

Teaching for Learning 4

*Information courtesy Kid Sense

We all have different working memories, some of us are able to keep large amounts of information in our heads over short intervals and some of us struggle just to remember two numbers briefly. Our working memory is unique to us.

What can be done to support working memory?

Structure the environment and use strategies to reduce the working memory load (e.g. break large goals into smaller ones, simplify information, chunk it, slow down the pace of delivery of information). Avoid distractions around you- reduce the cognitive overload.

Try not to have too much to remember at once if you struggle.

Practice using your working memory with games and quizzes- be patient it takes time to develop this skill don't be disheartened if things don't improve.

1. Structuring the environment to reducing working memory load includes the following:
 - ✓ Break tasks into simple steps: Provide short, simple instructions and make sure the first step is mastered before going onto the next.
 - ✓ Use simple language
 - ✓ Repeat instructions
 - ✓ Repeat activities: Complete repetitions of new activities to ensure the task is mastered . Sometimes you will need more repetition to master something then another person would.
 - ✓ Use visuals and gesture:
 - ✓ Slow the pace.
 - ✓ Reduce background noise
 - ✓ Reduce distractions: lessen the amount of information to process: reduce visuals that could distract.
 - ✓ Focus on one target at a time.
 - ✓ Make connections.
 - ✓ Engage other senses: listen, say, trace, feel.
 - ✓ Build routines, structure and familiarity.
 - ✓ Create crib sheets etc

2. What activities can improve working memory capacity?
 - ✓ Visualisation: make a picture in your head/draw it.
 - ✓ Play games: Matching games e.g. Memory, Snap, Pairs, Bingo.

- ✓ Teach someone else P
- ✓ lay card games: e.g. Go Fish, Uno, Crazy 8's
- ✓ Active reading: Use highlighters, sticky notes, take notes, underline text . Ask questions.
- ✓ Write tasks down
- ✓ Say it aloud
- ✓ Throw a ball back and forth whilst discussing what to do
- ✓ Draw the task
- ✓ Use pictures to support verbal information
- ✓ Demonstrate the task
- ✓ Make connections: Use mnemonics
- ✓ Games that involve repeating sequences of information, forwards and backwards: Using colours, shapes, food items, days of the week, clothes, animals, numbers, friends' names.
- ✓ Word list games: such as "I went to the shop/zoo/beach and I saw....".
- ✓ The game 'Guess Who?':
- ✓ "Simon Says" and other instructional games:
- ✓ Threading beads/building a block tower: Sit in a circle with a group/or face to face and each person takes a turn to say two colours that you both need to thread/build. Take in turns to tell each other two colours and slowly increase the number of colours to get to thread/build onto their tower.
- ✓ "Picnic time": Name of 2-3 things that they need to collect to bring to a picnic. Have them collect the items and bring them to a picnic rug (you can use pictures of items or the real item).

<https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-apps-tools-games-build-memory-retention/>