

Need a Memory Boost? Try Drawing!

If you're like most people, you could use a little help with your memory. One recent study suggests you may want to draw what you want to remember.

DRAW YOUR TO-DO LIST

Researchers at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, found that when participants were asked to draw pictures of words, they later recalled more than twice as many of the words as they did when asked to write them.

The researchers believe that drawing is an effective memory aid because it combines motor, visual and semantic information. And you don't have to be an artist to benefit. The study found that even crudely drawn images worked to spark memory.

MORE MEMORY BOOSTS

Drawing isn't the only way to boost your memory, and it may not be practical in every situation. Here are other options to try:

- **Exercise your mind.** Keep your memory in shape with activities like writing, reading and playing games such as crosswords, puzzles and board games.
- **Sleep on it.** Studies show that getting a good night's sleep before and after learning new things can help strengthen your memory. And a lack of sleep can cause your ability to learn new information to drop by as much as 40 percent.
- **Write it down.** Make to-do lists. Keep a notepad handy for when you think of something you need to do. Or keep a detailed calendar of appointments and tasks.
- **Make technology work for you.** Use your smartphone, computer or tablet to remind you of important events or deadlines.



Additional sources include American Psychological Association and National Institutes of Health.