

## FAQ/Finding Information About Psychological Tests

The APA Science Directorate answers hundreds of calls and emails each year from persons trying to locate the right test or find more information about psychological tests. APA neither sells nor endorses testing instruments, but it does provide guidance in using available resources to find psychological tests. Answers to frequently asked questions are provided here.

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**Section 1: Published Psychological Tests** The first section contains information about published psychological tests -- those available for purchase through a test publisher. It includes tips on how to locate tests within a given subject area, how to contact the test publisher once you find an appropriate test, and where to find computerized testing materials and information.

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**Section 2: Unpublished Psychological Tests and Measures** The second section focuses on unpublished psychological tests and measures -- those that are not available commercially for purchase. Information about unpublished tests usually appears in journal articles. The test can usually be obtained directly from the researcher who created the test or measure. This section tells you how to find unpublished tests in your area of interest and highlights your responsibilities as a user of unpublished psychological tests.

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### **A Final Word and Responsibilities of Test Users**

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## Section 1: Published Psychological Tests

*Where can I find tests to measure self-concept?*

*Can you send me a copy of this test?*

*Am I qualified to administer this test?*

Although some questions like these do require the assistance of professionals, most can be answered by consulting one of many sources of testing information available to the public. Whether student, teacher, concerned test-taker, or psychologist,

everyone can benefit from the many reference texts, databases, test reviews, and other items accessible through local colleges or public libraries.

The following information answers some of the most frequently asked questions regarding published tests.

### **Finding Information on a Particular Test**

The first place to start is with one of several excellent testing references available at your local library. These references provide comprehensive, useful, and directive information on tests. They can also provide answers to a variety of questions, such as these: What tests are available for a specific purpose (e.g., clerical spatial relations)? Who publishes the test? How can I evaluate the test? How do I get more information on a specific test?

*Tests in Print (TIP)*, the *Mental Measurements Yearbook (MMY)*, *Tests*, and *Test Critiques* are the four most useful and popular references. These are described in detail later in this document and are available in the reference section of most college, university, and larger public libraries.

### **Finding a Particular Type of Test**

Whether you are trying to locate tests that measure self-concept, or some other specific cognitive skill or personality trait, you should begin your search with one of the four test reference books identified above. If available, *TIP* may be your best choice, because it has the most entries per volume: 3,009 in the most recent edition. Each of the references contains several indexes to aid in such a search. Subject and test title indexes may be most helpful. For example, suppose you are interested in measuring self-concept. Looking under 'personality tests' in the *TIP* subject index, you would quickly find three tests for self-concept. On further inspection, you would identify over a dozen additional tests that may be relevant, but are listed somewhere else in the nine-page index of personality tests. Yet a relatively quick search of a specific subject heading in the index can provide you with several useful leads.

Once you have identified several tests that may be of interest, you would review the more detailed entries on each test to determine if they are useful for your intended purpose. Entries typically identify the age or school grade levels for which the test is appropriate, as well as any subtests.

Of course, if you are searching for a very specialized test or measure, your search is not so simple. For example, if you are interested in measuring letter recognition or honesty, you may not locate any relevant tests through the subject index. In this case, your best option is to go to the *MMY* and use the 'score index,' which would identify tests measuring subareas (e.g., honesty, letter recognition).

### **Locating a Specific Test**

Once you have a name or author of a test, your chances of locating it are greatly improved. Again, you could check any of the four test reference books, but *TIP* and the *MMY* have the largest indexes of tests. Title and author indexes in each of the reference books should refer you to the section of the book describing the test. (In the case of the *MMY* or *Test Critiques*, you may actually be referred to an earlier volume of the book for more information).

### **Locating Test Publishers**

Directories of test publishers are included in most major testing reference books (*MMY*, *Tests*, *TIP*). The size and scope of the directory usually reflects how many tests are included in that book. For example, *TIP* provides brief information on the greatest number of commercially available tests and, thus, has an extensive publishers directory. The Test Collection at Educational Testing Service (ETS) has a free pamphlet entitled *Major U. S. Publishers of Standardized Tests*, which lists the names, addresses, and phone numbers of 28 major test publishers. Call or write to them for your free copy at ETS, Library, Rosedale Road, Princeton, NJ, 08541, (609) 734-5667.

## **Publishers' Catalogs**

All of the major test publishers have catalogs listing their own products. The catalogs are published on an annual or semiannual basis. These catalogs are frequently the best source of information for the most recent editions of a test. Information on the cost of materials and scoring, types of scoring services, and ancillary materials are available through the catalogs. The catalogs also include information on variations of the test, such as large-print or foreign language versions. Contact the test publisher to request their catalog(s).

## **Purchasing Tests**

Commercially available tests are usually purchased through the test publisher. Publishers hold the copyright to tests they distribute, and they maintain the copies of tests, test manuals, and scoring keys.

After locating the name, address, or phone number of a test publisher, contact the publisher with your request for information on a particular test (including purchase inquiries). Such inquiries should be made directly to the test publisher. Many publishers have separate policies for individual and organizational purchases of tests. Individuals may be required to complete a test purchaser qualifications form that allows a publisher to determine if the purchaser is qualified and competent to administer and interpret the test.

## **Test References**

As mentioned earlier, the four most popular, useful, and easy to locate printed references for published tests are *TIP*, *MMY*, *Tests*, and *Test Critiques*. The following is a brief summary of these references.

- ***Tests in Print (TIP)*** Publisher: The Buros Institute for Mental Measurements, Lincoln, NE. Most current volume: 5th ed. (1999).

**What information is here?** *TIP* is a bibliographic encyclopedia of information on every published (and commercially available) test in psychology and achievement. Each entry consists of the test title, intended population, publication date, acronym (if applicable), author, publisher, foreign adaptations, and references. There are no critical reviews or psychometric information on the tests; detailed information on individual tests is available in other reference books such as *MMY* or *Test Critiques*. *TIP* was created to serve as a master index to the whole Buros Institute reference series on tests, including the 11 *MMYs* and the monograph series.

**What tests are included?** The only criterion for inclusion is that the test be in print and available for purchase or use. So

*TIP* covers a wide range of tests across psychology, education, and achievement. In all, there are 3,009 entries in the fourth edition.

**How do I use it?** Tests are listed alphabetically, within subjects. However, if you know a test title, you can flip to an alphabetical index to find it. There are five indexes: test title, classified subject, publisher, name (of authors, reviewers), and a publishers' directory. These five indexes are handy for locating tests by means other than the title or for accessing whole groups of tests for making comparisons (e.g., all tests tapping vocational interests). After you have located a test that interests you, turn to the *MMY* for more detailed information on that test, or use the directory of publishers to contact the test publisher for more information.

- **Mental Measurements Yearbook (MMY)** Publisher: The Buros Institute for Mental Measurements, Lincoln, NE. Most current edition: 14th ed. (2001).

**What information is here?** In the *MMY*, tests are listed alphabetically by title. Each entry provides descriptive information, such as the test name, intended population, publication dates, forms and prices, test author, and publisher. It also contains additional information on the extent to which reliability, validity, norming data, scoring and reporting services, and foreign language versions are available. Most entries also include one or more reviews of the test and testing materials (e.g., manuals) by qualified psychologists.

**What tests are included?** The criterion for inclusion in the *MMY* is that the test be new or revised since the previous yearbook, or be so widely used as to generate 20 or more references in the literature since the previous issue. Therefore, you will frequently need to refer to earlier volumes of the *MMY* for information on all but very recent or very popular tests. However, the index in each *MMY* will identify the appropriate edition for the information you need.

**How do I use it?** The introduction contains step-by-step directions for using the text to locate testing information. If you know the test title, you can look it up directly through the alphabetical listings. The six indexes arrange tests by title, acronym, classified subject, publisher, name (author, reviewer, and published references), and score. These can be used to access tests about which you have limited information or to access groups of tests that fit into the same category (e.g., yield the same score or are all measuring stress).

- **Tests** Publisher: Pro-Ed, Inc., Austin, TX. Most current edition: 4th ed. (1997).

**What information is here?** *Tests*, like *TIP*, is a bibliographic encyclopedia containing information on thousands of testing instruments in psychology, education, and business. It provides concise descriptions of tests, with each entry including the test title and author, the intended population, the tests purpose, the major features, the

administration time, the scoring method, the cost and availability, and the primary publisher. Also, a scanning line uses coded visual keys to indicate whether the test is self- or examiner-administered.

*Tests* does not contain evaluative critiques or data on reliability, validity, or norms; this information can be found for selected instruments in *Test Critiques*.

**What tests are included?** *Tests* was created to provide quick and easy access to all tests available in the English language. Several thousand tests are included from the areas of psychology, education, and business.

**How do I use it?** The book is divided into three main sections: 'Psychology,' 'Education,' and 'Business,' with each of these divided into subsections. Tests are arranged alphabetically within each subsection.

*Tests* has seven indexes, including the test title index, author index, foreign language availability index, and a publisher/distributor index. Three indexes identify tests suitable for special populations: the hearing impaired, visually impaired, and physically impaired. Finally, there is a listing of out-of-print tests, which shows tests that publishers indicate have recently gone out-of-print. Use these indexes to locate information on a particular test or to access whole groups of tests in your area of interest. A publishers directory, also located in *Tests*, gives names, addresses, and phone numbers of publishers to contact for more information or purchasing inquiries.

- **Test Critiques** Publisher: Pro-Ed, Inc., Austin, TX. Most current edition: updated annually.

**What information is here?** This text is designed to be a companion to *Tests* and contains supplemental information designated as 'not appropriate for inclusion in that directory.' This includes psychometric information such as reliability, validity, and norm development. The tri-part entry for each test includes an Introduction, Practical Applications/Uses, and Technical Aspects, followed by a critique. The Introduction describes the test in detail, including information on the authors and publisher and the purpose of the test. Practical Applications/Uses gives information aimed toward the test user, including intended population, administration, scoring, and interpretation procedures. Technical Aspects includes citations from reliability and validity studies and opinions from experts regarding the technical adequacy of the test. The text is written for both professionals and students, with technical terms explained, and includes helpful information not usually found in other reference books. This makes it a user-friendly resource for students, teachers, or persons unfamiliar with test terminology.

**What tests are included?** Tests are chosen for inclusion based on research on the most frequently used psychological, educational, and business-related tests.

Selections are also made based on surveys of professional organizations regarding the tests they would most like to see critiqued. This text is updated annually, with a cumulative index keyed to correspond to *Tests* (10th ed. 1994).

**How do I use it?** Each volume contains a table of contents that lists all reviewed tests alphabetically, along with the name of the reviewer. Each volume also contains cumulative indexes organized by test title, test publisher, test author and reviewer, and subject. This makes it easy to locate information on a test reviewed in any of the volumes, all in one location. Once you have located and read the review for any test, contact the publisher for more information regarding the purchase of the test. Also, because *Test Critiques* is a companion to *Tests*, you can look to the *Tests* directory for more information regarding any test described in *Test Critiques*.

- **Internet Searches**

The newest and most comprehensive way to search for information is through the World Wide Web on the Internet. The *Test Locator* allows you to access information from all the sources listed above. It is a joint effort of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation at the Catholic University of America, the Library and Reference Services Division of ETS, the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements at the University of Nebraska, and Pro-Ed, a publisher of test reviews. The *Test Locator* can be accessed through any of the three following web sites: <http://ericae2.educ.cua.edu>, <http://www.unl.edu/buros>, or <http://www.ets.org>.

**What information is here?** The *Test Locator* can search three areas: (1) The *Test Review Locator* will allow an individual to enter the name of a test and references of reviews of the test entered will be listed. (2) The Test Publisher Locator allows individuals to type in the name of a publisher and the contact information on that publisher will be available. (3) The *Test Locator* also provides access to the ETS test file, which is a database of over 10,000 published and unpublished tests.

**Available Software and Scoring Services for Published Tests**

You can find a multitude of computerized testing materials, including a variety of software products developed for administering, scoring, and interpreting published tests. There are a couple of helpful directories that can lead you to the software you need.

- **What is "Test Reviews Online"?**

At the Buros Center for Testing's website ([www.unl.edu/buros](http://www.unl.edu/buros)), search engines allow you to examine a large amount ) of information on tests and testing. "Test Reviews Online" is a web-based service of the Buros Institute of Mental Measurements. Test reviews are available to individuals exactly as they appear in the 9th through 14th Mental Measurements Yearbooks. In addition, regular

updates are provided from our latest test review database. For a small fee, users may download information for any of approximately 2,000 tests that include specifics on test purpose, population, publication date, administration time, and descriptive test critiques.

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- ***Psychware Sourcebook*** Publisher: Metritech, Inc., Champaign, IL. Editor: Samuel E. Krug, PhD. Most current volume: 4th ed. (1993).

**What information is here?** This handy reference identifies and describes over 533 computer-based assessment tools, including computerized versions of paper-and-pencil tests and computer-based scoring and interpretation systems. It serves as a directory of available computer services and contains no reviews or critiques of software or services. Each item entry provides the test (or instrument) name, supplier, category (see below), applications, scale restrictions, type and cost of service, and product description. Also, an appendix showcases sample screens and sample outputs for many products, lending a realistic preview of services.

A separate section, Additional Resources, contains information to direct readers to outside sources of information on new products and critiques of available ones. These resources include journals, newsletters, electronic bulletin boards, and databases.

**What tests are included?** Instruments are categorized using the following classification scheme:

1. Career/Vocational;
2. Cognitive/Ability;
3. Interests/Attitudes;
4. Motivation;
5. Neuropsychological;
6. Personality; and
7. Structured Interview.

The 533 products described consist of both computer-based test interpretation (CBTI) packages and assessment products.

**How do I use it?** Seven indexes provide easy access to the wide range of assessment tools included. The test title index makes it easy to trace a computer-based test version back to its paper-and-pencil counterpart. Other indexes arrange entries by product category, product application, service (including hardware compatibility), and supplier. These are useful in searching for a host of available services for one particular test (e.g., the MMPI) or in locating products compatible with your own computer (e.g., Macintosh).

**Where can I find it?** Ask the reference librarian at your university or college library. If you cannot locate it, contact the publisher, Metritech, Inc.

### **For Additional Information on the Proper Use of Tests:**

The following publications represent standards, guidelines, and principles that have been carefully developed by psychologists, educators, and researchers to achieve and maintain ethical testing practices by the whole community. If you are interested in locating guidelines on the proper use of tests, you can consult the following:

- *Standards for educational and psychological testing.* (1985). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. (800) 374-2721.
  - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Civil Service Commission, Department of Labor, & Department of Justice. (1978). Adoption by four agencies of uniform guidelines on employees selection procedures. *Federal Register*, 43 (166), 38290-38315.
  - Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Inc. (1987). *Principles for the validation and use of personnel selection procedures (3rd ed.)*. College Park, MD. (708) 640-0068.
  - Joint Committee on Testing Practices (1988). Code of fair testing practices in education. National Council on Measurement in Education. (202) 223-9318.
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## **Section 2: Unpublished Psychological Tests and Measures**

*What do you do when you need to identify and find instruments in a research area where no published tests exist?*

*What do you do when you try to find a specific test that has been used in a research study, but is not listed as a published test?*

*What responsibilities do you have when using an unpublished test?*

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Psychological measures are not limited to published tests; a gold mine of unpublished (or noncommercial) inventories, checklists, scales, projective techniques, and other instruments exist in the behavioral sciences literature. Unfortunately, only a few individuals who work in these areas know that the instruments exist or where to find them.

Locating these instruments is frustrating if you don't know where to look. Many researchers, unaware that measures may exist that are suited to their needs, re-create instruments for their own research. This process is a two-fold waste; usable instruments lie dormant, and time that could be spent refining existing measures is instead spent virtually duplicating them. But finding instruments to suit your needs can be easy if you know where to look.

### **Printed Directories**

The following are two of the more popular printed directories of unpublished or noncommercial tests and measures.

- ***Directory of Unpublished Experimental Measures*** Publisher: William

C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque, IA. Editors: Bert A. Goldman & David F. Mitchell. Most current volume: 7 (1997).

This valuable directory provides researchers and students easy access to recently developed experimental mental measures, tests, and surveys that are not commercially available. These measures have been used by other researchers on topics ranging from educational adjustment and motivation to personality and perception. The tests are arranged in a 24-category system and are grouped according to function and content, noting purpose, format, psychometric information (where available), and related research. The newest category, 'Adjustment: Vocation,' identifies articles addressing burnout, vocational maturity, job-related stress, job frustration, and job satisfaction.

The directory has been updated periodically since Volume 1 was published in 1974. Each volume has a cumulative index which makes it easy to access any of the 5,363 tests contained across the first six volumes.

- ***Measures for Psychological Assessment: A Guide to 3,000 Original Sources and Their Applications*** Publisher: Institute for Social Research, Ann Arbor, MI. Editors: K. T. Chun, S. Cobb, & J. R. P. French, Jr. Most current volume: 1975.

This text provides annotated references to thousands of psychological measures first appearing in journal articles or other publications. The first section, 'Primary References,' lists each of these 3,000-plus article references, along with the name of the measure and one or more applications of this measure in other experimental studies. The 'Applications' section lists over 6,600 additional studies that provide experimental tests or additional uses of the original measures. Author and subject indexes are included.

This text can help the researcher answer such questions as What empirical findings have been produced by the use of a given measure? or What additional information about a measure has been acquired since its publication?

Although it contains a wealth of references to experimental measures and corresponding research, this text is outdated. It is a helpful resource when looking for a specific measure appearing in the literature during the 1960s or early 1970s, but you would want to consult a more recent measure that is appropriate for your need.

## **Other Directories**

Directories covering unpublished tests also exist in a nonprint format. The following is a summary of some of the more complete directories that fall into this category.

- ***ETS Test Collection***

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) Test Collection database contains records on over 10,000 tests and research instruments. These records describe the instruments and provides availability information. ETS Library and Reference Services Division prepares the descriptions. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation maintains the database and hosts the Search System.

The title, author, publication date, and source appear in the record. An abstract describing the instrument, intended population, and uses accompanies the record. Subject terms give the age and grade level information as well as ERIC Thesaurus terms that describe the test. For more information, call or write: ETS Test Collection, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ 08541, (609) 734-5689.

- **Tests in Microfiche**

Available through the Test Collection at the ETS, Tests in Microfiche offers information on a multitude of educational and psychological tests cited in the literature, but unavailable commercially. This includes both never-published and out-of-print tests. Users who purchase the microfiche may reproduce tests for their own use.

Currently, there are over 800 tests included, with new sets of tests prepared annually and added to the cumulative set. These can be purchased as a set or by individual title, and an annotated index is available with each set. Also available is the Cumulative Index to Tests in Microfiche (1975-1987), which indexes all tests available for the first 13 sets of Tests in Microfiche. This reference is now available at many college and university libraries. For more information, call or write: ETS Test Collection, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ, 08541, (609) 734-5686.

- **Health and Psychosocial Instruments (HAPI)**

Many measures created or modified for specific studies appear in journals, but never become commercially available. This computerized database (formerly known as the Health Instrument File) publicizes their existence and allows researchers and students to benefit from past work and avoid re-creating existing instruments. *HAPI* uses controlled vocabulary descriptors from *APAs Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms* and the National Library of Medicine's *Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)*. The database, which is updated quarterly, contains over 15,000 instruments, most appearing in the literature between 1985 and the present. One particularly useful feature is that reliability and validity can be used as keywords to access instruments with tested psychometric properties. You could, for instance, search for all instruments in your area with demonstrated test-retest reliability, construct validity, or both.

*HAPI* is available at many college libraries through BRS Information Technologies. Now, it is also available on CD-ROM. The CD-ROM version is updated twice a year and costs \$265 for an initial copy and a semiannual update. For more information, contact: Evelyn Perloff, Behavior Measurement Database Services, P.O. Box 110287, Pittsburgh, PA 15232-0787, (412) 687-6850.

## o Using the PsycINFO Database

Suppose you are interested in group dynamics and want to locate a measure of group cohesion to use for your project entitled Cohesiveness Among Fraternities and Sororities. None of the tests or surveys you found in the directories or databases seem suitable for your study.

There is a chance that the measure you need is in the published literature, but has not yet been referenced in any of these directories. You can locate more tests through a literature search at your library. Ask your reference librarian about PsycINFO, a bibliographic database that indexes all published research in psychology since 1967, Psychological Abstracts, the print counterpart to PsycINFO, or PsycLIT, the CD-ROM version of PsycINFO. Using keywords to denote your interest areas, you can use the database to find citations for articles in your interest area. PsycINFO, Psychological Abstracts, and PsycLIT provide abstracts for each article and will mention if the author developed a measure in the context of the study. For articles that appear relevant, use the citation to locate the study within the literature. (More information on PsycINFO is available under the [PsycINFO](#) menu pick in this Gopher server.)

These citations also include the university or organizational affiliation of the authors, along with an address where you can forward correspondence regarding the article. Write to the author and ask for more information on the test or measure.

Depending on your research area, you may want to consult reference sources in fields related to psychology. For example, the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) of the American Institutes for Research produces a database similar to PsycINFO that indexes research published in the educational literature. In addition, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation (ERIC/TM) processes information on approximately 2,000 documents and 2,000 journal articles per year, specifically in the area of testing and evaluation. Ask your reference librarian for more information about such alternative sources.

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## A Final Word

Finding copies of unpublished tests and measures, or information about them, can be easy if you follow the tips in this document. Remember that the PsycINFO database is an excellent source of information on the very latest developments in psychology, including testing.

## Responsibilities of Test Users

Users of unpublished tests have certain ethical responsibilities. Users must (a) contact the test author and request permission to use their test, and (b) secure their permission in writing if the material is copyrighted. Locating the author may be a difficult process, particularly if the measure is several years old, but try the following steps:

1. Journal articles list the authors organizational affiliation (or university) with a mailing address on the first page of the article. If the publication

- is fairly recent, this method is almost always successful.
2. If this fails, directories published by scientific and professional associations like APA could provide you with a more current address and phone number for the author. This is useful if the article is several years old and the author has moved since the article was published.
  3. If these attempts to locate the author fail, contact the publisher holding the copyright to the original material and request permission from the publisher. Remember that APA holds the copyright to all material published in APA journals.

No matter how difficult this process may seem, you should make every effort to contact an author or copyright holder to secure permission before using any test or other instrument.

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Still have a question about finding tests? Contact the Testing Office of the APA Science Directorate: [testing@apa.org](mailto:testing@apa.org).

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