



Dr. Christian Poensgen

How to remember everything you learn (backed by science):





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Andrew Huberman is a neuroscientist and professor at Stanford University.

His “Huberman Lab Podcast” is often ranked #1 in Science, Education, and Health and Fitness.

He also shared a terrific protocol to help anyone learn anything more efficiently.



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That protocol includes **3 non-negotiable elements of learning**. First, you need *alertness* to trigger the learning.

Second, you need *focus* to engage with the material. Third, you need *rest* so that the rewiring of neural circuits can occur.

Here are some tips to optimize these 3 to remember everything you learn:



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Non-negotiable #1:

Alertness



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Tip #1: Get light right

This is vital for optimizing your cortisol and melatonin levels.

You'll be more alert during the day and fall deeply asleep easier at night.

To do so, use the *10-10-10 Rule*: Get 10 mins of sunlight into your eyes before 10 am & avoid bright, blue light after 10 pm.



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Tip #2: Have water (& coffee)

Insufficient hydration is a sure way to make you tired. We need 2-3 liters a day, according to the Mayo Clinic.

For caffeine, quantity & timing matter. First, up to 400 mg is fine. That's 2 regular cups.

Second, stay away from caffeine in the last 8 hrs before bed. You'll avoid destroying your deep sleep.



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Tip #3: Time your learning right

Follow the *30-3-11 Rule* by picking one of 3 times for your learning session:

~30 mins after waking.

~3 hrs after waking.

~11 hrs after waking.

These times are when you're most alert, according to Prof. Huberman. This is due to our "circadian rhythm".



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Non-negotiable #2:

Focus



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Tip #1: Defuse your phone

You got a “weapon of mass distraction” in your pocket: your smartphone.

Fortunately, the best tool for defusing that weapon comes preinstalled on it.

It's called airplane mode. Use it (h/t to Ben Meer).



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Tip #2: Minimize distractions

Even without your phone, getting into deep focus is hard.

So don't make it harder for yourself. Turn off email & group chat before you start.

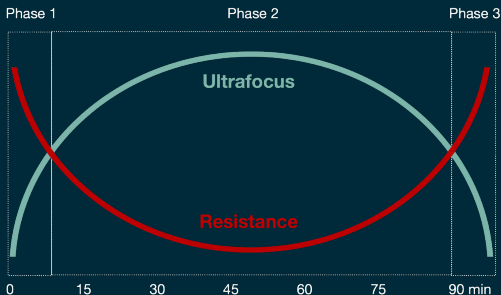
Also, consider a distraction blocker like *Freedom*. It works like charm.



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Tip #3: Master the art of the start

Every learning session looks like this:



In phase 1, resistance always is high, and focus is low. It's perfectly normal.

Master that start. Phase 2 is worth it.



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Non-negotiable #3:

Rest



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Tip #1: Insert micro-rest

During your learning session, pause & do nothing for 10 secs every now and then.

This promotes the same neural activity that occurred when engaging with the material – but 10 (!) times faster.

That's why Prof. Huberman recommends a 10-sec pause about every 2 mins.



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Tip #2: Get some deep rest

This enhances the rate and depth of learning. Prof. Huberman recommends it within 1 hr after a learning session.

As a bonus, deep rest also restores your alertness and focus effectively.

One popular form is non-sleep deep rest (NSDR). Too busy? Think again. Even Google's CEO does this on most days.



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Tip #3: Get plenty of deep sleep

Focusing on the material provides the stimulus for learning – but the neural circuit rewiring occurs during deep sleep.

To prepare for getting plenty of that most restorative sleep phase, try “intermittent digital fasting”:

Put your phone into its own bedroom (not yours!) 1 hr before bed, and let it “sleep in” for 1 hr after you wake up.



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TL;DR: How to remember everything you learn

- Get light right
- Have water (& coffee)
- Time your learning well

- Defuse your phone
- Minimize distractions
- Master the art of the start

- Insert micro-rest
- Get some deep rest
- Get plenty of deep sleep



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Regardless of whether you're a student, busy parent or professional, give these tips a try and let me know how it went.

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