

## Myths & Questions

### "Is dyscalculia real?"

Dyscalculics say it is. Teachers say it is. The World Health Organization and the American Psychiatric Association say it is.

### "The problems come from the students lack of concentration and motivation – or simply math anxiety"

Concentration disorders like ADHD can easily affect a student's ability to learn math, but when it comes to motivation, it is the teacher's job to motivate the learning disabled student. You can't expect a learning disabled student to feel motivated after years of failure. Most dyscalculics show signs of math anxiety. Anxiety is treatable.

### "I have had extra math classes forever, but I still don't get this - is there something wrong with me?"

No. When a student needs special learning methods *instead* of repetition, extra math classes can do more harm than good. Most dyscalculics can learn enough to do okay and beyond. It depends on tools and learning methods. Dyscalculic students need different learning methods, in every aspect of the assignment.

### "Dyscalculia just means you're stupid"

You can't get diagnosed with dyscalculia if your IQ is below the normal range.

### "I'm a teacher, and I want to help my dyscalculic student. But how?"

1: Get the student diagnosed. 2: Be patient. 3: Understand that your student really wants to be able to understand the subject. 4: Find professional help and read all you can find about dyscalculia. 5: Involve other teachers in the process – dyscalculia affects more than math classes.

## Getting Help

If you have dyscalculia, you have the right to be taken seriously and to get the help you need.

UN's Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities read:

"States should recognize the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system."

If you are in school, contact them and ask to see their counselor - they will know, where you can go to with your problem. If they don't know, you should know that it **is** their job to find the help you need.

If you are not in school, but want to be diagnosed/helped, contact your local learning disabilities association.

If you have any questions or don't know where to go, you can try and ask on [www.dyscalculiaforum.com](http://www.dyscalculiaforum.com).

The Dyscalculia Forum is an international discussion forum for dyscalculics, teachers, parents and other people interested in the math disability. The forum is completely nonprofit, not part of any organization. It is simply owned and maintained by people interested in dyscalculia, and exists to provide a place to find support. The forum opened in March 2005 and today it counts over 2000 members from all over the World.

# MATH DYSLEXIA

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# DYSCALCULIA



[dyscalculiaforum.com](http://dyscalculiaforum.com)  
[mail@dyscalculiaforum.com](mailto:mail@dyscalculiaforum.com)

## Symptoms

Here is a list of common dyscalculia symptoms. Having some of the symptoms does not mean that you have dyscalculia – no list of symptoms is a diagnosis method. A professional needs to test you, before you can be sure.

- Normal or above normal verbal skills: reading, writing, spelling. Good in areas of science, until math is required. May be good at geometry.
- Problems with time and direction. Having a hard time remembering schedules and keeping track of time. Gets lost easily and seems absent minded.
- Bad at addition, subtraction, division and multiplication - may be able to do an assignment one day, and forget how to do it the next.
- Cannot do taxes, budgeting or balance checkbooks - may be afraid of money.
- Unable to remember math rules, concepts, order of operations and basic math facts.
- May have problems with motor skills - can't remember sequences in aerobics/dance steps, fingering when playing an instrument etc.
- Can't remember rules and understand strategy in games and sports.

Read a more comprehensive list at [www.dyscalculiaforum.com](http://www.dyscalculiaforum.com)

## Facts

According to UK studies done by Gross-Tsur, Manor and Shalev in 1996, 6.5% are dyscalculic. According to studies done by Lewis, Hitch and Walker in 1994, 1.3% are dyscalculic while 2.3% are dyscalculic AND dyslexic - that means that according to this study 3.6% of the World's population are dyscalculic. That gives a total of between **3.6 and 6.5% of the World's population**.

There are many types of dyscalculia. Research specifically names four types: semantic retrieval dyscalculia, procedural dyscalculia, visuospatial dyscalculia, and number fact dyscalculia

Researchers around the World are still trying to find a specific cause of dyscalculia – opinions vary.

Dyscalculia is something people have all life, but the degree of it CAN change.



## What is Dyscalculia?

Dyscalculia is acknowledged in the medical world - it is in DSM-IV under 315.1, and WHO ICD-10 under F81.2, in the same category as dyslexia and other learning disabilities.

Dyscalculia is a specific learning disability in mathematics. Dyscalculia is a word you use to describe when people have significant problems with numbers - but still have a normal or above normal IQ. It seems that no dyscalculic has problems with math alone, but also struggle with problems being able to learn to tell time, left/right orientation, rules in games and much more.

Having dyscalculia does not mean that you can't do math at all (if that's the case, it's called *acalculia*), just that it is harder and that you need other learning methods, aimed specifically at the cause of your dyscalculia.