

Our brains grow and shrink when we learn—which is how we continue to absorb knowledge

Our past understanding of the brain would suggest that new knowledge requires new brain cells, and as a result our brain would grow in size upon each new skill we learn. We know this is not true, as the human brain stops growing in size [somewhere during our mid-20s](#). Still, humans can continue to learn new information well into old age. Now, we know how.

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[T]he team [concluded](#) that when the brain learns a new skill it initially increases in volume, but then after a process of elimination retains only the most useful brain cells, eliminating those not more effective, and thus eventually returning to its pre-learning size.

“Brain matter volume increases in the initial stages of learning and then renormalizes [sic] partially or completely,” said Wenger in a recent [statement](#). “This seems to be an effective way for the brain to first explore the possibilities, call in different structures and cell types, select the best ones, and get rid of the ones that are no longer needed.”

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The new findings show even further evidence of neural expansion and reorganization upon learning new information and provides us with a better understanding of our most amazing yet most misunderstood organ, our own brain.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Brain science: This is why our heads don't actually explode when we're learning](#)