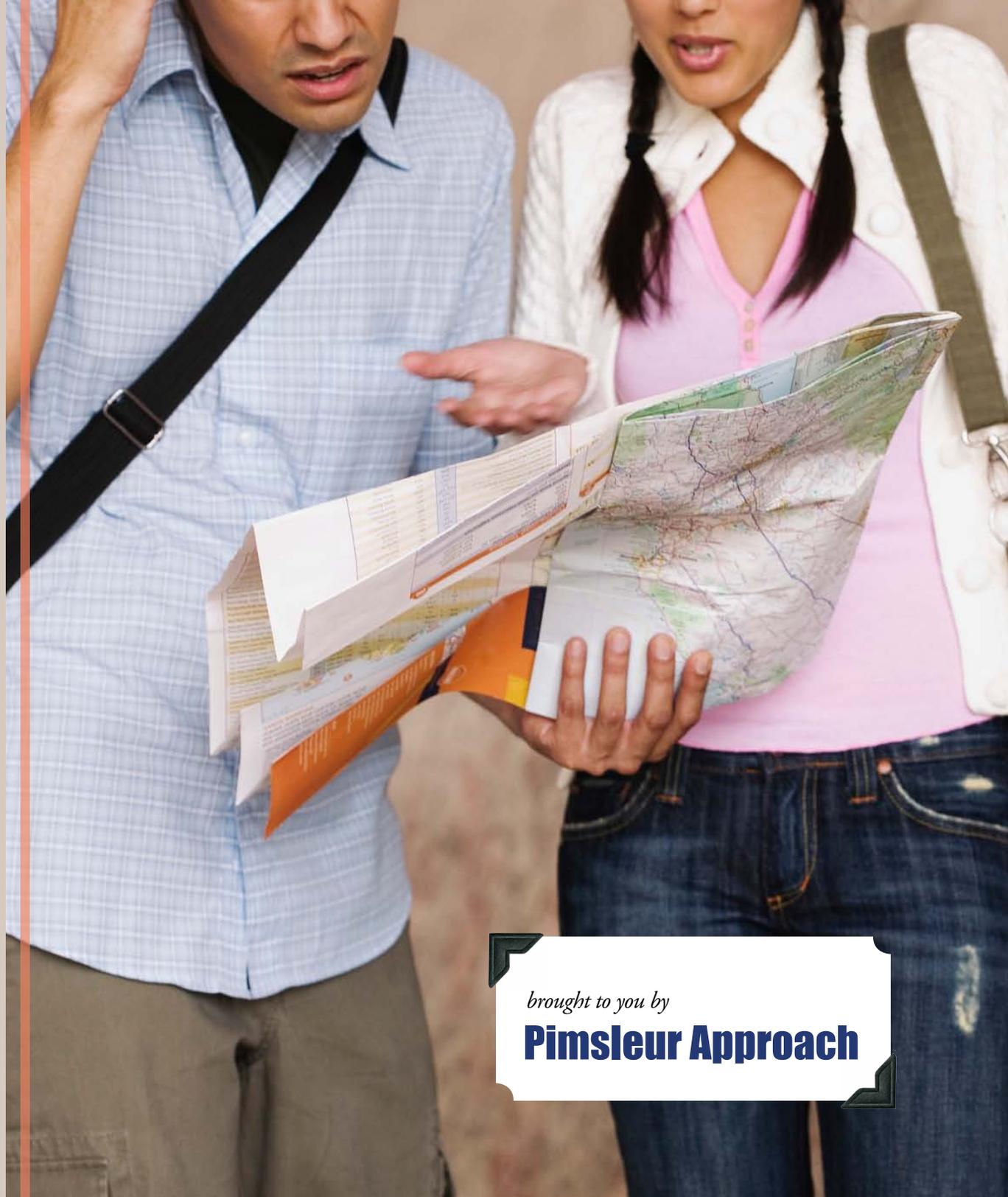


Take Steps in the Right Direction: How to Memorize Any Route

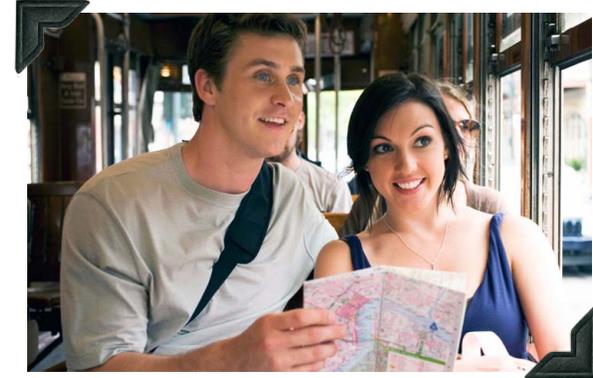
End up in the right place, at the right time
and become a remembering machine!



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Pimsleur Approach

*The three keys of memory:
association, location and
imagination.*



How to End Up in the Right Place, at the Right Time!

“Right,” said the well-meaning stranger.
“You take the second left onto New Bond Street and then the sixth right onto Grafton Street, right? Then you take the next left onto Albemarle Street, turn right at NatWest Bank, you’ll then pass the Ritz on your right, but keep going for a good while and then turn left just before Green Park station, right? And then turn right onto the Mall and then keep walking and then Bob’s your uncle.”

Bob’s your what? I had no idea what that phrase meant and even less of an idea of where to go. Ten minutes later, I was more tangled up than ever and seriously considering jumping in an eye-wateringly expensive taxi. I bet you’ve had the same problem remembering directions- it happened to me on a tiresomely regular basis.

But that was before I discovered Dominic O’Brien. He’s the eight time world memory champion and made the Guinness Book of World Records for memorizing a random sequence of 2,808 playing cards after looking just once at each card.

So, I was pretty happy to take direction from him on taking directions. He works with the three keys of memory: association, location and imagination, and has devised nifty ways of harnessing them to turn you into a remembering machine!

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For more free language learning resources, visit www.pimsleurapproach.com

Start at the front door of your house. Choose a route through the house that you remember easily.



The Following Steps May Look Complex at First, but They Form Your Template for Remembering Every Set of Directions You'll Ever be Given:

Step 1

Think of a location that you know like the back of your hand. It could be where you work, your favorite bar, your gym- anywhere you want, as long as you can picture it clearly with your eyes closed. For this example, picture your home.

Step 2

Now, you have to 'build' a familiar journey to you. Start at the front door of your house. Choose a route through the house that you remember easily. For example, you might come home from work every day, enter the hallway, go to the kitchen, then go to the sitting room, then go upstairs.

Build your own journey, but it might look something like this:

1. Front Door
2. Hallway
3. Kitchen
4. Living Room
5. Stairway
6. Upstairs Hallway
7. Bedroom
8. Second Bedroom
9. Bathroom
10. Attic

Make sure that the journey follows a logical order; you're unlikely to start from the attic and then go to the front door! Close your eyes and "walk" through the familiar journey a couple of times, making note of anything that pops out. Is there a painting you hate in the hallway? Or a favorite photograph of your family in the living room?

Now, you have a 10 step journey through your home that you will never forget. What's that got to do with remembering directions in an unfamiliar place? Be patient!

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Step 3

Next, we need an easy-to-remember system for numbers. Dominic O'Brien devised the 'Number Shape' system, which I've found foolproof!

What do you see when you look at the number 1? A pencil? The image of the pencil now represents number 1. Number 2 could be a swan, number 3 a pair of handcuffs, number 4 a sailboat, number 5 a seahorse, number 6 a golf club, number 7 a boomerang, number 8 a snowman, number 9 a balloon on string and 0 could be a football.

If you're thinking, "Alan, I don't think of a snowman when I see the number 8", then just use whatever object you think looks like the number 8.

Step 4

Let's go back to those pesky directions from the beginning of this article. Here they are again:

1. Take the second left onto New Bond Street
2. Take the sixth right onto Grafton Street
3. Take the next left onto Albemarle Street
4. Turn right at NatWest Bank
5. You'll pass the Ritz on your right, keep going
6. Turn left just before Green Park Station
7. Turn right onto the Mall

Now you're armed with your journey and your number images, it's time to mix them all together with imagination. This step involves conjuring up vivid mental pictures for each direction.

So, "take the second left onto New Bond Street." It's the first step in the journey; therefore I'm picturing my front door. The number two is a swan, so I'm picturing a swan flying to the left of my front door. And he's flying over a very startled Daniel Craig. That is one mental picture that isn't going to leave me in a hurry!

For the next direction, I'm picturing a raft with the letter "G" and a golf club on it floating down the right hand side of my hallway. Then, an old couple called Albie and Marlene standing to the left of my kitchen door. Then, a giant dollar on the right hand side of my TV in the living room.

I think we've delved into the recesses of my imagination quite enough for you to get the picture, if you'll excuse the pun!

Your journey will be wildly different than mine- why don't you go ahead and give it a try with the above directions?

Did you do it successfully? Congratulations, you've just walked from Oxford Street to Buckingham Palace in London!

Now that you've mastered this ingenious system, you can successfully memorize directions anywhere! And if you are given directions that are longer than ten steps, just add on another step to your own journey.

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Finally, Here are Some More Examples for You to Practice With. Good Luck!



Trevi Fountain

St. Peter's Basilica, Rome

1. Go straight for a good 10-15 Minutes
2. Turn right at Bartolucci Italy S.R.L.
3. Take the first left onto Via in Aquiro
4. Take the next right and follow the road around for about 10 Minutes
5. Turn right onto Via di Panico at Bar Tabacchi Bella Roma
6. Take a left and then an immediate right onto Ponte Sant'Angelo
7. Turn left onto the Via della Conciliazione

Success!

Tip: Foreign words add another dimension but if you don't know the language, just break down the word whatever way you want- it's not a vocabulary test. For me, Step 5 would be a panicking bottle of Tabasco sauce running up the right side of my stairs!



Eiffel Tower

Champs-Elysées, Paris

1. Take the Rue de l'Universite
2. Turn left onto Av. Rapp
3. Cross the Pont de l'Alma
4. Continue on the Place de l'Alma
5. Take the first left and then the immediate first right
6. Go down Rue Jean Goujon
7. The Institut Polonais will be on your right, keep going

Success!



Temple de la Sagrada Familia

Picasso Museum, Barcelona

1. Continue down Carrer de Mallorca
2. Take the second left at Snack Bar Giralt
3. Continue down Carrer de Sardenya and turn right onto Carrer de Ribes
4. Take the fifth left and an immediate right
5. Follow Avinguda de Vilanova round
6. Turn down the road with Eivissa footwear on it
7. Turn right onto Carrer del Comerc
8. At Racon de la Ciudadela, turn right onto Carrer de la Princesa
9. Turn left onto Carrer de Montcada

Success!