

PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Performance skills

- **Performance skills** are goal-directed actions that are **observable** as **small units** of engagement in daily life occupations.
- **Fisher and Griswold (2014)** categorized performance skills as **motor skills, process skills, and social interaction skills**

<i>OCCUPATIONS</i>	<i>CLIENT FACTORS</i>	<i>PERFORMANCE SKILLS</i>	<i>PERFORMANCE PATTERNS</i>	<i>CONTEXTS AND ENVIRONMENTS</i>
Activities of daily living (ADLs)* Instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) Rest and sleep Education Work Play Leisure Social participation	Values, beliefs, and spirituality Body functions Body structures	Motor skills Process skills Social interaction skills	Habits Routines Rituals Roles	Cultural Personal Physical Social Temporal Virtual
*Also referred to as <i>basic activities of daily living (BADLs)</i> or <i>personal activities of daily living (PADLs)</i> .				

Performance skills

- They are **learned** and **developed over time** and are **situated in specific contexts and environments** (Fisher & Griswold, 2014).
- Various **body structures**, as well as **personal** and **environmental contexts, converge** and **emerge** as occupational performance skills.
- In addition, **body functions**, such as mental, sensory, neuromuscular, and movement-related functions, are identified as the capacities that reside within the person and also converge with structures and environmental contexts to emerge as **performance skills**.

Performance skills

- Performance skills are the client's **demonstrated abilities**.
- Performance skills are also closely **linked** and are used in **combination** with **one another as a client engages in an occupation**.
- A change in one performance skill can **affect** other **performance skills**.

Performance skills

- Occupational therapy practitioners **observe** and **analyze** performance skills to understand the **transactions among client factors, context and environment**, and **activity** or **occupational demands**, which support or hinder performance skills and occupational performance (Chisholm & Boyt Schell, 2014; Hagedorn, 2000).

TABLE 3. PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Performance skills *are observable elements of action that have an implicit functional purpose; skills are considered a classification of actions, encompassing multiple capacities (body functions and body structures) and, when combined, underlie the ability to participate in desired occupations and activities. This list is not all inclusive and may not include all possible skills addressed during occupational therapy interventions.*

Skill	Definition
MOTOR SKILLS —"Occupational performance skills observed as the person interacts with and moves task objects and self around the task environment" (e.g., activity of daily living [ADL] motor skills, school motor skills; Boyt Schell, Gillen, & Scaffa, 2014a, p. 1237).	
Aligns	Interacts with task objects without evidence of persistent propping or persistent leaning
Stabilizes	Moves through task environment and interacts with task objects without momentary propping or loss of balance
Positions	Positions self an effective distance from task objects and without evidence of awkward body positioning
Reaches	Effectively extends the arm and, when appropriate, bends the trunk to effectively grasp or place task objects that are out of reach
Bends	Flexes or rotates the trunk as appropriate to the task to grasp or place task objects out of reach or when sitting down
Grips	Effectively pinches or grasps task objects such that the objects do not slip (e.g., from the person's fingers, between teeth)
Manipulates	Uses dexterous finger movements, without evidence of fumbling, when manipulating task objects (e.g., manipulating buttons when buttoning)
Coordinates	Uses two or more body parts together to manipulate, hold, and/or stabilize task objects without evidence of fumbling task objects or slipping from one's grasp
Moves	Effectively pushes or pulls task objects along a supporting surface, pulls to open or pushes to close doors and drawers, or pushes on wheels to propel a wheelchair
Lifts	Effectively raises or lifts task objects without evidence of increased effort
Walks	During task performance, ambulates on level surfaces without shuffling the feet, becoming unstable, propping, or using assistive devices
Transports	Carries task objects from one place to another while walking or moving in a wheelchair
Calibrates	Uses movements of appropriate force, speed, or extent when interacting with task objects (e.g., not crushing objects, pushing a door with enough force that it closes)
Flows	Uses smooth and fluid arm and wrist movements when interacting with task objects
Endures	Persists and completes the task without showing obvious evidence of physical fatigue, pausing to rest, or stopping to catch one's breath
Paces	Maintains a consistent and effective rate or tempo of performance throughout the entire task

■ PROCESS SKILLS—“Occupational performance skills [e.g., ADL process skills, school process skills] observed as a person (1) selects, interacts with, and uses task tools and materials; (2) carries out individual actions and steps; and (3) modifies performance when problems are encountered” (Boyt Schell et al., 2014a, p. 1239).

Paces	Maintains a consistent and effective rate or tempo of performance throughout the entire task
Attends	Does not look away from what he or she is doing, interrupting the ongoing task progression
Heeds	Carries out and completes the task originally agreed on or specified by another
Chooses	Selects necessary and appropriate type and number of tools and materials for the task, including the tools and materials that the person was directed to use or specified he or she would use
Uses	Applies tools and materials as they are intended (e.g., uses a pencil sharpener to sharpen a pencil but not to sharpen a crayon) and in a hygienic fashion
Handles	Supports or stabilizes tools and materials in an appropriate manner, protecting them from being damaged, slipping, moving, and falling
Inquires	(1) Seeks needed verbal or written information by asking questions or reading directions or labels and (2) does not ask for information when he or she was fully oriented to the task and environment and had immediate prior awareness of the answer
Initiates	Starts or begins the next action or step without hesitation
Continues	Performs single actions or steps without interruptions such that once an action or task is initiated, the person continues without pauses or delays until the action or step is completed
Sequences	Performs steps in an effective or logical order and with an absence of (1) randomness or lack of logic in the ordering and (2) inappropriate repetition of steps
Terminates	Brings to completion single actions or single steps without inappropriate persistence or premature cessation
Searches/locates	Looks for and locates tools and materials in a logical manner, both within and beyond the immediate environment
Gathers	Collects related tools and materials into the same work space and regathers tools or materials that have spilled, fallen, or been misplaced
Organizes	Logically positions or spatially arranges tools and materials in an orderly fashion within a single work space and between multiple appropriate work spaces such that the work space is not too spread out or too crowded
Restores	Puts away tools and materials in appropriate places and ensures that the immediate work space is restored to its original condition
Navigates	Moves the arm, body, or wheelchair without bumping into obstacles when moving in the task environment or interacting with task objects
Notices/responds	Responds appropriately to (1) nonverbal task-related cues (e.g., heat, movement), (2) the spatial arrangement and alignment of task objects to one another, and (3) cupboard doors and drawers that have been left open during task performance
Adjusts	Effectively (1) goes to new work spaces; (2) moves tools and materials out of the current work space; and (3) adjusts knobs, dials, or water taps to overcome problems with ongoing task performance
Accommodates	Prevents ineffective task performance
Benefits	Prevents problems with task performance from recurring or persisting

■ SOCIAL INTERACTION SKILLS—“Occupational performance skills observed during the ongoing stream of a social exchange” (Boyt Schell et al., 2014a, p. 1241).

Approaches/starts	Approaches or initiates interaction with the social partner in a manner that is socially appropriate
Concludes/disengages	Effectively terminates the conversation or social interaction, brings to closure the topic under discussion, and disengages or says good-bye
Produces speech	Produces spoken, signed, or augmentative (i.e., computer-generated) messages that are audible and clearly articulated
Gesticulates	Uses socially appropriate gestures to communicate or support a message
Speaks fluently	Speaks in a fluent and continuous manner, with an even pace (not too fast, not too slow) and without pauses or delays during the message being sent
Turns toward	Actively positions or turns the body and face toward the social partner or person who is speaking
Looks	Makes eye contact with the social partner
Places self	Positions self at an appropriate distance from the social partner during the social interaction
Touches	Responds to and uses touch or bodily contact with the social partner in a manner that is socially appropriate
Regulates	Does not demonstrate irrelevant, repetitive, or impulsive behaviors that are not part of social interaction
Questions	Requests relevant facts and information and asks questions that support the intended purpose of the social interaction
Replies	Keeps conversation going by replying appropriately to question and comments
Discloses	Reveals opinions, feelings, and private information about self or others in a manner that is socially appropriate
Expresses emotion	Displays affect and emotions in a way that is socially appropriate
Disagrees	Expresses differences of opinion in a socially appropriate manner
Thanks	Uses appropriate words and gestures to acknowledge receipt of services, gifts, or compliments
Transitions	Handles transitions in the conversation smoothly or changes the topic without disrupting the ongoing conversation
Times response	Replies to social messages without delay or hesitation and without interrupting the social partner
Times duration	Speaks for reasonable periods given the complexity of the message sent
Takes turns	Takes his or her turn and gives the social partner the freedom to take his or her turn
Matches language	Uses a tone of voice, dialect, and level of language that are socially appropriate and matched to the social partner's abilities and level of understanding

Clarifies	Responds to gestures or verbal messages signaling that the social partner does not comprehend or understand a message and ensures that the social partner is following the conversation
Acknowledges and encourages	Acknowledges receipt of messages, encourages the social partner to continue interaction, and encourages all social partners to participate in social interaction
Empathizes	Expresses a supportive attitude toward the social partner by agreeing with, empathizing with, or expressing understanding of the social partner's feelings and experiences
Heeds	Uses goal-directed social interactions focused on carrying out and completing the intended purpose of the social interaction
Accommodates	Prevents ineffective or socially inappropriate social interaction
Benefits	Prevents problems with ineffective or socially inappropriate social interaction from recurring or persisting

Source. From "Performance Skills: Implementing Performance Analyses to Evaluate Quality of Occupational Performance," by A. G. Fisher and L. A. Griswold, in *Willard and Spackman's Occupational Therapy* (12th ed., pp. 252–254), by B. A. B. Schell, G. Gillen, M. E. Scaffa, and E. S. Cohn (Eds.), 2014, Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins; <http://lww.com>. Copyright © 2014 by Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Adapted with permission.