

Levels of Prompts

Levels of prompts are maximal, moderate, minimal, and independent. (See Table 3 below.) The more assistance needed, the greater the level of prompting.

Table 3: Scales of Prompting by Communication Partner

Physical Prompts	Maximal	Full support to select target (e.g., hand-over-hand, push body part) to complete movement and/or train motor pattern and/or teach desired response
	Moderate	Partial support of body part to initiate movement to select target (e.g., gentle nudge, light weight bearing) and/or stabilize gross movement
	Minimal	Light support (e.g., touch/tap) of body part or equipment to direct attention to select target
	Independent	No physical prompting; no physical contact or cues directing user toward use of AAC system
Verbal Prompts	Maximal	Explicitly specify target symbol; tell person who uses AAC to "Push (name of symbol)" to teach specific target; or say, "It's blue, like the color of the sky," etc.
	Moderate	Provide verbal topic cues (e.g., "How are you today?" [wait] "Find your feeling words."); provide verbal multiple-choice (e.g., "How are you today?" [wait] "Are you happy or sad?")
	Minimal	Provide verbal direction for communication strategy (e.g., "How are you today?" [wait] "Tell me with your talker.")
	Independent	No verbal prompting; no verbal cues directing person who uses AAC toward use of system; AAC system use during discourse in which communication partner does not specifically use verbal prompts to cue system use is considered independent
Visual Prompts	Maximal	Point to target (e.g., location on device/switch) to teach desired response
	Moderate	Point to general area (e.g., left side, row) or give multiple-choice options to orient to location
	Minimal	Point to AAC system to remind person who uses AAC about strategic use
	Independent	No visual prompting; no visual cues directing person who uses AAC toward use of system

Learning Environment

People who use AAC may demonstrate behaviors in some environments and under some circumstances but not in others. These occurrences can be related to familiarity to the environment, the people present, the specific task, or the person's level of motivation. The *AAC Profile* identifies learning environments as "structured" (communication partner directs the activity) or "unstructured" (person who uses AAC takes the lead and directs the activity). Settings include therapy rooms, home, school, or places in the community. A structured environment may provide more support than an unstructured one, but that depends on the targeted behavior.

Mastery Over Time

A behavior is mastered only when it is demonstrated over a period of time. Typically, a behavior is mastered when demonstrated at a 75 percent accuracy level, or in 3 out of 4 opportunities or trials.