



Breaking Down a Task (Grading)

When teaching your child, a new skill (for example, using cutlery, tying shoe laces or using scissors), it helps to break the activity down into manageable steps. Occupational Therapist call this 'grading'.

Encourage your child to do the steps that they can do. You can then teach one step at a time, you may need to make up a visual aid using photographs or symbols, or make a sequence checklist, depending on what suits your child. Your child may also benefit from using adaptive equipment to help with a specific step. You can also look at each of the steps in turn to identify where things are going wrong for your child and see if you can make it easier for your child.

To help with your understanding, think about a task that you would complete daily, such as making a cup of tea. This activity can be broken down into lots of different steps. The steps may vary given the environment or what order you like to do things in, such as adding the milk first or last, although generally they remain the same. If you were struggling to complete this task, you may focus only on pouring the milk to begin with. Once you have learned the key components of a task, you then learn how to do the task in different environments.