

A lecturer describes a technique to improve your recall.

I'm going to describe a memory technique called the journey method. It combines the link system and peg methods in a way that makes a very powerful tool for remembering long lists or quite complex information.

The key to the journey method is to think of a route that you know very well. It could be your route to work, or to a relative's house. Then you need to think of the important places, the landmarks along this route. Examples of landmarks are doors, traffic lights, buildings you pass on the journey, etc. At this stage it's a good idea to write the landmarks down on a piece of paper in the order they occur on the route. This makes sure that you have the route and landmarks very clear in your head. Now you are ready to remember your first list.

We'll start with a simple example. You are using your route to the supermarket as the journey, and you have to remember a shopping list. The first three items on your list are coffee, milk and tomatoes. The first three landmarks on your journey are the front door, your garden and your car. You visualise hurriedly drinking a cup of coffee as you open the front door. You go outside and see it has been raining milk, and there is a big puddle of milk in your garden. Then you get to your car, and the roof is covered with tomatoes. You continue this way, making each image as memorable as possible.

Once you have mastered this method, you will find that it is a very flexible memory tool. You can have several different journeys, which can be used in either direction. You can also add events and landmarks to a route to accommodate longer lists of information, and for short lists you can just use part of a route.