

# Prompting and Errorless Learning

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## WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson will explore prompting in errorless learning by defining and discussing the following:

1. Errorless Learning
2. Most-To-Least Prompting
3. Prompt Fading Procedures

## 1. Errorless Learning

There are two primary uses for prompting and fading within skill repertoire building. The first, **errorless learning**, is used for teaching new skills and mass trials. It is a procedure used to teach a new skill involving the immediate prompting of the response during the initial teaching stages and systematic removal of prompts to avoid errors.

### Errorless learning

- promotes immediate learning
- prevents errors
- avoids confusion and frustration for the patient

We use this method to introduce a new target. Typically, errorless learning is used when new material is introduced and is 0%-79% correct. The goal of errorless learning is to minimize or eliminate incorrect responses.

As a behavior technician, it is your job to ensure the patient succeeds. All of the examples of prompt fading that you have watched so far in this section have been examples of errorless learning. The prompt is faded systematically across trials to prevent errors until the patient can respond correctly without a prompt.

### Video Transcription

Sit criss-cross applesauce. OK, here we go. What's this? Say skirt.

Skirt.

Oh, super job, mister!

What's this? Say skirt.

Skirt.

Ooh, that was so smart.

What's this? Say--

Good job. Skirt.

Skirt.

That's right. What's this say? Sk--

Skirt.

Oh, good for you. You did it. OK, sit up. Sit up so we can finish. What's this? Sk--

Skirt.

Perfect job. What's this? Sk--

Skirt.

Wow, you did it! One more. Turn around. What's this?

Skirt.

Oh, yay! Hey, come here! Come here, you. Come here you. You did it. You did it.

Keep in mind the following terms for errorless learning:

- Acquisition: the learning of a new skill that is not yet in the patient's repertoire
- Acquisition skill/target skill: the response or new behavior currently being taught to the patient
- Prompt hierarchy: a systematic arrangement of prompts used in a particular order to facilitate learning, usually arranged according to the level of strength of the prompt or the amount of support given to the patient

To ensure errorless learning, we use a most-to-least prompting hierarchy.



#### TERM TO KNOW

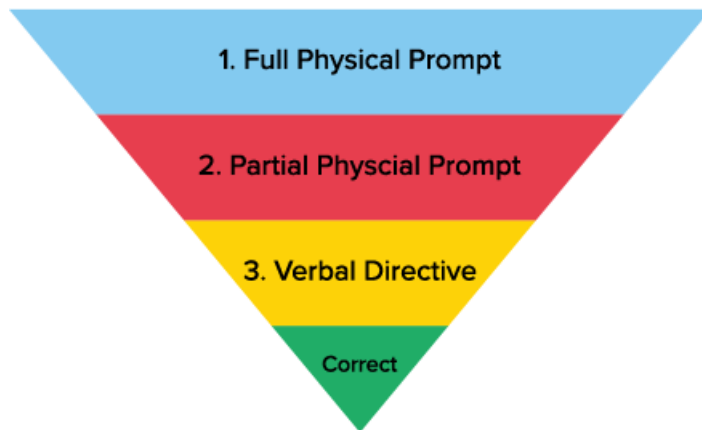
### Errorless Learning

A procedure used to teach a new skill involving the immediate prompting of the response during the initial teaching stages and systematic removal of prompts to avoid errors

## 2. Most-To-Least Prompting

Most-to-least prompting means that you start with providing a prompt that provides the most assistance and fade to a prompt that provides the least assistance across trials in an effort to prevent errors.

**Most-to-least prompting** is a fading procedure using stronger, more intrusive prompts during initial instruction and progressing to less intrusive prompts over time to enable success and independence.



This method guarantees initial success and helps the patient contact, or receive, reinforcement, making learning fun!

With this method, use the most intrusive prompts first to ensure the patient's response is correct. Once the patient begins the response with prompts, fade to a prompt that provides less assistance.

This method ensures initial success and helps the patient earn reinforcement. As the prompt is faded, the instruction becomes a discriminative stimulus with stimulus control over the response.

🔗 **EXAMPLE** Target: Sweeping the floor

1. Full physical prompt: hand over hand with the patient's hands demonstrating how to sweep.
2. Partial physical prompt: the behavior technician places the patient's hands on the broom in the correct place and the patient completes sweeping motion independently.
3. Vocal directive: the behavior technician tells the patient to place their hands on the broom and move it back and forth in a sweeping motion.
4. Correct performance by the patient without prompts.

### Video Transcription

OK, I'm going to help you get some of these other areas. OK?

OK.

All right. So we're gonna go put the broom all the way to the crease of the wall, and then you're gonna drag it forward and make it all into a little pile. All right? So we'll grab all of this, and we'll put it together in the same pile.

You know what? Let's turn the broom around. OK, move forward a little bit and let's get this corner. And that's a little tricky, isn't it? OK, then drag it and put it on that pile.

Yeah.

OK? OK, try to do that now with that little amount there. Good. Remember, go all the way to the crease of the wall.

Perfect. Right there. Awesome. OK? [INAUDIBLE]. Remember, go all the way to the wall. OK?

Yeah.

There you go. There you go, all the way to the wall. Perfect.

#### **EXAMPLE** Target: Clapping

1. Full physical prompt: Hand over hand with the patient's hands, pick up hands, and bring together in clapping motion.
2. Partial physical prompt: Hand over hand with the patient's hands, bring hands up, the patient completes clapping motion independently.
3. Partial physical prompt: Prompting the patient's arms up with slight upward guidance directed at the patient's forearms.
4. Partial physical prompt: Prompting the patient's arms up with a slight touch to the patient's elbow.
5. Correct performance by the patient without prompts.

Here is one more example of how most-to-least prompting might look:

#### **EXAMPLE** SD: "Give me Blue."

- Trial 1: Full physical prompt (hand-over-hand).
- Trial 2: Partial physical prompt (the behavior technician places the patient's hand on the picture).
- Trial 3: Gestural prompt (the behavior technician points to the picture).
- Trial 4: No prompt.
- Trial 5: No prompt.

## Video Transcription

All right. Addition. Nice job. Addition. Perfect. Really good. Addition. Great job. One more. Addition. Nice. Great job.

Now we're doing silverware too? Addition. Good job. Really good. Couple more. Perfect. Keep going. You're awesome.



### TERM TO KNOW

## Most-To-Least Prompting

A fading procedure using stronger, more intrusive prompts during initial instruction and progressing to less intrusive prompts over time to enable success and independence.

### 3. Prompt Fading Procedures

Let's discuss prompt fading procedures for errorless learning. While we are attempting to prevent errors using errorless learning, there will be errors from time to time when you begin to fade your prompts.

If this occurs, then you could provide an informational "No" if instructed by your BCBA, then immediately provide the last effective prompt on the next trial in an effort to ensure a correct response. Then, the prompt fading process should be repeated over successive trials.

If an error occurs during the fading process,

- provide an informational "No" (even if the trial was a prompted trial and the patient responded incorrectly to the prompt, and if instructed by your BCBA).
- re-present the S<sup>D</sup> with the last effective prompt to ensure a correct response.
- begin to fade the prompt over successive trials.



#### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about the first of two primary uses for prompting and fading within skill repertoire building known as **errorless learning**. This is a procedure used to teach a new skill using immediate prompting of the response during the initial teaching stages and systematic removal of prompts to avoid errors. Typically, errorless learning is used when new material is introduced and is 0%-79% correct, with a goal to minimize or eliminate incorrect responses. You also learned about **most-to-least prompting**, a fading procedure using stronger, more intrusive prompts during initial instruction and progressing to less intrusive prompts over time to enable success and independence. Keep in mind that this method ensures initial success and helps the patient earn reinforcement. Finally, consider errors that may occur during these **prompt fading procedures**.



#### TERMS TO KNOW

##### Errorless Learning

A procedure used to teach a new skill involving the immediate prompting of the response during the initial teaching stages and systematic removal of prompts to avoid errors.

##### Most-To-Least Prompting

A fading procedure using stronger, more intrusive prompts during initial instruction and progressing to less intrusive prompts over time to enable success and independence.