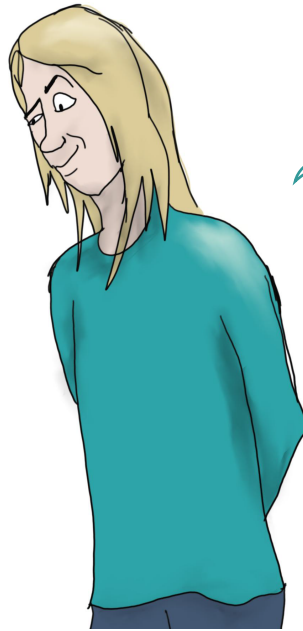


I'm disappointed. I was supposed to remember my friend Lola's phone number to call her once I got home, and even though I kept saying the numbers in order all the way home, I must have mixed them up because I couldn't reach her!



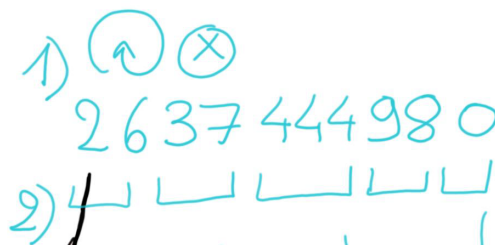
Well, repeating them was a nice plan, but phone numbers are long and if you have one number wrong, you have it all wrong, so a strategy is to remember them by groups of numbers, for example two by two or three by three. See, it is easier to remember 26 37 444 98 0 than 2 6 3 7 4 4 4 9 8 0 or 263 744 498 0.



Why can't my brain remember it?

Well, it is not that it can't. It's just that it takes quite some effort. Scientists think we usually remember about 7 items that we need to keep in mind and work with soon, +/- 2. That is the golden number. So to remember the whole phone number you have two options and you can combine them for better results: One is to read and understand the content, learn and re-learn it and repeat it a few times like you intended on doing. You should check regularly that you are keeping in mind the right number. The other is to make connections between several items.

Oh, like you suggested to group all the fours together as '444', and group the others 2 by 2 as '26 and 37'.



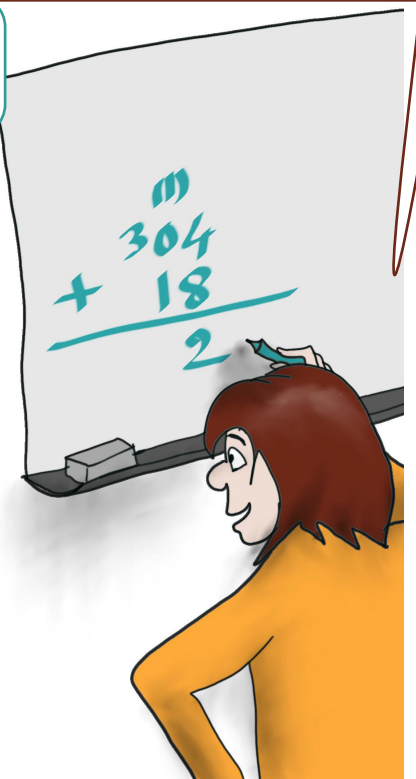
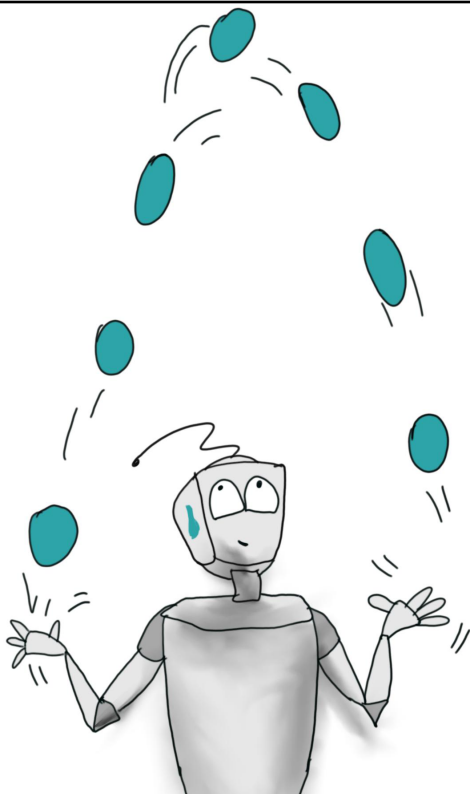
That's it!



Your working memory is not a storage space. It's more like a juggler. A juggler can keep several balls in the air to make a good show. In a similar way, your mind can keep a few pieces of information active at the same time, to reach a certain goal. The number of pieces it can keep active is limited, just like the juggler can only juggle a few balls at a time

I see: you need to remember the numbers, the operation, to do it and update the result while keeping in mind how far you've gotten on your calculation. Do you still need to combine the tens? or the hundreds now?

calculus or learning to read requires great working memory skills.



Robi, while you're here, any tips on how I could improve my working memory?

Really?

I know you like to play UNO with your brother; that's a great game for that!

When you play UNO you have to constantly adjust to the next request, change of colors, of numbers, and not to forget to mention there is only one card left in your hand! Keeping track of all this while being expected to act fast to get rid of your cards and win is using your working memory a lot.

I didn't know we could have fun while training our working memory!

Shall we?

