same day each month
- Following the same path through the grocery store