

THE DIGIT MEMORY TEST

An assessment procedure for specialist teachers to investigate verbal memory difficulties in children's learning. Both parts are administered.

Digits forwards

- Start** Item A
- Finish** Failure on both trials of a pair.
- Directions** "Listen carefully as I say some numbers. When I finish, you say them."
- Delivery** Digits should be given at the rate of one per second. Administer both trials of each item. Recite digits in an even monotone without any variation in pitch of voice.
- Scoring** The individual's score is the total number of items correctly repeated forwards.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Item	First Trial	<input type="checkbox"/> or X	Second Trial	<input type="checkbox"/> or X
A	43	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	792	<input type="checkbox"/>	847	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	5941	X	7253	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	93872	X	75396	X

In this example, the total correct is 5.

Digits Backwards

- Directions** Administer as above but say, "Repeat these numbers after me but this time I want you to say them backwards." Give two practice trials of two digits first – any two numbers. If the child gets them wrong - correct her or him. If the child repeats the digits *forwards*, give a reminder that they should be reversed.
- Score** As for digits forwards.
- Final score** Total number managed (ticks) backwards and forwards *added together*. Consult Table 1 for standard score. This can also be expressed as a percentile equivalent: consult Table 2.
- Comparison** Most people can remember two more digits forwards than they can backwards. If the gap is larger than three, or smaller than one, this may be worthy of note.

DIGITS FORWARDS

Item	First trial	<input type="checkbox"/> or X	Second trial	<input type="checkbox"/> or X	Total
A	43		16		
B	792		847		
C	5941		7253		
D	93872		75396		
E	152649		216748		
F	3745261		4925316		
G	82973546		69174253		
H	246937185		371625948		
				Forwards score:	

DIGITS BACKWARDS

Item	Trial one	<input type="checkbox"/> or X	Trial two	<input type="checkbox"/> or X	Total
A	83		29		
B	475		615		
C	2619		3852		
D	28736		59413		
E	624719		276391		
F	4183627		1586937		
G	52624197		94617385		
				Backwards score:	

FINAL SCORE:

Total forwards and backwards:	
Standard score:	
Percentile equivalent:	

TABLE 1

Table 1: Estimated standard scores for digit memory performances from six years to adult												
Age	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Adult
Raw score												
4	74	57	60	56	54	55	50	48	52	52	51	50
5	79	63	65	61	59	59	55	53	56	56	55	54
6	85	69	70	66	64	64	59	57	60	60	59	57
7	90	75	75	71	69	68	64	61	64	64	63	61
8	96	81	80	76	74	73	68	66	68	68	66	64
9	101	87	85	81	79	77	73	70	72	72	70	68
10	106	93	90	86	85	82	77	74	76	75	74	71
11	112	99	95	91	90	86	81	78	80	79	78	75
12	117	105	100	96	95	91	86	83	84	83	82	79
13	123	111	105	101	100	95	90	87	88	87	86	82
14	128	117	110	106	105	100	95	91	92	91	89	86
15	134	123	115	111	110	105	99	96	96	95	93	89
16	139	129	120	116	115	109	104	100	100	98	97	93
17	144	135	125	121	121	114	108	104	104	102	101	96
18	150	141	130	126	126	118	112	109	108	106	105	100
19	155	147	135	131	131	123	117	113	112	110	108	104
20	161	153	140	136	136	127	121	117	116	114	112	107
21			145	141	141	132	126	122	120	118	116	111
22			150	146	146	136	130	126	124	121	120	114
23			155	151	152	141	134	130	128	125	124	118
24			159	156	157	145	139	134	132	129	127	121
25						150	143	139	136	133	131	125
26						154	148	143	140	137	135	129
27						159	152	147	144	141	139	132
28						163	157	152	148	144	143	136
29								156	152	148	147	139
30								160	156	152	150	143
31									160	156	154	146
32									164	160	158	150
33												154
34												157
35												161
36												164

TABLE 2

Standard score	%ile equiv	Standard score	%ile equiv	Standard score	%ile equiv	Standard score	%ile equiv
54	0.1	77	6	100	50	123	94
55	0.1	78	7	101	53	124	95
56	0.2	79	8	102	55	125	95
57	0.2	80	9	103	58	126	96
58	0.3	81	10	104	61	127	96
59	0.3	82	12	105	63	128	97
60	0.4	83	13	106	66	129	97
61	0.5	84	14	107	68	130	98
62	0.6	85	16	108	70	131	98
63	0.7	86	18	109	73	132	98
64	0.8	87	19	110	75	133	99
65	1	88	21	111	77	134	99
66	1	89	23	112	79	135	99
67	1	90	25	113	81	136	99.2
68	2	91	27	114	82	137	99.3
69	2	92	30	115	84	138	99.4
70	2	93	32	116	86	139	99.5
71	3	94	34	117	87	140	99.6
72	3	95	37	118	88	141	99.7
73	4	96	39	119	90	142	99.7
74	4	97	42	120	91	143	99.8
75	5	98	45	121	92	144	99.8
76	5	99	47	122	93	145	99.9

Source: Martin Turner
 Jacky Ridsdale
 revised 6th October 2004