

Working Memory Guide

Age	Working memory is crucial for...	Indicators that working memory needs exercise
Pre school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning the alphabet Focusing on short instructions such as "Come brush your teeth" Remaining seated to complete independent activities, such as puzzles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems unwilling or unable to learn alphabet, numbers Can't focus long enough to grasp and follow instructions Flits from one thing to another
Elementary school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading and understanding the content (reading comprehension) Mental arithmetic Interacting and responding appropriately in peer activities such as playing on the school ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reads (decodes) but does not understand or remember material read Problems memorizing math facts Difficulty participating in group activities (e.g. awaiting turn); makes friends but cannot keep them
Middle school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doing homework independently Planning and packing for an activity, such as dance class Solving multi-step math problems, especially word problems Participating in team sports, such as soccer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not begin or persist with homework without supervision Packs but forgets items essential for activity Reads the problem but can't break it into understandable parts Problems grasping rules of game, functioning as a "team player"
High school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting a driver's license Understanding social cues, responding to demands of a social situation Writing essays, reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problems with spatial awareness, reading and following traffic cues Interrupts, talks excessively, doesn't listen to others Essays and reports are short, sloppy, and disorganized
College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing and following a conversation Making and adhering to work plans, such as studying for an exam Participating in group activities in school Sustaining focus and interest throughout lectures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes topics suddenly, makes irrelevant comments Procrastinates, then tries to "cram" the night before an exam Doesn't listen or participate during group activities Falls asleep or "zones out" during lectures
Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting to work on time Meeting deadlines at work Prioritizing multiple activities Handling conflicts within the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently late to work Often underestimates time required for a task Has problems breaking a project into manageable steps Often loses temper with children and spouse
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For seniors that are working all the adult items are relevant Being able to perform what you are planning to do Organizing your materials and activities Managing important financial transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forgetfulness Distractibility Losing track of the topic in a conversation Mislaying things like glasses, mobile phone, keys etc