

# Glossary of Terms\*

(\*There is also a video version of the glossary of terms.)

Occupational Therapist	An <b>occupational therapist (OT)</b> is a rehabilitation and health professional specialized in helping people to do all of the occupations (activities) that they <u>want</u> , <u>need</u> , or <u>are expected</u> to be able to do. The common occupations of childhood are self care (eg. eating, sleeping, dressing), productivity (eg. learning at school and through play, chores at home) and leisure (eg. hobbies, sports, and play).
Senses	<p>The <b>senses</b> are the way human beings receive information from outside or inside the body.</p> <p>There are seven senses, including the five children usually learn about in school. These each have a common name and a scientific name (in brackets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• hearing (auditory)</li><li>• sight (visual)</li><li>• smell (olfactory)</li><li>• taste (gustatory)</li><li>• touch (tactile)</li></ul> <p>There are two other very important senses that are less well known, so they don't really have agreed upon common names. Their scientific names are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• vestibular sense*</li><li>• proprioception, or the proprioceptive sense.*</li></ul> <p>*See definitions of these senses below. You can watch the section of the video called "<u>A Review of the Seven Senses</u>" for more information about all of the senses.</p>
Vestibular Sense	The <b>vestibular sense</b> senses the position of the head, and how it is moving in space. It is very important for keeping your balance.
Vestibular System	The <b>vestibular system</b> is the main sense organ for the vestibular sense. It is made of tiny little bones and ligaments in your inner ear. It tells your brain the position of your head in relation to gravity and senses how your head is moving in space. The vestibular system senses circular, up and down, forward, backward and sideways movement. It also tells you whether you are speeding up, slowing down, or changing directions.
Proprioception	<b>Proprioception</b> is the sense that tells us the position of our joints and muscles. There are sensory receptors, called proprioceptors, in all of our joints and muscles. These receptors send information to the brain about when and how our joints and muscles are bending, straightening, or being stretched or pushed together.
Sensor	Each sense has specialized sensory receptors, or <b>sensors</b> , that take in the sensory information for that sense and send it through the nerves to the central nervous system. The taste buds are one example of sensors.
Sense Organ	A part of the body where all of the sensory receptors (sensors) for a particular sense are located. The eyes, nose, and tongue are all examples of <b>sense organs</b> .

Sensory Processing	The neurological process by which our brains receive, organize and interpret information from all of our senses. This process can also be called <b>sensory integration</b> .
Sensory Integration	There are 2 definitions of <b>sensory integration</b> : 1: The neurological process by which we receive, organize and interpret information from our senses, also called <b>sensory processing</b> . 2: A specific form of occupational therapy treatment that requires certain training and certification and uses proprietary treatment techniques. <b>Ayres Sensory Integration®</b> treatment (also known as SI) was introduced in the 1960s by occupational therapist Jean Ayres, a pioneer in the understanding and treatment of children with sensory processing challenges. She also coined the term Sensory Integrative Dysfunction, which is now usually called Sensory Processing Disorder.
Sensory Registration	<b>Sensory registration</b> is the first step of sensory processing. In this step sensory information from the environment, or from inside the body, is registered (meaning detected or noticed) by the senses.
Sensory Threshold	The <b>sensory threshold</b> is the level at which sensation is registered. Sensory thresholds are different for every person. Each person's sensory thresholds may change from day to day (or hour to hour) depending on many factors such as: how awake you are, what you are doing, the environment around you, and your mood. A <u>high threshold</u> for a certain sensation means it takes a lot of that sensation before it is registered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person with a high threshold is <i>under-responsive</i> to that type of sensory input.</li> <li>• Sometimes children with a high threshold will be described as <u>sensory seeking</u> because they seem to want and need more of that type of sensory input.</li> </ul> A <u>low threshold</u> for a certain sensation means that it is noticed with very little input. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person with a low threshold is <i>over-responsive</i> to that type of sensory input.</li> <li>• Sometimes children with a low threshold will be described as <u>sensory avoiding</u> because they seem to avoid, or not want any of, that type of sensory input.</li> </ul>
Sensory Preference	A preference for certain sensations or intensities of sensation. Everyone has their own <b>sensory preferences</b> : certain sensations that we like, and other sensations that we might prefer to avoid.
Sensory Aversion	A fixed, intense dislike for—or an inability to tolerate—a certain sensory experience. A <b>sensory aversion</b> is stronger than a sensory preference.