

Get total recall

By Daniel Theyagu - Nov 3, 2005

ST Recruit

THE numerical pegging system works up to the first 10 pegs. But the disadvantage is that after some time, it may be difficult to find a word association with the number.

This is when you might consider using the alphanumerical system, which involves replacing the number with a letter from the alphabet that represents the number either by its pronunciation, shape of number or some form of association.

For instance:

- Number 0 is represented by s, z, ce, se (this sounds like zero)
- Number 1 is either T or D (both letters have one downstroke)
- Number 2 is N (which looks like a two on its side)
- Number 3 is M (which looks like a 3 on its side)
- Number 4 is R (there are four lower-case Rs in the number 4 if you observe carefully)
- Number 5 is L (the top part of 5 looks like an L)
- Number 6 is represented by J (a mirror-image of six resembles lower-case j), soft G (as in sage), CH, SH
- Number 7 is represented by hard G (as in girl), K (there are two sevens in K) and hard C (sounds like K in the name Catherine)
- Number 8 is F (written in cursive, the letter looks like an 8), v (as v sometimes replaces f)
- Number 9 is P or B (the number's mirror image resembles capital P; upside down, it looks like lower-case b)

Note that the vowels (a, e, i, o, u) and consonants such as (q, w, x, h, y) do not represent anything. They are used only as fillers to help create a word that will represent the number.

For instance, the number 15 can be represented by 1 (T or D) and 5 (L). What you need to do is come up with a word that has these two letters in them, like tail. There are two vowels in tail and these have no meaning. Therefore T and L represent the number 15.

In the same way, Number 16 can be replaced with the word touch: T is 1 and CH represents 6; Number 17 is deck: D is 1 and K is 7 (in this case, the C is silent and does not represent anything); and so on.

With this system, you can continue creating your own pegs to remember information the same way as with the numerical peg method.

Say you have a friend named Mary and her phone number is 95404848. How do you remember this? I will create a journey in my head that will allow me to recall her number easily.

Every time I think of Mary, I visualise (remember the visual association technique) her carrying a bunch of blue roses and I tell myself that "Blue Rose Are Very Few" (do not worry too much about the grammar, this is a memory exercise).

If you look at the sentence, you will notice that some of the words are substitutes for her phone number, namely:

- **Blue:** B (9); L (5) (U and E have no meaning since they are vowels)
- **Rose:** R (4); O (vowel); SE (0)
- **Are:** A (vowel); R (4); E (vowel)
- **Very:** V (8); E (vowel); R (4)
- **Few:** F (8); E (vowel); W (no meaning)

This method requires confidence and patience. The important thing is not to put too much pressure on yourself and lose interest in exercising your memory.

For a start, you could look at the phone numbers of your 10 most favourite people and see whether you can make word and number associations as demonstrated above. Once you can do this, add another 10 to the list. After all, if you have time to give your body a workout, you can do the same for your mind.

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