



AMBER BOOK™

Five study hacks to help you pass the ARE®.

Boost your retention with
these learning insights from
Benedict Carey.



Overwhelmed by studying for the ARE®?

You're in the right place. (Oh, and you're not alone.)

During one of our favorite [Amber Book study sessions](#), we had the chance to host Benedict Carey, award-winning journalist and author of the bestselling book, [How We Learn](#). Carey lent fascinating insight into the science behind learning, including a few study strategies that can help you pass anything — even the ARE®.

The best part? You can easily weave these practices into your current study process to boost your ARE® study efficiency — minimal brain power required.

“Nothing falls out of memory. The human memory storage capacity is, for all purposes, infinite. It's there forever. The problem is retrieval, and retrieval is very limited.” – Benedict Carey





Hack 1

Pace yourself, hare.

We don't need to remind you why the tortoise wins, but do you know how to apply his method to your study habits?

According to [The Spacing Effect](#), by simply studying each topic at different intervals — rather than cramming all your studying into one session — you can drastically boost your chances at retention.

Bottom line? You still put in the same amount of daily study hours; just break up which topics you study and when. More on the benefits of mixing up your study later.

*“This technique can **up to double** the amount that you remember on a test given a few days afterwards.” – Benedict Carey*

Hack 2

Take things out of context.

You've crushed your practice exams, but come test day, something about the harsh florescent lights and dead silence throw you off your game.

According to [The Context Effect](#), we retain information easier when we have something tangible to hang it on — i.e., environmental stimuli. So, if you spend all of your time studying in a dimly-lit, comfy bedroom with light jazz playing, but then you take your exam in a sterile, brightly-lit room, you may not remember as much.

The fix? Study in many places instead of just one, so your memory isn't as reliant on a singular environment.

“You don't have to sit in the same place. You don't have to go to the same cubicle, you don't have to be in the same room. Take it outside, go on the porch. Go to the bar. Have a couple — but you know, not too many.”

– Benedict Carey





The Amber Book study prep course includes 12 practice exams and 6 practice quizzes.

Hack 3

Struggle with the answer.

There was a time before Google, when you had to use your brain to answer a question.

Turns out, this simple practice is at the heart of [The Testing Effect](#). Students often focus solely on memorization when they study. But by adding in regular self-examination (e.g., practice quizzes), you challenge your brain to retrieve memories in a way that increases your long-term retention of the material.

Bottom line? Test your patience. Struggle with the question before looking up the answer.

“Normally, we think of tests as evaluations, because they find out what you’ve learned. Now, that’s completely flipped. Now tests are one of the most powerful learning tools out there. And kids with repeated testing remember more over time.” – Benedict Carey

Hack 4

School your friends.

Ever practice a big presentation on a friend, over and over, until you had it down pat?

This is actually a proven learning method and another facet of *The Testing Effect*. The idea is that the more you teach others about a topic, the deeper your understanding of that topic becomes.

Bottom line? This is a great excuse to grab a friend, sit them down, and lecture the heck out of them.

“It’s one of the great things to be able to study with a friend, especially if you’re teaching and testing each other, right? That is a very powerful way to improve, deepen retention, and retrievability.” – Benedict Carey

Source: <https://www.miragenews.com/5-big-benefits-of-studying-with-friends-835866/>





Researchers found a 25% test score improvement from mixed practice (aka, interleaving).*

Source: <https://examstudyexpert.com/study-tips/>

Hack 5

Mix it up.

Ever gone into an exam thinking you know your stuff, just to find that nothing on the exam looks familiar?

Mixed Practice (aka “Interleaving”) shows that studying multiple related topics in one study session is more effective than studying just one topic at a time (aka Block Practice). Why? Come exam day, you won’t be given the method needed to answer each question; you’ll have to figure it out for yourself. Mixed Practice gives you the foundation to identify what that method is.

Bottom line? Bounce around from one related topic to the next in the same study session.

“Mixed-up practice doesn’t just build overall dexterity and prompt active discrimination. It helps prepare us for life’s curveballs, literal and figurative.”
– Benedict Carey, *How We Learn*

Ready to level up your study game?

Lucky for you, the [Amber Book study prep course](#) is already set up so you can start practicing all these hacks with ease.

PLUS, Amber Book delivers what architects (practicing and aspiring) value most: a flexible learning model, visually engaging and interactive content, and up-to-date study materials.

Amber Book has enrolled 39K+ emerging professionals and partnered with 1K+ firms, boasting an average ARE® 5.0 pass rate of 80%.

Still not sure? Check out one of our [favorite lessons](#), for free!

“So this is about you studying material. Individual learning. It’s not about teaching, it’s not about classrooms, none of that. It’s about how you interact with the material. That’s it.” - B.





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