

MEASUREMENT

Rate

Frequency divided by time. Example: 25 occurrences ÷ 50 minutes = 0.5 per minute. Always includes the time unit.

MEASUREMENT

Frequency

A count of how often a behavior occurs. Does NOT include time — just the number of instances observed.

MEASUREMENT

Duration

How long each instance of behavior lasts. Calculated as end time minus start time.

MEASUREMENT

Latency

Time from the antecedent (SD) to the onset of the response. Example: 5 seconds from 'put on shoes' to starting.

MEASUREMENT

Inter-Response Time (IRT)

Time between successive instances of the same behavior. Different from latency, which measures time from SD to response.

MEASUREMENT

Partial-Interval Recording

Score an interval as occurrence if behavior occurred at any point. Tends to OVERESTIMATE behavior.

MEASUREMENT

Whole-Interval Recording

Score occurrence only if behavior occurred for the ENTIRE interval. Tends to UNDERESTIMATE behavior.

MEASUREMENT

Momentary Time Sampling

Score behavior only at the END of each interval. Useful when continuous observation isn't possible.

MEASUREMENT

Permanent Product

Recording method using the lasting physical effect of behavior (worksheets completed, items assembled). Requires the product to remain intact.

MEASUREMENT

Inter-Observer Agreement (IOA)

Measure of how reliably two observers record the same behavior. Total count IOA = $\frac{\text{smaller} \div \text{larger}}{100}$.

ASSESSMENT

Preference Assessment

Identifies what items a client likes or prefers. Methods include single stimulus, paired stimulus, MSWO, and free-operant.

ASSESSMENT

MSWO

Multiple Stimulus Without Replacement. Present 5+ items; remove what's chosen; repeat. Rotate positions between trials to avoid bias.

ASSESSMENT

Free-Operant Preference Assessment

Provides free access to items; measures engagement duration. Best for learners who can't reliably select from a structured array.

ASSESSMENT

Reinforcer Assessment

Tests whether a preferred item actually INCREASES behavior. Preference does not equal reinforcer effectiveness.

ASSESSMENT

ABC Recording

Direct observation method documenting Antecedent, Behavior, and Consequence. Must use objective, observable language — no inferences about internal states.

ASSESSMENT

Functional Analysis (FA)

Experimental manipulation of conditions (attention, demand, alone, tangible) to identify what maintains a behavior. Strongest evidence of function.

ASSESSMENT

Indirect Functional Assessment

Interview or questionnaire (FAST, MAS) with people who know the client. Generates hypotheses but doesn't directly observe behavior.

ASSESSMENT

Scatter Plot

Shows WHEN behavior occurs across time periods. Identifies temporal patterns but does NOT identify behavior function.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Discrete-Trial Teaching (DTT)

Structured teaching format: SD → Response → Consequence → ITI (inter-trial interval). Best for teaching new skills systematically.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Naturalistic Environment Teaching (NET)

Teaching embedded in play or natural routines, using the learner's existing motivation. Best when learner has low motivation in structured settings.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Forward Chaining

Teach step 1 first to mastery, then add step 2, then step 3, etc. Builds the chain from beginning to end.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Backward Chaining

Teach the LAST step first to completion, then add the second-to-last step, etc. Learner experiences task completion every trial.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Total Task Chaining

Present the entire chain on every trial, prompting only weak steps. Best when learner has partial competence across steps.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Shaping

Reinforcing SUCCESSIVE APPROXIMATIONS toward a target. Different from chaining: shapes a single response across attempts.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Response Prompts

Prompts added to the learner's response. Includes physical guidance, verbal prompts, models, and gestural cues.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Stimulus Prompts

Prompts that modify the SD itself (making it larger, brighter, or in a specific position). Not added to the response.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Most-to-Least Prompting

Start with the most intrusive prompt (physical), fade to less intrusive over trials. Errorless approach.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Least-to-Most Prompting

Start with no prompt; add prompts only if the learner makes an error. Encourages independent responding.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Constant Time Delay

Maintain a single delay value (e.g., 4 seconds) across all trials, giving consistent opportunity to respond independently.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Errorless Learning

Use immediate prompts so the learner never errors, then fade the prompts. Reduces error reinforcement.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Mand

Verbal operant controlled by a motivating operation (wanting something). Functions as a request. Produces direct reinforcement.

SKILL ACQUISITION

Tact

Verbal operant controlled by a nonverbal stimulus (seeing something). Produces social reinforcement (praise).

SKILL ACQUISITION

Intraverbal

Verbal response controlled by another verbal stimulus, without point-to-point correspondence. Example: 'What barks?' → 'Dog.'

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Differential Reinforcement

Reinforcing one class of behavior while NOT reinforcing another. Includes DRA, DRI, DRO, DRL, DRH.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

DRA

Differential Reinforcement of Alternative behavior. Reinforces any appropriate alternative to the problem behavior.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

DRI

Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible behavior. Reinforces a behavior that physically cannot co-occur with the target.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

DRO

Differential Reinforcement of Other behavior.
Reinforces the ABSENCE of the target behavior for a defined interval.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

DRL

Differential Reinforcement of Low rates. Reduces an appropriate behavior that's occurring too frequently (not stopping it entirely).

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Extinction

Withholding the reinforcer that maintains a behavior.
Expect a temporary extinction burst before behavior decreases.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Extinction Burst

Temporary INCREASE in intensity, frequency, or duration when extinction begins. Expected — implement the plan as written.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Spontaneous Recovery

Reappearance of an extinguished behavior after a period of absence. Normal pattern after extinction.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Response Cost

Contingent removal of an EARNED reinforcer (e.g., tokens) following problem behavior. A form of negative punishment.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Time-Out from Positive Reinforcement

Removing access to ALL reinforcement for a defined period following problem behavior. Must be paired with rich time-in.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

Non-Contingent Reinforcement (NCR)

Delivering reinforcement on a time-based schedule, regardless of behavior. Reduces motivation for problem behavior.

BEHAVIOR REDUCTION

High-Probability Sequence

Antecedent strategy: present 3 easy demands the learner reliably complies with, then the difficult demand. Builds compliance momentum.

DOCUMENTATION

Operational Definition

Specific, observable, measurable description of a behavior detailed enough that two observers would agree on instances.

DOCUMENTATION

Session Note

Documentation of an ABA session including objective behavior data, procedures used, and observations. Complete promptly after session.

DOCUMENTATION

HIPAA

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Federal law protecting client health information. Requires reasonable safeguards for PHI.

DOCUMENTATION

Protected Health Information (PHI)

Any information that could identify the client AND is related to their care. Includes notes, names, dates, photos.

DOCUMENTATION

Mandated Reporting

Legal requirement to report suspected abuse or neglect through proper channels. RBTs are typically mandated reporters under state law.

DOCUMENTATION

Release of Information (ROI)

Signed authorization required before sharing client information with other professionals — even for legitimate care coordination.

DOCUMENTATION

Incident Report

Agency-specific form documenting unusual events (injury, behavioral crisis, property damage). Required in addition to session notes.

DOCUMENTATION

Subjective vs Objective Language

Subjective ('angry,' 'tired') = inferences. Objective ('crossed arms, said no') = observable behavior. Always use objective language.

ETHICS

RBT Scope of Practice

RBTs implement plans as designed, document, and escalate to BCBA. RBTs do NOT design plans, interpret data, or modify procedures.

ETHICS

Multiple Relationships

Relationships that could compromise objectivity (romantic, sexual, financial, close friendship) with clients or caregivers. Must be avoided.

ETHICS

Confidentiality

Protection of client information. Includes not sharing on social media (even with first name only), not discussing in public, and using authorized channels.

ETHICS

RBT Supervision Requirements

RBTs must maintain ongoing supervision by a qualified BCBA per BACB standards. Service delivery without active supervision violates certification.

ETHICS

BACB Ethics Code

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board's ethical code for RBTs, BCaBAs, and BCBAs. Updated periodically — check current version.

ETHICS

Conflict of Interest

When personal interests (family business, financial gain) could compromise professional objectivity. Must be disclosed and typically avoided.

ETHICS

RBT Renewal Requirements

Renewal application + documentation of ongoing supervision + renewal fee. NOT a new 40-hour training (only required at initial certification).