STRETCHLEARN · WORKBOOK

Memory & Learning Techniques — Workbook

This workbook gives you hands-on exercises, structured worksheets, and actionable checklists to turn every course concept into a real habit. Work through each section alongside its corresponding module — do not rush ahead. The templates at the end are designed as living documents you will update weekly for at least 90 days.

How Memory Actually Works

Audit your current study habits, identify your dominant encoding depth, and map your personal forgetting rate before building any new system.

Exercise: The 48-Hour Encoding Audit

For the next 48 hours, log every learning activity you do. After each activity, classify its processing depth and estimate the percentage of content you could recall 24 hours later. Complete the exercise before reviewing your results against the lesson's shallow/medium/deep framework.

• List every study or learning activity you did in the past 48 hours (reading, meetings, videos, podcasts, practice problems, conversations).

• For each activity, classify it: shallow (appearance/recognition), medium (meaning in isolation), or deep (meaning + connection to prior knowledge + application).

• What percentage of your total study time fell into each category? What does that tell you about your current learning ROI?

• Pick the one activity that was most shallow and rewrite it as a deep-processing equivalent you could do instead.

Worksheet: Forgetting Curve Baseline Tracker

After your next study session, fill in this tracker. Return to it at the intervals shown and rate your recall without looking at notes. This gives you your personal forgetting curve baseline for one topic.

Topic studied

Date and time of initial study session

Confidence rating immediately after study (1–5)

Recall attempt at 1 hour: notes-free summary in 3 sentences

Confidence rating at 1 hour (1–5)

Recall attempt at 24 hours: notes-free summary in 3 sentences

Confidence rating at 24 hours (1–5)

Recall attempt at 7 days: notes-free summary in 3 sentences

Confidence rating at 7 days (1–5)

Key gaps identified between attempts

Checklist: Cognitive Load Reduction Setup

[ ] Phone is in another room or switched to Do Not Disturb during every study session
[ ] I have a designated study space that is used only for focused learning (not browsing or entertainment)
[ ] Browser bookmarks toolbar and notifications are hidden during study
[ ] I have identified my peak cognitive hours (morning, afternoon, or evening) and scheduled encoding sessions then
[ ] I have tested the Pomodoro 25/5 cycle for at least three sessions and recorded whether it matches my natural attention rhythm
[ ] I have reduced each study session to a single topic or chapter (no multi-topic cramming in one sitting)
[ ] I have a paper notepad visible for capturing interrupting thoughts so I can park them without switching context

Spaced Repetition and Active Recall

Build your first Anki deck, make your first 30 cards using best-practice templates, and establish a retrieval-practice habit you can measure each week.

Exercise: Your First 30 Anki Cards

Choose one subject you are actively studying right now. Create exactly 30 Anki cards over two days. Deliberately use at least three of the five card-template types from the lesson. After 7 days of daily review, return here and answer the reflection prompts.

• What subject did you choose, and why is it the highest-priority knowledge area for you right now?

• Which three card-template types did you use? Give one example card from each type (front and back).

• After 7 days, what is your retention rate (percentage of cards answered correctly)? Is it above or below the 85–92% target range, and what does that tell you about your card quality?

• Which cards were hardest to recall consistently? Rewrite two of them using the Minimum Information Principle — simpler, one fact each.

Exercise: The Retrieval Practice Replacement Test

Take your next scheduled study session and replace all re-reading with retrieval practice. Before opening any notes, do a brain dump. Only open notes to check gaps. Record your experience below.

• How many minutes did you spend in retrieval-only mode before opening your source material?

• List five specific facts or concepts you could not recall but would have assumed you knew if you had re-read normally.

• How did the session feel compared to a typical re-reading session — more or less effortful, more or less productive?

• What did you learn about your actual knowledge gaps from this single retrieval session that weeks of re-reading had hidden?

Checklist: Weekly Active Recall Habits

[ ] I complete my Anki review session every day before checking email or social media
[ ] My Anki new-card limit is set to 10–15 cards per day (not the default 20)
[ ] After every book chapter or lecture, I spend 5 minutes on a brain dump before reviewing notes
[ ] I use at least one retrieval practice method (brain dump, self-explanation, or practice problems) per study session
[ ] I have told a colleague, friend, or family member about something I learned this week without looking at my notes
[ ] My Anki retention rate this week was between 85% and 92%
[ ] I have reviewed my most-failed cards and reformatted at least two of them

The Method of Loci and Advanced Memory Techniques

Build and use your first memory palace, encode a real 10-item list, and practise the link method on a framework from your work or studies.

Exercise: Build and Test Your First Memory Palace

Follow the six-step palace-building process from the lesson. Choose a space you know extremely well. Identify 10 distinct loci, encode a real 10-item list (a process, a presentation outline, a set of key facts), and test your recall 24 hours later without any cues.

• Describe your chosen palace space and list your 10 loci in order. Why did you choose this space?

• For each locus, describe the image you created. How did you apply the Von Restorff properties (large, animated, sensory-rich, emotionally charged)?

• What was your recall accuracy at 24 hours (how many of the 10 items did you retrieve correctly and in order)?

• Which images were weakest and why? Redesign them — make them more vivid, more absurd, or more personally meaningful and re-test the same list the following day.

Worksheet: Link Method Story Builder

Choose a 7-step process, framework, or sequence from your current work or study. Build a narrative story that links all 7 items using the link method. Write the story here, then test recall of the original sequence 48 hours later.

Framework or process name

Item 1

Item 2

Item 3

Item 4

Item 5

Item 6

Item 7

Narrative story linking all 7 items (write it in vivid detail, present tense)

Recall accuracy at 48 hours (items recalled in correct order, out of 7)

Revisions made to the story after the 48-hour test

Checklist: Memory Palace Maintenance

[ ] I have built at least one functional memory palace with 10 or more distinct loci
[ ] I have encoded a real, professionally relevant list into my palace (not just a practice list)
[ ] I tested my palace recall 24 hours after encoding and corrected any weak images
[ ] I have assigned a separate palace to each distinct subject I am memorising (no cross-contamination)
[ ] I have walked my active palace forward and backward at least twice this week
[ ] I understand the Major System digit-to-sound map and can convert any two-digit number to a word without looking
[ ] I have used narrative linking on at least one multi-step process from my work or study

Building a Sustainable Learning System

Design your personalised weekly learning stack, attach it to existing habits, and set up your measurement dashboard for the first 90 days.

Exercise: Design Your Weekly Learning Stack

List every knowledge area you need to develop in the next 90 days. Classify each by knowledge type (declarative, procedural, conceptual, applied). Assign the dominant technique for each. Then draft a specific weekly schedule using the Monday-to-Sunday template from the lesson.

• List your top 3 knowledge priorities for the next 90 days. For each, state why it matters, what your current level is (1–5), and your target level.

• Classify each priority by knowledge type (declarative facts, procedural skills, conceptual understanding, applied judgment) and name the primary technique you will use for it.

• Draft your Monday-to-Sunday learning schedule. Be specific about start time, duration, location, and technique for each session.

• What is your single non-negotiable daily learning commitment — the one action you will do even on your worst day? How long will it take and when exactly will it happen?

Worksheet: Habit Stack Planner

Identify three existing daily habits you can use as anchors for new learning behaviours. Write the full if-then implementation intention for each, then track completion for two weeks.

Anchor habit 1 (existing, reliable daily action)

New learning behaviour attached to anchor 1

Full implementation intention for habit 1 (After I [anchor], I will [learning action] at [location])

Anchor habit 2

New learning behaviour attached to anchor 2

Full implementation intention for habit 2

Anchor habit 3

New learning behaviour attached to anchor 3

Full implementation intention for habit 3

Week 1 completion rate for each habit (days completed out of 7)

Week 2 completion rate for each habit

Adjustment made after week 1 based on what was not working

Checklist: 90-Day Learning System Launch

[ ] I have written my weekly learning stack and added it as a recurring calendar block
[ ] I have set up my Anki statistics screen and noted my baseline retention rate and average interval
[ ] I have identified at least two habit anchors and written implementation intentions for them
[ ] I have scheduled my first 4-week review session (90 days from today) in my calendar now
[ ] I have a paper or digital log where I track weekly Anki completion, techniques used, and application wins
[ ] I have applied the two-day rule by deciding now what my minimum viable practice will be on difficult days
[ ] I have done a teaching loop at least once — explained a concept from this course to another person from memory
[ ] I have shared my learning stack with at least one person who will ask me about it in 30 days
[ ] I have run a domain diagnostic test on one subject I have been studying for at least 4 weeks
[ ] I have identified my biggest remaining knowledge gap and written a specific 2-week plan to address it

Your Action Plan

1. Within 24 hours: complete the 48-hour encoding audit and classify every study activity from the past two days as shallow, medium, or deep
2. Within 48 hours: set up Anki with a new deck for your highest-priority subject, configure new cards to 10 per day, and make your first 15 cards
3. Within 3 days: replace one scheduled re-reading session with a brain dump and retrieval-practice session; log the gap findings
4. Within 5 days: build your first memory palace with 10 loci using a familiar space and encode a real 10-item list from your work or study
5. Within 7 days: run one fully interleaved study session mixing at least 3 topics; apply elaborative interrogation (five-why chain) to at least one concept
6. Within 14 days: complete your first 30 Anki cards, review your retention rate, and reformat any cards below 2.0 ease factor
7. Within 21 days: draft your full weekly learning stack, attach it to two habit anchors with written implementation intentions, and block the time in your calendar
8. At 30 days: run your first domain diagnostic test on a subject you have been studying — write a full recall summary from memory, then compare to source

9. At 60 days: audit your Anki mature-card percentage and average interval; retire any palace loci for topics that have graduated to Anki long-term storage
10. At 90 days: conduct a full learning system review — measure retention rates, application wins, and knowledge-level self-ratings versus your Day 1 baseline; revise your learning stack for the next quarter