

REPETITION + VARIATION + SPACED PRACTICE = Learn Anything

Study is not for the passive. It's an active process of encoding, retrieving, and encoding again. With this formula in the backdrop of everything we are learning, we can learn anything. Really, anything! But how do you do this? Let's break it down.



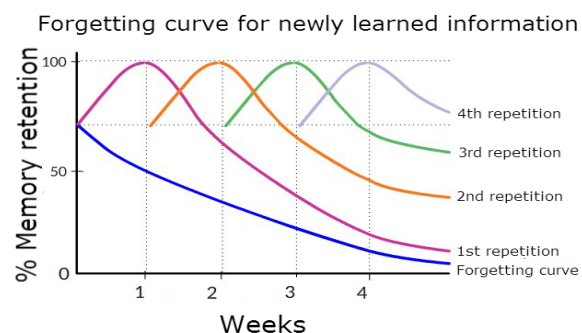
To learn material, we need to teach it to ourselves – or 'encode' it (brain scientists' term). We need to expose ourselves to the info over, and over, and over to *make it stick*. *Repetition turns short-term to long-term.*



Our brains get bored! Encoding info *the same way again and again* is NOT the most effective way to learn (and is boring). Encoding in a variety of ways brings the material into our long term memory. You may read a text the first time. The next study period, you may take notes – and then hone your notes. The third go around, you may teach it to your mom. Or your dog. Or your venus fly trap. *Variation makes learning stick.*



By spacing out practice the material sticks better. How much time between practices? That depends on what you're studying and – of course – how much time you've got!



* Brown, P. C., Roediger, H. L. III, McDaniel, M. A. *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014.