FACT SHEET

Get It Out of Your Head

Working-memory support for everyday life

Working memory is limited

Working memory is the mental space you use to hold information while doing something with it.

- remembering why you entered a room
- following several instructions
- keeping your place
- holding steps in mind

Externalize the information

- lists and checklists
- alarms and calendar reminders
- visible instructions
- baskets or trays for important items
- duplicate supplies
- written appointment notes

Put the cue where the action happens

Instead of: Remember the package tomorrow.

Put the package beside the door tonight.

Instead of: Remember what I need at the store.

Write the list when you think of the items.

Instead of: Remember to bring this to work.

Put it with the things you already take.

A useful question

What am I repeatedly asking my brain to remember that I could put somewhere outside my brain?

External supports reduce how much working memory has to carry.