

Always Forgetting Important Things? Here's How to Fix That, According to Science

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Most people, when tasked with remembering something important, jot down a note. But [a study](#) published recently in the journal *Experimental Aging Research* says there may be a better way to [keep memories fresh](#): draw a picture.

Drawing works your brain in ways that writing alone does not, forcing it to process visual information, translate the meaning of a word into an image and carry out a physical act all at once, says study co-author Melissa Meade, a doctoral candidate in cognitive neuroscience at the University of Waterloo in Canada. “It’s bringing online a lot of different brain regions that you wouldn’t bring online if you were just writing information out,” Meade explains. “We think this multifaceted approach of using the drawing technique benefits memory and the brain.”

And older adults may have even more to gain from this approach, Meade says. “In normal, healthy aging, you tend to see a lot of changes occurring to parts of the brain that are involved in memory functioning and language processing,” Meade says. “You don’t see as many changes occurring in regions that are involved in sensory processing of visual information” — so drawing may take advantage of these “relatively well-preserved brain regions” and boost memory.

Meade and her supervisor, University of Waterloo psychology professor Myra Fernandes, confirmed these results in a series of experiments involving 48 adults ranging in age from college undergraduates to those in their 80s.