

Functional Behavioral Analysis/ Time Trials

Time sampling, also known as interval recording, is a data collection method used in behavior assessment to measure how often a behavior occurs by observing and recording it at specific time intervals.

Establishing a Baseline

(How long should it take?) There needs to be some consistency in the observation periods. If you choose to observe at different times of the day, you may be introducing another variable. If possible, the baseline is established over one week's time. This may be 3-5 samplings of behavior.

Choose a method for recording behavior.

Regardless of the method of recording used for FBA, it is necessary to establish a baseline for present behavior. The data is then plotted on a graph and becomes a graphic representation of behavior, before interventions. A baseline should consist of a minimum of three observation periods.

Selecting the Recording Method.

The method used will depend on the type of behavior being observed. Generally, the criteria for selection depend on the duration of the behavior. Behavior, which lasts for a period of time (e.g., out of seat), may be recorded using a **Time Sample**.

In a **Time Sampling**, behavior is recorded at the end of the interval.

At the end of each interval, + is recorded if the behavior is observed at the end of the interval.

– is recorded if the behavior is not observed at the end of the interval. Because of this, **Time Sampling** uses intervals that last 1-5 minutes, and that are no longer than five minutes.

So for example, if an observation period is 60 minutes long, and divided into 5-minute intervals, there would be 12 intervals, and behavior would be recorded 12 times.

When behavior is of a shorter duration, (E.g., “calling out”), shorter intervals may be used. For shorter intervals, **Interval Recording** may be used. Using this method, a + is recorded if behavior occurred any time during the interval. A – is recorded if behavior did not occur at any time during the interval. Again this is useful for behavior that is brief in duration such as hitting.

Assessment of Behavior

A **sample Interval Recording** would consist of a ten-minute observation period divided into 1 minute intervals.

Regardless of method used, **Time Sampling** for longer periods and sustained behavior, **or Interval Recording** for shorter duration behavior, scoring the behavior consists of counting the number of +s, and dividing that number by the number of intervals to determine the percentage of time the behavior occurred in the total observation period. It is also acceptable to use the raw score, i.e. the number of times the behavior occurred.

Timed Sample (Longer duration behavior)

Student's Name _____ Observer _____

Environment _____ Date _____

Target Behavior _____

Start Time _____ End Time _____

9:00 AM- 10:00 AM Divided into 5 minutes intervals. Behavior is recorded **at the end** of each 5 minute interval.

+1+_2_+_3_+_4_+_5_+_6_+_7_+_8_+_9_+_10_+_11_+_12

Student's Name _____ Observer _____

X

Environment _____ Date _____

Target Behavior _____

Start Time _____ End Time _____

Interval Sample (Shorter duration behavior).

9:00 AM- 9:10 AM Behavior is recorded if it occurred at any time during the 1-minute interval.

_+_1_+_2_+_3_+_4_+_5_+_6_+_7_+_8_+_9_+_10

Example

Student's name: Patrick

Target behavior: Calling out

Observation Period % of times Patrick called out.

Interval Sample (Shorter duration behavior).

9:00 AM- 9:10 AM Behavior is recorded if it occurred at any time during the 1-minute interval.

 + 1 + 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Monday 20%

 1 2 3 + 4 5 6 + 7 8 9 + 10
Tuesday 30%

+ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 + 9 + 10
Wednesday 30%

+ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 + 9 10
Thursday 20%

 1 2 + 3 4 5 + 6 7 8 + 9 + 10
Friday 40%

