

The limits of human memory

1. Complete the questions below with the correct prepositions.
 - a) Do you have a good memory **for** faces, names or dates?
 - b) What are some of your most vivid memories **of** your childhood?
 - c) Can you recite a poem, song or speech **from** memory?
 - d) What is the most significant moment or event that will remain **in** your memory forever?
2. Answer the questions from the previous exercise.
3. Read the sentences in the boxes and match the verbs (*remember, recall, remind, recollect*) to their meanings below. In some cases, you can match more than one verb to a specific meaning.

REMEMBER

She suddenly *remembered* that her cell phone was in her other bag.
I can *remember* when his birthday is.
I don't *remember* signing a contract.
Did you *remember* to do the shopping?

REMIND

Could you *remind* Paul about dinner on Sunday?
Please *remind* me to post this letter.
That song always *reminds me of* our holiday in Mexico.

RECALL

I don't *recall* arranging a time to meet.
He *recalled* that he had sent the letter over a month ago.

RECOLLECT

He does not *recollect* seeing her at the party.
Can you *recollect* her name?

MEANINGS:

- a) keep a piece of information in your memory **remember**
- b) make someone remember something that happened in the past **remind sb of sb/sth**
- c) be able to bring back a piece of information into your mind **remember, recollect, recall**
- d) make someone think of something they have forgotten or might have forgotten **remind**
- e) not forget to do something **remember**

4. Using the correct forms of *remember, remind, recall* and *recollect*, complete the sentences below.

- a) I can't **remember** the date of their wedding.
- b) Your hair and eyes **remind** me of your mother.
- c) She **recalled/remembered/recollected** seeing him outside the shop on the night of the robbery.
- d) Can you **remind** us about your plans for your holiday?
- e) I really don't **recollect/remember/recall** what our argument was about.
- f) He never **remembers** to lock the door when he goes out.

5. Discuss the questions.

- What is the earliest memory you can recall?
- Can you recollect the name of your biology teacher from school?
- Can you recall what the weather was like last Friday?
- Do you remember what you ate for breakfast last weekend?
- Do you remember what day Valentine's Day was last year?



6. You're going to watch a [video](https://youtu.be/hpTCZ-hO6il) [https://youtu.be/hpTCZ-hO6il] (to 04:10) presenting the story of a person who has superior autobiographical memory. What is it and how does it work?

7. Watch the [video](#) again (to 04:10) and answer the questions.

a) What is Marilu Henner famous for?

Starring in a 1970s sitcom called Taxi and remembering everything!

b) How many people in the world have superior autobiographical memory (as of 2018)?

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c) What is superior autobiographical memory compared to, in terms of how it works?

Google Search

d) How does Marilu describe how her memory works?

She compares it to 'selected scenes' on a DVD and says that when she hears a date, she imagines a year organized in a timeline and sees the whole calendar of that year.

8. Discuss the questions below.

- Would you like to have an impressive memory like Marilu Henner?
- If you had an impressive memory, how would you use it? Would it be more interesting to remember all of your personal events or all of the major public events?
- Some of the people who have superior autobiographical memory say that it is a blessing and a curse. What might be the disadvantages of being able to remember every single moment of one's life?
- Do you think that thanks to people who have that ability we might be able to unlock some mysteries we still don't understand about the human brain?