

NEVER FORGET ANOTHER NAME

How to Remember “What’s His Name”

A QUICK AND EASY STRATEGY FOR
SHARPENING YOUR MEMORY AND
AVOIDING EMBARRASSMENT



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Mankind shares a common problem. It's as prevalent as the common cold and can be just as annoying and embarrassing at times. I am referring to forgetfulness. It reveals itself particularly when it comes to remembering names. Some people, burdened with this problem, admit defeat and give up even trying. Others hide their 'handicap' with phrases like "hey you," "hey buddy," "hey pal," and "ol' what's-his-name." Still others persist only to experience frustrating failure. However, unlike the common cold, there is a cure for forgetting names.

Let me tell you a bit about myself: I once thought I had a lousy memory. In fact, I shied away from any courses that had to do with memorizing. In my junior year in high school I was asked to be in the school play, but I declined—I was afraid I'd forget my three lines. As a physics major I am good with logical modes of thinking, and as far as I was concerned, biology, literature, and languages were merely courses in recall. Then I learned the "how-to" of memory and learning. The result? Today I enjoy the benefits of a trained memory and I have formed Memory Dynamics to help others do the same. ▶



While appearing on a national talk show, I recalled the names and phone numbers of the studio audience (you can see this video on my web site). Later, I took a college course in ancient Greek and received 100% on the final exam. These successes were due to memory systems. There is no need to be amazed, because anyone can do it—it's just a matter of learning how. You can do it too!

Usually when I give memory seminars, I begin by meeting each person and then naming the group. On occasion I approach someone who comes to the seminar early and I ask if they are willing to meet people with me. At one conference, I was to address a group of thirty people. I met a young man who had come in from out of town and didn't know the others. I asked him if he'd be willing to stand with me at the door and meet the people as they came in. I would show him how to remember the delegates' names, and then he would name them all back. He had his doubts, but he was willing to give it a try. When my workshop began, I introduced the young man. He proceeded to name each person correctly. I then asked him two questions: first, "Was it easy to name the group?" His answer? "Yes!" Second, "Could you have named two or three times as many people?" His answer, "Yes!" How did he do it? By using a method. The same method I'll show you in this book.

As one student said to me after I'd shared some of the strategies of memory training, "It's like the light was turned on. No one ever told me there was a way to remember."

Why Remember Names?

Don't you feel flattered when someone remembers your name? Be honest now, all of us enjoy hearing our name. Not long ago I entered my dentist's office and was greeted by a smiling receptionist who said, "Good afternoon, Graham." She knew my name. I felt like an important patient. Even though I knew she had an appointment book that said "Graham Best at 2:00 p.m.," and it was 1:59 p.m., I still felt good.

Recently, two friends of mine attended a new church in their area. After the service, they were introduced to the pastor as he was greeting



parishioners at the door. Months later, they returned to the church for a second visit. To their pleasant surprise, as they were leaving the service, the pastor smiled and called them by name, telling them how wonderful it was that they were back again. Guess where they now attend church?

Remembering a name shows that you care and are interested in an individual. If you wish to make someone feel important, remember his or her name. Business deals are often made or lost by remembering or forgetting a name. The person who calls others by name gets greater respect. It is said that the greatest compliment you can give someone is to remember their name. ▶



A Word About Attitude

Attitude is one of the most important aspects of learning. You must put an end to negative thoughts about your abilities. If you constantly say to yourself, “I have a lousy memory,” it won’t be long before your memory takes offense and begins to let you down. Or, if you say to yourself, “Yeah, I’ll forget that,” believe me, you will forget it—it’s a self-fulfilling prophecy. Instead, start saying to yourself, “I have an excellent memory. In fact, I’m going to begin right now to train it and take advantage of it.”

A Formula For Success

| Knowledge + Action = Success |

Many things seem impossible until you are given the right knowledge and information. Here’s a puzzle: suppose that there are two children that are born on the same day, of the same month, of the same year, to the same mother, yet they are not twins. Think about that a moment. Isn’t that impossible? It seems so, until I tell you that there is a third child—they are triplets. The right knowledge solves the problem.

Consider the many inventions of the last two centuries. If someone had said in the early 1800’s that man would be able to fly across the ocean, he would have been laughed at. Yet, today it is commonplace. A few individuals had a vision, the right knowledge, and the motivation to act. Now, how does this relate to you?

You have a remarkable memory, but you probably lack the training and knowledge to use it effectively. You are capable of amazing things. I am reminded of the story of a man who owned a parcel of land in Texas. It was the Depression and he was barely able to feed his family. In desperation he was seeking to borrow even more money from the bank. At the same time, an oil company asked if they could test drill on his land. He agreed. Sinking their drills into the land, they found what became the largest oil deposit in Texas. This man became a millionaire overnight, though only days before, he was living below the poverty level. The truth



of the matter is that he was actually very wealthy the entire time—he just didn't know it. He was a millionaire living as a pauper. You may be like that. Your memory is astounding and you probably don't realize it.

A few years ago the papers carried a story of a man who went to a Rock and Gem Show. Bypassing all the polished gems, he went to a table of crude rock. One rock caught his attention and he offered the seller twenty dollars. Looking at the rock, the seller said "It's an ugly rock, I'll give it to you for ten dollars." The man took his rock home and began to work with it. Cutting away the dross, he uncovered a Star Sapphire worth \$2.28 million dollars! Quite an investment. This man had success because he did two things: one, he recognized the potential in the rock (knowledge), and two, he did something about it (action). You must do the same. First, realize the potential you have and then take steps to develop that potential. I'd like to help you take the right steps. ▶



The First Step

Every job requires the right tool, and the right tool for memory improvement is picture-association. This is one of the real keys to a successful memory. Let's take apart the phrase "picture-association."

Pictures

One of the best-kept secrets of memory improvement is the ability to see pictures in the mind. Let me prove that you have a visual memory. Pause a moment and try to recall furniture in your living room—close your eyes and imagine moving around the room in a clockwise direction. Don't read on until you've tried it.

Now, try to recall the furniture in your bedroom. Can you do this? Of course you can. What are you doing while recalling the furniture? Picturing!

Have you ever noticed that you can remember someone's face easily, but you tend to forget the name? That's because the face is visual and the name is not. How many times have you ever walked up to someone and said, "I recall your name, but your face escapes me?" This does not happen.

Association

I firmly believe that all learning is accomplished by association. "Association" means "joining together"—I know one thing and it in turn reminds me of something else. Have you ever said, "Ah, that reminds me?" Some event or statement triggered a memory. You may hear a song, see a movie, or meet a person and you are reminded of a past experience. This is association.

There are many associations that you may be familiar with. Let's review some of them.



Every spring and fall the clocks are changed by an hour. But which way do we move them—forward or backward? Remember the old saying:

“Spring forward, fall back.”

Here’s a familiar old rhyme:

“In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.”

This is one of my favourites: let’s learn the value of pi (π) to seven decimal places. Say aloud: “May I have a large container of coffee?” Count the letters in each word and you have: 3.1415926

May	I	have	a	large	container	of	coffee?
3	1	4	1	5	9	2	6

Now let’s combine association with pictures.

Picture-Association

The best way to illustrate picture-association is to consider an experiment in which several word-pairs are called out. A word-pair consists of any two words such as “monkey-bike,” “cornflakes-chimney,” “ice cream cone-mouse,” and so on. After fifty or so word-pairs have been called out, you are given the first word of every pair and then asked for the matching word. In our example you would be given “monkey” and would have to respond with “bike.” Next, you would be given “cornflakes,” and have to respond with “chimney,” and so forth. How well do you think you would do if fifty word-pairs were used? Probably not very well.

There is, however, a secret for achieving remarkable success with this experiment. As each pair is called out, use your imagination to make an absurd, exaggerated picture connecting the two items. The funnier the association, the better your recall. For the word-pair “monkey-bike,” you could see a monkey riding a bike.





Although it may be reasonable for such an event to take place, the action of a monkey riding the bike places the two items together in such a way that whenever one is recalled, the other immediately comes to mind.

Totally unrelated items can make bizarre and memorable pictures. For the word-pair “cornflakes-chimney,” you might imagine millions of cornflake boxes popping out of your chimney.



Picture association must fix the relationship between the two words so strongly that when one word is mentioned, the other immediately comes to mind. Can you guess how much better you would do using the idea of picture-association in the experiment mentioned above? Most people guess 70%, but the answer is 700%.

That’s astounding! There is a real power to this amazing concept. It is this powerful tool called picture-association that enables us to remember names and faces.

The Intangibles

Our little experiment works well for simple words that make pictures, but what about the difficult words--the intangibles? Intangible words don’t readily make pictures in the mind. Most words will fall into this category. Examples of intangible words are “time,” “abominable,” “Bill,” “comfort”, or “replete.” How can we ‘see’ these words? Here’s what we’ll do. Find a word that is a picture to remind us of the word that is not a picture. To explain what I mean, we’ll use the intangible words just mentioned.

To visualize “time,” I would use a clock. There is such a strong association between “clock” and “time” that a clock can be a picture reminder for the word “time”.



To visualize “abominable,” break the word down into pictures that sound like the word. Imagine “a bomb in a bull.” Or, you could see the abominable snowman. See the picture clearly.



In similar ways, any word may be visualized. This becomes very important when we want to remember names. See the helpful list in the appendix at the end of the book for suggested picture-associations for common names. ▶

STEP ONE: MAKE IT YOUR GOAL TO LEARN THE NAME

We all know the importance of a goal. A goal provides us with motivation, tells us where we are going, and keeps us on the right track. Our goal will be to get the person's name. This is not a half-hearted, "I guess I'll learn this fellow's name," but, "I *must* learn this name." I must have a strong desire to accomplish the goal, otherwise I may not have success. What this means for us, is that when we meet someone we must be very intentional about learning their name. Imagine this conversation:

"Hi. I'm Graham Best."

"Hi, I'm (mumble mumble)"

What do most people do in this situation? Nothing. Did you get the name? No. Will you remember the name? No. When you can't hear the name because of a heavy accent, a quiet voice, or a sudden noise, etc., don't give up. Pursue the name. Remember that it's your goal to get that name, so ask again. Never put blame on the person by saying things like, "Speak louder, I can't hear you. What's the matter with you?" Always take the blame yourself. Instead, say, "I'm sorry, I missed that. What was your name again?"

If the person tends to be a very quiet speaker, subtly incline your ear towards their mouth or watch the lips. In other words, do everything possible to get the name this second time. Ninety-five percent of the time you'll get it by asking the second time.

If you miss it again—ask again. Some memory teachers suggest that you should ask the person to spell his name if you miss it. I don't. Can you imagine trying to hear the spelling of a mumbling speaker, or a person with a heavy accent? No way! Ask and ask again until you get the name. If, however, it is bordering on the embarrassing, you can ask them to write down the name. This has to work.



Be creative in achieving your goal of getting the name. If you miss the name and you know that someone nearby knows the person, you can always say to them privately, "I'm sorry. I missed that man's name. Can you tell me what it is?"

Once you've heard the person's name, use it immediately in the conversation.

"How do you do? I'm Graham Best."

"Hi! I'm George."

"Nice to meet you, George."

Please don't use the name repeatedly: "Well, George, it's nice to see you, George. Tell me, George, what do you do, George?" Whenever I meet someone for the first time and they use my name repeatedly, it's usually a pushy salesman and I can't help but wonder what course they took. I emphasize again, use the name immediately, but casually, in the conversation. If it's natural to use it again, do so.

Why the emphasis on using the name? Two reasons:

First, it confirms that you've heard the name and reached your goal. If you can say the name aloud, you must know it—even if temporarily.

Second, it confirms whether or not you have heard it correctly.

"How do you do, I'm Graham Best."

"Hi, I'm Mary Ann."

"Nice to meet you, Marion."

"No it's Mary Ann."

"Oh, pardon me. I'm sorry, Mary Ann."



STEP TWO: PICTURE THE NAME

Every name can be pictured. As before, we may use picture words that sound like the name. For example, the name Bill could be pictured by a duck's bill, or a dollar bill.



I woke up one morning and I heard a newscaster say, "The new premier of the U.S.S.R. is Andropov." I thought to myself, what an unusual name—how will I picture it? Then I imagined an ant walking across my roof and all of the sudden, "ant drop off." "Ant drop off" sounds like Andropov.

Sometimes the name may be pictured by close association with something familiar. For example, the name MacDonald could be pictured by a McDonald's "M".



Sometimes the association involves something that is unique to the individual. I am a passionate guitar player and I own several excellent guitars. I have a pre-war Martin guitar that belonged to my father. If I meet someone named "Martin," I could use that guitar as a picture. It would not work for you, unless you too were familiar with Martin guitars.

I will emphasize, with a little practice you should be able to picture any name. It doesn't matter how bizarre or how ridiculous the picture is—if it reminds you of the name, use it. And remember: the simpler the picture, the better. Once you decide upon a picture for a particular name, it becomes your standard.

It is important that pictures are very specific to each name. For example, for the name "Mary," I use a bride—the bride is about to be married. For "Mary Ann," I use a bride with ants (Ann) all over her gown. For "Marion,"

I use a pointed hat like the one worn by maid Marion from the old Robin Hood TV series.

For a list of several common names, and pictures I use to remember them, refer to the appendix at the end of the book. Remember, these are only my suggestions—if you think of something yourself, by all means use it. By reading the list over a few times you should get the idea. Then, start your own list.

STEP THREE: STUDY THE FACE AND PICK A FEATURE

How can you remember a person if you don't look at them? When first introduced to someone new, make a quick survey of the face. Look at the hair. What kind of hair style does the person have? Do they have hair? Maybe that had a crew cut but the crew bailed out. Study the nose: is it large, small, or pointed? What are the eyes like? Very round? Elongated? Beautifully coloured? What does the mouth look like? Are the eyebrows or eyelashes noticeable? Look at the chin—is there a dimple in the chin? Is there a mark on the face? Decide on a feature. It may be a flattering or unflattering feature. It doesn't matter. If you have not been observant of faces before, this is something that must change. Start paying attention to faces and noting the features. Be intentional in your study of faces from this moment on.

STEP FOUR: CONNECT THE PICTURE TO THE FEATURE

This step is the crucial one. Previously, we used picture-association to join two words together. Now we will use picture-association to connect the selected feature to the picture for the name. The following six drawings will be used to illustrate what I mean. Let's learn the first names of these people.

Our first person is Dennis. He is balding. To picture "Dennis," I use the word "tennis". Imagine two people playing tennis on his head. Study the picture and make the associations.





Next we will meet Audrey. Audrey has very curly hair. I imagine that her hair is actually growth from an odd tree. Give yourself a few seconds to make the associations.



Meet Rod. To visualize “Rod,” I could use a fishing rod. Rod has quite a prominent nose. Imagine standing at a distance from him and cleaning out his nose with a fishing rod. “Horrible,” you say. Yes. But it certainly works.



Here is Frank. He has big ears and very small eyes. The picture for “Frank” is a frankfurter. Imagine frankfurters hanging from his ears instead of earrings. Lock in the associations and say the name aloud.



Take a moment now to review the first four names.

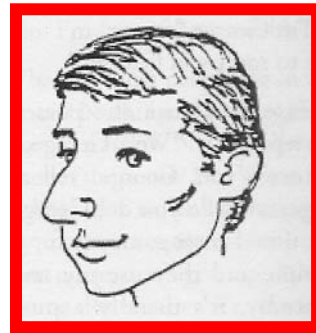
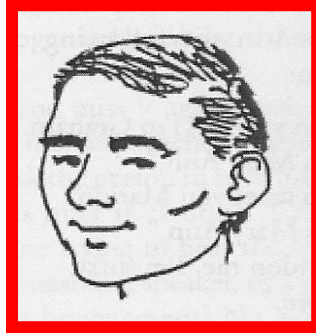
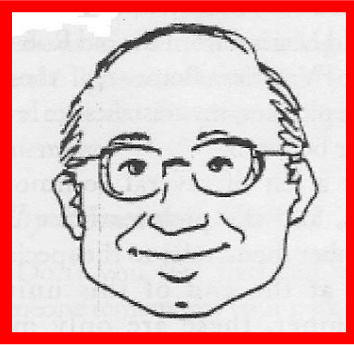
Now meet Mark. Mark has very thick brows. Imagine that Mark colours his heavy brows with a dark marker. Say the name aloud, and make the necessary associations.



Finally, we meet Bill. Bill has a long slender face and a cleft in his chin. Imagine storing a dollar bill, or a bill you pay in the cleft in his chin. Roll it up and stick it in there. When you need it, reach for it and pull it out. Once again, carefully make the associations.



Take a moment to strengthen the associations, and then try to name each of the people.



To practice this skill, I recommend that you buy a magazine and tear out pages that have good clear pictures of people that you are not familiar with. Write the name on paper and then tape it to the back of the page. Next, try to apply steps two, three, and four. Start with ten pictures or so and work your way up to twenty or more.

The next time you are at a party or other such gathering, practice with the system. You'll be amazed at how well it works. For starters, only do first names. As your confidence grows, you will be able to do the first and last names. To do the last name, simply add to your picture. If our cartooned man named "Bill" has the last name "Cook," you would imagine cooking the dollar bill. If Frank's last name is Friesen, you might imagine the frankfurter is freezin' because it was in the freezer.

By the way, if you ever see a "memory expert" on television naming an entire studio audience—I assure you that he or she is using these first four steps. The only difference between that person and you is summed up in one word: practice!

STEP FIVE: RECORD THE NAME

If you intend to learn a name for the long term, you must write it down. I recommend buying a small note pad and starting a collection of the names of people you meet. Each page of a small pad would represent a different person. Record the following information:

Name of the person

Write it down in full—first and last name.

The Where, the When, and the Why

Write down where you met the person and the occasion—include the month and year. For example, if you met Joanne and Arthur Fenster at a relative's wedding banquet, you would write down: Melanie's wedding – Feb 7 – 05.

Distinguishing features

Describe everything that you can about the person: approximate age, hair colour and style, and so on. Above all write down the feature you chose as the distinguishing feature.



The memory picture of the name

Describe your picture and the connection to the feature.

Miscellaneous

Record any information that you think could be pertinent such as hobbies, number of children, and likes and dislikes. Often you will meet someone who reminds you of someone you know. Certainly they will remind you of that person at a future date, so write it down.

Here's another tip—if the person gives you a business card, make it a point to staple it to the appropriate page in the note pad. You may also use the back of the card to write down notes about the person. Don't ever lose the card—it could be embarrassing!

How can you use this information?

It depends upon you. If you are in sales or any other business that requires meeting a lot of people, you may want to start several books of various classifications. You may have a Vancouver book, a Los Angeles book, or Memphis book. Likewise, the classification may be by business. Here's how it might work:

Today, I'm going to the ABC Widget company. While there I meet about seven people that I know I'll be seeing again. I use steps one through four to actually learn their names. When I leave, I apply step five and record the information in my note pad.

Next I go to the XYZ Company where I meet two people. Once again, I apply steps one through four and when I leave I record the names.

Now suppose two weeks later I'm returning to the ABC Company. What do I do? Review the names. I read and reread the descriptions of the people before I go to the company. When I go back to the company, I'll know the people.



By making this effort you will need the note pad less and less. Soon you will just know the people. Simply having a method and paying attention assures that the names will be recalled.

Summary

Now that you have learned the Five Steps, let's take a moment to memorize them. We'll use an acrostic: **GPS CaR**.

A GPS unit for your car gets you to your destination. In our case, our destination is getting and remembering the name.

- G** → "Get the name."
- P** → "Picture the name."
- S** → "Study the face and pick a feature."
- C** → "Connect the picture to the feature."
- R** → "Record the name."

Run through this a few times and you will know the steps. ▶



Q I need immediate help. Until I am proficient with picture-association, what can I do?

Answer: Here is the First Aid that will help immediately. The acrostic “STORE” will help you recall the steps to making the brain pay attention so that you are to remember the names of people you meet.

S stands for “say it.”

As soon as you hear the name, say it aloud. This will at least put the name into temporary storage. It also confirms that you have heard the name correctly.

T stands for “ten seconds.”

Within ten seconds you must do something to interact with the name. For example, you may say *to yourself*, “This is ...” Then immediately try to access any information stored in your mind that is related to that name. Suppose that the person’s name was Bob, you could group the person you’ve just met with the other Bobs you know. Or, you may think of an actor with the same name. You may think of someone you work with or even a character in a book you’ve read. The point is: do something with the name.

If it is natural and appropriate, you may interact with the person about their name. Imagine the following conversation:

“How do you do, I’m Graham Best.”

“Hi, I’m Katherine.”

“Nice to meet you, Katherine. Is that Katherine with a “K” or a “C”?”

Or, consider the following:

“How do you do, I’m Graham Best.”

“Hi, I’m Steve MacFarlane.”

“Nice to meet you, Steve. Is that MacFarlane with a “Mc” or a “Mac”?”



The point is: if it is appropriate, interact with the person's name. Be sensitive so that you do not cause offense in any way. With practice, you will become creative and soon it will become natural to interact with people this way.

O stands for "one minute."

Within one minute review the name. You do not need to actually time anything, but sometime within the minute, either use the name in conversation (if this is natural) or remind yourself once again of the person's name.

RE stands for "record the name."

I do not mean make an audio recording, but write the name down. Keep a record of the name, along with a brief description of the person. This you can do anytime over the next several hours.

Q What happens if many names are coming very quickly?

Answer: There is nothing you can do. Even if you are proficient with the systems, you'll need time to lock in the name. You must spend time with each person. Here is my suggestion: if this occurs at a social gathering, I nod graciously to each person and then later go to each one privately. I'll say, "I'm sorry, the names came by so quickly, I missed your name." No one has yet to look at me and say, "Too bad!" They are always flattered that someone takes the time to really meet them and learn their name.

If you are at a board meeting and the names of new people are coming by quickly, write them down. As the meeting progresses, go through steps one through five. Use the memory aid: GPS CaR.



Q Are there any other tips or tricks you use if there are many people to meet?

Answer: Yes! If I know that I have to meet forty or more people I may try to get the list of names in advance. This is by no means necessary, but it eases the load a bit. I've met well over 70 people at one time without any knowledge of their names beforehand. Teachers, for example, get their class lists in advance. Why not review the names and prepare pictures? Also, you can usually get by with learning first names only. In the case of teachers, the first name of everyone in the class could be learned the first day. As the year progresses, the last name will automatically come to mind after calling the roll so often.

Another tip is to stand with someone who knows many of the people. Use their assistance. Ask, "Who is that lady?" When they tell you the name go through steps one through four of the five steps before you meet the person. Do this for several people and then go and meet them. When you talk with them, reinforce the associations you've already made.

When you are meeting people, it's important to rehearse the names. Meet four or five people and then mentally review the associations. Here's a sample of what may go through my mind as I rehearse the names:

"There is the man with the greying sideburns. The sideburns are all covered with sand from a sandy beach—this man is Sandy. There's the man with the dimple in his chin. Flying out of the dimple is a red berry. This man's name is Barry," etc.

I'm a bit reticent to share this next trick because it may backfire. If the names are coming fairly quickly, and you know that you have to learn many of them, you may use the clothing. Associate the name to the first thing you notice about the person. The man with the sweater is Harry—immediately picture hair on the sweater. The lady with the big brooch is Lynn—immediately fill the brooch with lint, etc. This works well, however, it is only temporary. It will last until they remove their sweater or brooch.



Q What do I do if a name is on the tip of the tongue and I can't remember it?

Answer: There are several things you can do.

One, begin to think about and bring to mind everything that is associated with that person. When did you meet them? Who do you know in common? What interactions have you had with them? Keep drawing out what you know, and it is likely that the name will suddenly pop into the mind.

Two, start through the alphabet and think of a couple of names that begin with each letter – Ann, Alice, Barb, Bonnie, Betty, Colleen, Connie... It is possible that when you hit the letter that their name begins with you will instantly recall their name.

Three, don't stress. Take a deep breath, hold it, and breath out slowly. Do this several times. Go and do something else, and it is possible that then name will come to mind.

Q When I'm at an office party with my spouse and the name of someone I should know slips my mind, what can I do?

Answer: Work with your partner on this one. Indicate to them that you don't know the name of the person approaching. You can have a secret signal between each other if you want. Have your partner introduce themselves: "Hi, I'm Monica." The person will then usually state their name to your partner. ▶



By definition, technology is supposed to better our quality of life by making what we do easier. This is true for remembering names.

Most cell phones have the ability to take a picture. This allows you to have a permanent visual record of people you want to know by name. You can politely ask if you may take their picture. Tell them that you would like to remember them and to call them by name next time you meet them. If you are sincere, most people will say “yes.”

On your computer you can have a file of people you are meeting and want to remember. Pictures you take may be downloaded into this file. Then you can type in any additional information about the person.

You can set up your own file, but many of software packages and operating systems contain a contact list that is already set up for this purpose. You can import a picture directly into this list.

Some of the new iPhones and Blackberries allow this information to be stored immediately in the device themselves—along with detailed information. Here is an example of what this would look like.



When you type the name into your phone, you get the picture along with any other information you chose to add about this contact. It is a marvellous use of technology.

You can also use steps one through four of the five steps to review and practice with the names in your contact list. To test yourself, scroll through your contact list and look at the face that comes up and cover up the name. Can you recite the name?

If you practice this you will reach a point where you can quickly identify lots of people.

A True Story

I once had a psychology professor who related the following story. While in Mexico, he was watching men loading goods onto the side of a donkey. After loading up one side of the donkey, they proceeded to balance the load with stones on the other side. Realizing the inefficiency of the operation he approached them and said, “Here’s a better way. First, take the stones away.” They obliged him. He said, “Now, take half the load and put it where the stones were. Now it’s easier for you, and for the donkey.” They did what he asked and graciously thanked him. Then they started down the mountainside. The professor, sensing that something was wrong, climbed onto the roof of his hacienda to watch the men as they travelled. As soon as they thought they were out of sight, they stopped and quickly put the goods back onto the other side and looked around for stones to balance the load. Why? They’d always done it that way. Sometimes arguments of tradition are more persuasive than the arguments of reason. I have shown you a psychologically sound and proven way to remember names and faces. Please be willing to try something new—don’t be like the men with the donkey. ▶



Here is a helpful memory aid that will help you to observe people:
 SHARED CHoW.

S = sex	Male or female?
H = hair	What color is the hair? What style is the hair?
A = age	Approximately how old is the person?
R = race	What race are they?
E = eyes	Can you describe the shape of the eyes?
D = dress	What were they wearing?
C = characteristic	Where there any distinguishing characteristics?
H = height	How tall were they? Use your height to compare.
W = weight	Roughly, what was their weight?

It looks a little daunting when you first see this, but here is how you can learn it.

Write out the phrase: S H A R E D C H o W (note that the lowercase 'o' is only there to complete the word.)

Point to each letter and rehearse naming the list until you know it well. It would go like this: (pointing to the S) S reminds me of sex (male or female)... (pointing to the H) H is hair... (pointing to the A) ...A is age, etc.

If you make a mistake, review the one that was incorrect and then start from the beginning. It should take a couple of minutes to be able to do this.

Next, take a blank piece of paper and write out each letter *as* you recite the list.

Finally, try it without writing anything down.

You can use this to help observe people. To practice, mentally run through the list as you meet people throughout your day. For example, if you are waiting in line at the checkout in the supermarket, you can observe the checkout person. You may say: This is a female. She has short



brown hair reaching to her shoulder. I would guess she is in her early 20's. She is a Caucasian with roundish eyes. I also notice that her eyebrows are neatly plucked. She is wearing jeans with a light coloured sweater. I notice that she smiles widely with each customer. There is also small red earring in each ear. I'm guessing she is about 5 feet 6 inches and about 120 lbs.

Later try to recall your description.

Practice this a few times and you will see how much more you are observing about people. ▶



Here are some suggested pictures for common names. If you don't like my pictures, by all means come up with your own. What you think of is by far the best picture to use. I emphasize, it must be a *picture*—something tangible.

I have noticed that popular names have changed over the years. First I'll provide a list of recent common names for boys and girls. I'll give a description of how to picture each one. Then I'll provide a data bank of other common names. You should start adding to this data bank by writing down the names of people that you meet that are not on the list. Spend whatever time you need to create a unique picture for each one.

Jacob

I will picture a cob of corn with a "J" in it. "J" cob sounds like Jacob.



Michael

See a mic. You call someone with the mic. "Mic call" sounds like Michael.



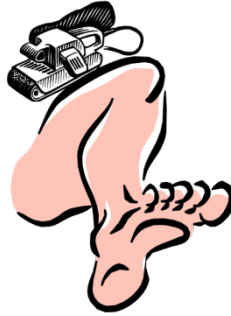
Ethan

To picture Ethan, I imagine a large letter E that is very thin. "E thin" sounds like Ethan.



Alexander

To picture Alexander, you could find some image that could stand for Alexander the Great. Or, you could imagine “a leg sander.” Imagine a “sander” that is used to sand legs.



Nicholas

Imagine nickels.

Logan

You could picture a log. Or, you might imagine logging in to a computer. “Log in” sounds like Logan.



Let's look at some girls names that have become popular.

Emily

To find a picture for this name, I will try to sound it out and find tangible pictures that will sound like the name. To visualize "mill" I could use a mill for grinding, or a windmill.



I could see the mill lying down. "A mill lay" sounds like Emily. Or, I could see a mill on a lea. A lea is a meadow. "A mill lea" sounds like Emily.

Alternatively, I could work with the idea of the letter M. I could see an M lying down. "M lay" sounds close enough to Emily. Or, I could see an M in a lea.



Isabella

I would see a bell. It is possible to have an elaborate picture like "I saw bell." To picture this I imagine using a saw to cut a bell. "I saw bell" sounds like Isabella, but I don't think that is necessary. The simpler the better.

Emma

You could imagine “a ma.” See your own mother (ma). “A ma” sounds like Emma. Or, you could imagine that someone is about to “hem a” dress. “Hem a” sounds like Emma.



Ava

For Ava I will use an avenue, or an avenue sign.



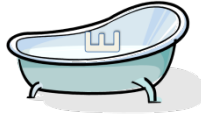
There are many other possibilities of what to use. It depends on your knowledge. There is a famous line of labels called “avery” labels. You could use this. If you knew that an aviary is an enclosure for birds, you could use that as a picture.

Olivia

For Olivia, I would use an olive.

Elizabeth

For Elizabeth I could use the Queen. Or, I could imagine a letter E lying in a bath. “E lies bath” sounds like Elizabeth.



Addison

For Addison I would use “add sun.” To see this as a picture, I would imagine adding something in the sun.



Ashley

For Ashley I could imagine some ash. You may want to see ash on a leaf. “Ash leaf” sounds like much like Ashley.

Alexis

You could imagine the car—a Lexus. You may imagine a letter “L” spinning on its axis. “L axis” sounds like Alexis. Or, you might see a lake. In the lake is your sister (sis). “A lake sis” also sounds like Alexis.

Chloe

See a large letter E that glows. “Glow E” sounds like Chloe.

Here is a list of men’s names and some suggested pictures. If you think of something better, by all means write it down.



Name	Picture
Aaron	iron
Adam	a dam, atom
Adrian	a drain
Allan	a lion, a line
Albert	L bird, an elbow
Alfred	elf red
Andrew	Ant drew
Anthony	Ant tiny
Archie	archer
Arnold	iron old
Barry	berry
Ben	pen, bend; Big Ben
Benjamin	Pen jam
Bernard	St Bernard; burn yard
Bill	bill
Bob	plumb bob
Bradley	bread
Brian	brine
Bruce	bruise
Cameron	camera
Carl	car
Cecil	see seal
Charles	charcoal
Cliff	cliff
Craig	crag, crack
Daniel	den yell; Daniel Boone
Darren	deer run
Darryl	derail, barrel
David	a sling
Dennis	tennis
Derek	oil derrick
Don	the dawn
Doug	dug



Name	Picture
Duncan	dunk can
Ed	head, add
Eric	a rake
Ernest	ear nest
Ernie	ear knee
Frank	frankfurter
Fred	fret (of a guitar)
Gary	carry
George	charge card
Gerald	jar old
Glen	glen, gun
Gord	cord
Graham	Graham wafers
Grant	granite
Harold	hair old
Harry	hairly
Henry	hen
Howard	hoe ward
Hugh	ewe
Ian	ion
Ivan	eye van
Jack	jack knife
James	jam
Jason	chase son
Jeff	chef
Jeremy	jar on me
John	yawn
Joe	joker; GI Joe
Keith	keys
Ken	can
Kevin	cave in
Larry	lariat
Lee	lea
Len	a lens



Name	Picture
Les	lace
Malcolm	mail comb; mail come
Mark	a mark
Martin	martian
Marvin	mar van
Maurice	more ice; more rice
Mike	microphone
Neil	kneel
Norman	Normal; oar man
Oliver	olive
Pat	pat
Paul	pole
Pete	peat moss
Philip	fill up
Ralph	our elf
Ray	sun's ray
Richard	rich yard
Rod	fishing rod
Robert	raw bird
Roger	row jar
Ronald	run old; Ronald McDonald
Ross	rose
Roy	Roy Rogers; row
Russel	wrestle
Scott	Scottish kilt
Shane	chain
Stan	music stand
Steve	steed, stove
Stuart	stew wart
Terence	tear ants
Terry	terry cloth
Thomas	tom tom drum
Tony	toe knee
Vincent	Fin cent; vine



Name	Picture
Wallace	Walrus; wall lace; wall ice
Walter	wall tear
Wayne	weigh; wine

Here is a list of women's names and some suggested pictures. If you think of something better, by all means write it down.

Name	Picture
Alice	lace
Angela	angel
Anita	anteater
Ann	ant
Annette	a net
Audrey	odd tree
Barbara	barb, barber
Beverly	beverage
Brenda	bran
Bridget	bridge
Caroline	carry a line
Catherine	cat rain
Charlotte	a web
Cheryl	chair hill
Chris	cross
Cindy	cinders
Colleen	calling
Connie	con
Darlene	door lean
Dawn	the dawn
Debbie	tub bee
Diane	tyin', dine, dyin'
Donna	donut
Eve	eave
Eileen	eye lean
Elaine	eel lane



Name	Picture
Elizabeth	E lies bath
Ellen	yellin'
Eunice	ewe nest
Evelyn	a violin
Faye	happy face
Gail	gale
Gloria	glow
Grace	praying hands
Heather	heather
Heidi	hide
Helen	hailin'; Mt. St Helens
Ingrid	ink red
Irene	eye rain
Jackie	jack knife
Jane	chain
Janet	chain net
Janice	gin ice
Jayne	chain knee
Jean	jeans
Jennifer	gin fur
Jessica	chase a car
Jill	chill, jail
Joyce	juice
Judy	chewed E
Julie	jewel
Kate	gate
Kathy	cat see
Kay	Special K
Kerry	carry
Kim	gum
Laura	laurel
Lesley	lace lea
Linda	lint
Lisa	lease



Name	Picture
Lorna	lawn
Lorraine	law rain
Lynn	line; lint
Margaret	mark a rat
Marjorie	margarine
Marie	merry
Mary	a bride's veil
Maureen	mower rain; more rain
Melaney	melon
Melissa	mail a saw
Melody	musical note
Michelle	my shell
Nancy	nun see
Natalie	gnat
Pat	pat
Paula	pole
Pauline	Pole lean
Priscilla	purse silly
Rachel	ray shell
Rebecca	ray peck
Rosalind	rose land
Rosemary	rose marry
Rita	reader
Ruth	root
Sandra	sand draw
Sandy	sandy beach
Sara	seer
Sharon	chair hen
Sheila	shield
Shelley	shell
Shirley	chair lea
Sonia	sun
Sophie	sofa
Stephanie	staff



Name	Picture
Susan	snoozin'
Sylvia	silver
Tanya	tan ya'
Tara	tear
Theresa	terrace
Tina	tuna
Tracy	trace
Valerie	valley; valet
Vanessa	fan a saw
Wendy	windy

Creating pictures for names is like playing a game. The more you play a game, the more skilled you become at the game. In the same manner, the more you work at creating the pictures, the better you get at it. It is worth pressing on in order to become proficient with the system. Why? It works! The pictures force the mind to pay attention.

Study what I have done, and you will soon be able to do this on your own. ▶

