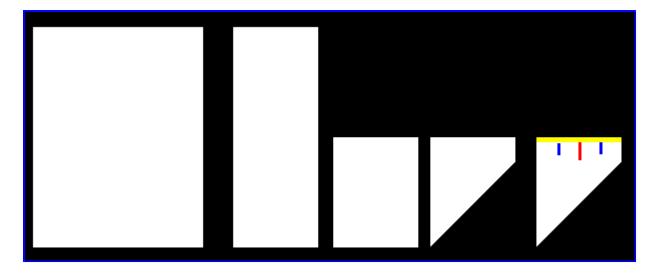# How to Make a Speed Reading Device

To help me read faster, I use a specially designed speed reading device made out of a folded sheet of paper. You could probably use an index card in much the same way, but the specially designed speed reading device is better suited for this purpose. The main use of the speed reading device is to keep your eyes from wandering around the page, to maintain a constant reading pace, and to more easily enable you to read without sounding the words. I will describe its use in more detail after I have described how to make it and you know what it looks like.

To make the device, you will need a blank sheet of letter-sized printer or photocopier paper, a paper clip or stapler, a yellow highlighter, a red permanent marker, and a blue permanent marker. If you don't have these exact materials available, you can substitute other materials. For example, A4 sized paper can be used in place of letter, and the highlighter and markers don't have to be the exact colors I specified. I do recommend permanent markers over watercolor markers, but it's not too important.

Letter-sized paper is 8.5 by 11 inches. Fold it in half into a 4.25 by 11 inch rectangle. Fold it again into a 4.25 by 5.5 inch rectangle. It will now be one quarter its original size. If you're an intuitive, let me emphasize that the order in which you fold the paper is important. After you have folded it into a 4.25 by 5.5 inch rectangle, each side of the rectangle will have a different number of loose edges. The top, which is 4.25 inches long, should have only one edge, and the bottom, which is also 4.25 inches long, should have four edges. One of the 5.5 inch sides should have 2 edges, and the other should have four. If you are right handed, place the side with two edges on your right. If you are left handed, place it on your left. Imagine that the rectangle has two parts: a 4.25 by 4.25 square at the bottom and a 4.25 by 1.25 rectangle at the top. Starting from the bottom corner that corresponds to the hand you favor, fold the lower square into a right triangle half the size of the square. The bottom corner you start with should be pulled up to the opposite corner of the square. At this point, you have a 4.25 by 1.25 inch rectangle on top of a right triange whose sides are both 4.25 inches in length. At the point where the corners meet, there will be eight loose edges of paper. Place a paper clip around the inner six. This will keep the paper clip more secure and also prevent it from damaging books. Alternately, staple these six flaps together instead of using a paper clip. Using the yellow highlighter, draw a line all the way across the top. Using the red marker, draw a small vertical line at the top and center. Using the blue marker, draw two smaller vertical lines at the top and center of each half, as divided by the red line. Turn it over and draw the same lines at the top of the reverse side. This will enable you to use it with your other hand when you choose to. Nevertheless, the hand you made it for will have a slight advantage.

Here is a visual representation of how to fold and color the speed reading device. These images are of a right handed device. A left handed device will simply be reversed. As you look at these pictures, assume that the bottom left corner never moves.

If you've followed these instructions, you now have your own speed reading device. To use it, hold it by the hypotenuese of the lower triangle part. Place the top, where you have drawn the yellow line, underneath the line you want to read. Once you've read that line, move the device down to the next line. As you read each line, use the vertical lines to guide your eye movements. Read the line in visual chunks instead of one word at a time. Avoid vocalizing the words when you read. The vertical lines help you read each line in one, two, or three chunks, depending on how good you are at speed reading. Just focus your eyes around the red line if you are really good at speed reading. Just focus on the blue lines if you are fairly good at speed reading, and stop your eyes at each of the three lines if that is what best helps you take in the whole line. The fewer times you stop your eyes across a line, the less time it will take to read it. With the help of this device, it ought to be easy to take in a line of text with no more than three stops of the eyes.