

Hello, I'm Kate D'Ore, I have been teaching line learning for over 20 years and I'm here to tell you about 5 basic memorizing techniques and how to apply them.

Please make sure, if you are a third ager and interested in becoming a SuperAger that you hang in and listen to my closing remarks. They concern an article that appeared today by [Marc Milstein, Ph.D.](#), who is a brain health expert and author of "[The Age-Proof Brain: New Strategies to Improve Memory, Protect Immunity, and Fight Off Dementia.](#)" And the closing remarks of this article support all I have been claiming for the huge, and additional advantages to the brain, of using memory techniques.

After that little trailer, back to business: this is the third technique and the first of the three numerical systems. The basis of mnemonics is to take something you know and peg it to something you want to remember. When you are at home, you may have a bowl on the table in your hall where you put your keys. That is where you look when you want your keys – bowl = keys. In episode one, we used this idea of loci by using the places in your home, to place your shopping list. And in episode two, we used the same rooms to place the 7 Wonders of the World.

And so, Numbering is a form of loci. It will give your mind an image that you will conjure up when you want to recall a piece of information. It is particularly powerful as numbers are unlimited, so you have many pegs on which to hang your facts. Also, most people can count and so - like the Journey - it is something that you KNOW. You know that 1 is followed by 2, that 74 is followed by 75, and that 99 is followed by 100. This is the principle that is used in the numerical system.

The problem is that a number is a symbol for a quantity and just as the word DOOR will conjure up the image of a door, you need a number to conjure up an equally strong image. I am starting with the Shape system, because that is where numbers are the closest thing to images. If you are not driving, it may help you to write down numbers one to ten. I will give you some suggestions for number shape images but if you look at your own numbers and your imagination gives you a stronger picture, then do use it.

1 is a straight up-and-down stroke. It is like a PAINTBRUSH or a PENCIL or a pole. Picture any straight object that comes to mind or fits with what you are trying to remember. Also, remember that your brain likes what is funny, unusual, or even a bit naughty, and no one will ever know what pictures you are conjuring up in your imagination.

2. SWAN Quite an obvious shape and you could always add a bit of music to the picture from 'Carnival of the Animals' or 'Swan Lake'.

3. PREGNANT WOMAN

4. SAILBOAT – again a very easy image and very useful

5. HOOK – a very useful image to peg things on or if appropriate, you could always use Captain Hook and use linking to turn your memory into a story.

6. CHERRY – again a useful image, eat it, hang it on your ears.

7. CLIFF – another great image, throw things off it.

8. HOUR-GLASS/ SNOWMAN - I sometimes use Marylyn Monroe for her 'hourglass' figure and that is a great image for a linking story. Remember we did 'linking' in episode 3.

9. BALLOON on a STRING – another good image especially as part of a linking story, Disney's 'Up' comes to mind.

10 BAT and BALL – I tend to use this as part of a cricket match.

Now to learn the [10 LONGEST RIVERS in the WORLD](#)

This is a list of the ten longest rivers in the world. It is not an absolute list as I searched on the web and found some discrepancies between different sites. Although some Brazilian scientists are now claiming that the Amazon is longer than the Nile, the top two rivers are undisputed in all the sites, with the Nile as the longest river followed by the Amazon. Only two sites put the Mississippi-Missouri as third, the majority opting for the Yenisei followed by the Mississippi. The remaining five rivers are the most popular in most sites and so I think the following list is as accurate as possible as most people cannot get beyond the Nile and the Amazon, I doubt if anyone will challenge your knowledge.

NILE

AMAZON

YANGTZE

MISSISSIPPI

YENISEI

YELLOW

OB-IR-TISH

CONGO

PARANA

AMUR

Also, of course, learning the 10 longest rivers may be very low on your list of things you would like to remember, in which case, pick out 10 other items that do interest you and use them. The point of the exercise is to peg an item to a number using the Shape system and creating images for these rivers will also be a challenge for your imagination.

Now, using the Shape System, link the numbers to the rivers. I have put in links to the rivers, as extra information about a subject is always helpful in retaining it in your memory.

1. Paintbrush - [NILE](#)

You probably will not have any difficulty remembering that the Nile is the longest river and that it is in Africa. If you do need an image, then picture an Egyptian painting it on a pyramid in blue and white (Blue Nile and White Nile). Also, spare a thought for the 7th Wonder and the Pyramid of Giza.

2 Swan - [AMAZON](#)

You will probably know that the Amazon is in South America. Put a maze in the middle of the rainforest with a swan swimming through it and an Amazon warrior woman reading a book on its back. This is a nice point when you can brush up on your connection with traveling through the Amazon to reach Brazil and Rio de Janeiro and the New Wonder Christ the Redeemer. Then skip to the Ancient Wonders and remember that at number 4, the Amazon women worshipped at the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus. This is a further advantage of memorizing facts; they seem to act as a magnet and you will find yourself linking stuff together that would have passed you by. A bit like the red car syndrome. You decide to buy a red car, and then suddenly you see red cars everywhere when you would never have noticed them before.

3 Pregnant Woman - [YANGTZE](#) (Pronounced YANG TSEE).

Quite a well-known river in China and so the name may not be difficult to remember. Picture a pregnant Chinese lady on a rickshaw being pulled (yanked) by a Yankee into the sea. A Yankee is a North American and I use the image of a cowboy, but you could equally use Uncle Sam or Yankee Doodle and sing the song in your head.

4 Sailboat - [MISSISSIPPI](#)

Picture a sailboat going down the Mississippi and being run down by a paddle steamer. On board is your idea of a Southern Belle, a Miss is Sipping at a glass of champagne.

5 Hook - [YENISEI](#) Pronounced YENISAY

It Rises in Mongolia but mostly flows through Siberia (Russia) emptying into the Arctic Ocean.

Break up the word: YEN: Japanese coin – it comes from the word yen-yen, meaning a craving for opium which is where we get the English word ‘yen’ (remember stories help the memory). Captain Hook is hooked on opium; he has a yen for it. That will probably give you the word. Otherwise, imagine him drawling in that upper class, Leslie Phillips’s voice, ‘I say’. I am showing my age here, but Leslie Phillips was the voice that was used for the Talking Hat in the Harry Potter films, so hopefully, you

will get what I mean. If that fails, try giving a YEN to Captain HOOK for his SAIL. You might picture him sailing into the Arctic Ocean among the icebergs.

6 Cherry - YELLOW River

China again. Imagine the Great Wall - another of our Wonders - filled with YELLOW cherries.

7 Cliff - OB-(IR-TISH)

The Ob. One of the three great Siberian rivers that flow into the Arctic Ocean, the other two being the Yenisei and the Lena. The Gulf of Ob is the world's longest estuary. It is about 1,000 km (620 mi) long and varies in width from about 50 to 80 km (31 to 50 mi). That is half as long again as England north and south (402 miles) and almost as long as Great Britain (683 mi) The river is sometimes referred to as the Ob-Ir-Tish, as the Ir-Tish river rises in China and flows into the Ob.

Imagine standing on a CLIFF and LOBBing an ear wrapped up in a tissue off it. If lob does not work for you, try using rOB someone you know called Rob or a famous Rob - Robin Hood, Robbie Williams, etc. They could still be lobbing the ear in a tissue off the cliff.

8 -Hour Glass - CONGO

This river is in Africa and is the deepest in the world. The images that probably spring to mind are the Cuban conga drums and the dance. Picture dancing the conga with Marilyn Monroe (hourglass figure), and she has a friendly conger eel wrapped around her neck or instead of Marilyn you could be dancing with a snowman or around a gigantic hourglass.

9 -Balloon on a String - PARANA

The second longest river in South America: Parana sounds a bit like Piranha so imagine fierce little fish with razor-like teeth leaping up and trying to burst the balloon.

10 -Bat and Ball - AMUR

The Amur rises in China and forms a border between China and Russia. To remember the name, Amur sounds a bit like Amor, which is another name for Eros, the Greek god of love, and Cupid, the Roman god of love. Imagine them playing cricket together. To remember that it forms the border between Russia and China, put Cupid out to field and bring on your stereotypical images of a Russian and a Chinese as a batsman and bowler (wearing a furry hat and conical hat respectively) with the river as a boundary.

If Eros doesn't work for Amur, try breaking the name up into AM and MUR. A.M. - morning, AM - broadcasting using amplitude modulation. AM also sounds like hAM.

MUR - Famous associations with the word Muir - [John Muir](#) – Scottish-born American naturalist, [Muir Glacier](#), [Frank Muir](#) - a comedy writer, well known for his flamboyant bow ties, [Jean Muir](#) - a British fashion designer and Muir also sounds like moor and myrrh.

There are any number of stories you could make up using these images and perhaps the most bizarre would be one of the Magi trudging across A MOOR (where a cricket match is in progress) bringing a gift of a large hAM and myrrh.

Now to remember your rivers. Find a quiet place without distractions and see how many rivers you can remember.

I found that it took me less than 2 minutes, but of course, I am already familiar with the number images, so it was easy for me, and it will be easy for you if you practice this technique several times with any list of 10 that interests you. Not only are you learning a new technique you are exercising your imagination. Also, as before, don't worry if you find that you have missed an item - just go back in your mind and make the picture stronger, adding elements of exaggeration, movement, sound, and humour. I found that I had forgotten the IR-TISH part of the Ob although I knew a tissue came into the picture. I went back and made it poor old Vincent Van Gogh wrapping an ear in tissue, before throwing it off the cliff. A wonderful, heart-breaking self-portrait that I now will forever associate with that magnificent river.

In the next episode, I will introduce the second of the numerical techniques, - [rhyming](#). It uses an old nursery rhyme, for images to associate with your 10 numbers and we will tackle the 10 highest mountains, which are far more challenging than the rivers. If you don't want to learn them, then create a list of your own to use, but breaking up very, very unfamiliar words is an excellent exercise for the imagination, especially, if you fancy using these techniques for learning foreign languages.

Finally, Use it or Lose it, so please practice this new technique. It is very valuable to be able to translate numbers into pictures. If you cannot think of a list, then try this which will involve the second technique linking. Find [10 random numbers](#) and learn them using a linking story and the shape technique e.g. 6392547810 feed a cherry 6 to a pregnant lady 3 who carries a balloon 9 and sits on a swan 2 she hooks 5 onto a sailboat 4 which sails by a cliff 7 with snowmen 8 playing cricket 10. That took me less than a minute, but I forgot the balloon, so I went back and made it so big it lifted her up before depositing her on the swan. So practice with your credit cards, and bank account numbers and have fun.

I have just read an article that sums up so much of what I have been saying in this and the previous 3 podcasts and I must quote from it. It is by [Marc Milstein, Ph.D.](#), who is a brain health expert and author of ["The Age-Proof Brain: New Strategies to Improve Memory, Protect Immunity, and Fight Off Dementia."](#) And I quote 'concerns a group of people that [longevity researchers call "SuperAgers,"](#) who are in their 80s and beyond, but have the cognitive function of those decades younger.' He then adds ominously 'Conversely, it's possible for your brain to be older than your chronological age, which is what we want to avoid'. A 2021 study on SuperAgers concludes that there is one

key differentiator that they kept learning new things throughout their life. He gives a nice analogy 'Think of the brain like a bank account. We make "deposits" – or new connections between our brain cells – by learning. Our memories are housed in these connections.

As we age, we naturally lose some of those connections. It's like making a withdrawal every year. But the more deposits we make throughout our lives, the less our net worth is affected by these withdrawals.

The conclusion: What does make significant new connections in the brain is learning *new* skills and information. And the process should be challenging:

And he finishes: No matter what it is, learning new things keeps your brain young. So if you discovered something you didn't know before from reading this article, (*I must add, listening to this podcast*) you're already helping your brain age at a slower pace.

I rest my case and hope to see you next time.

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