



## **Double/Triple Your Reading Speed Without Losing Comprehension**

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The human brain can process more than 100,000 thoughts per minute<sup>1</sup>. Given this, it's practical to assume that it should be possible to increase the average reading speed beyond that of the average college graduate of about 300 words per minute<sup>2</sup>. Imagine opening the door to a busy room for only 5 seconds and attempting to absorb as much information as possible. In only those 5 seconds, you will take in more than 300 words worth of information. In reality, you should be able to quadruple your current reading speed within one week of practice. Here's how...

1. Select a non-technical book. A novel, biography, or history text are ideal. But, choose something you haven't read before, or haven't read for quite a long time.
2. Obtain something with which to time yourself (watch with second hand, stop watch, etc.).
3. Select a section from the book with few pictures. Be sure the section contains at least 15 pages.
4. Start the clock, and begin reading at your *normal speed*. Read for two minutes.
5. Count the number of words you just read and divide by 2; this is your reading speed in words/minute.
6. Think about the material you just read, and try to recall as much information and detail as possible. Try to summarize the material without looking at the book.
7. Read the section again, at the same speed, but use your right index finger to follow the words.
8. Now, mark a place in the book approximately *TWICE* as far as you just read, again in 2 minutes. For example, if you read 3¼ pages, mark a place at 7½ pages.
9. Start the clock again, and begin read the same section, starting at the same place you previously started. This time, however, *read as fast as necessary in order to arrive at the place you marked within the originally allotted time* (2 minutes). Use your finger to *push* yourself along. If you don't make it to your mark, reread the section from the beginning until you *DO* make it.
10. Again, think about the material you just read, and try to recall as much information ... this time in as much detail as possible. Try to paraphrase the material without looking at the book.
11. Now, mark a place in the book approximately *4 TIMES* as far as you originally read.
12. Start the clock again, and begin to read the same section, starting at the original starting point. *Read as fast as necessary in order to arrive at the place you just marked within the originally allotted time* (2 minutes). Again, use your finger to *push* yourself along.
13. Again, think about the material you just read, and try to recall as much information and detail as possible. Try to paraphrase (in detail) the material without looking at the book.
14. Keep in mind that you just read this material at *4 TIMES* your normal reading rate. Remember how fast you had to move your finger to read at this new rate, and read another section of the book at this speed. Think about the material you just read, and try to summarize as much information as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Purdy, M. (1998, May 26). Hopkins Scientists Clock The Speed Of Comprehension. Retrieved November 29, 2008, from Bio-Medicine Web site: <http://news.bio-medicine.org/biology-news-2/Hopkins-Scientists-Clock-The-Speed-Of-Comprehension-14579-1>

<sup>2</sup> Suggestions for Improving Reading Speed. Retrieved November 29, 2008, from Virginia Tech Cook Counseling Center Web site: <http://www.reachoutmichigan.org/learn/suggest.html>

15. Now, slow down to the rate equal to twice your original reading speed, and read a different section. For the next 3-5 days, read *everything* at this speed. You will now be reading at twice your original rate, with comprehension approximately equal to your original level.
16. At the end of 5 days, repeat this process. If you find that your finger cannot move fast enough, don't try following every word, but move your entire [right] hand down the middle of the page, *seeing* every word on each line. At these speeds, you will need to turn the pages with your left hand – cross your right hand/arm over the top of the book with your left index finger in position to turn the page, and have it ready to turn the page as soon as you're done.

References: *The Evelyn Wood Seven-Day Speed Reading and Learning Program*, Stanley D. Frank, Barnes & Noble Books, 1994, ISBN 1-56619-402-4. Cost about \$20.  
*Maximum Speed Reading*, Howard Stephen Berg, <http://www.mrreader.com>. Cost about \$80.