

Forgetting

Psychology

The main explanations, and what distinguishes them.

Competing accounts of why memories become inaccessible.

Theory	Claims
Trace decay	Memory fades without rehearsal
Proactive interference	Old learning disrupts new
Retroactive interference	New learning disrupts old
Retrieval failure	The cue is missing, not the memory
Motivated forgetting	Repression — poorly evidenced

Encoding specificity: recall is best when the retrieval context matches the encoding context. Cue-dependent forgetting is the largest effect.