

Table 2

Common Examples of Obsessions and Compulsions:^{10,11,12} These examples are also listed in the appendix in a checklist table format (Appendix 7a and 7b). They may be photocopied for school or home use only, to track a student's symptoms in order to gauge frequency and/or isolate OCD behaviours for which strategies are needed. Parents may use the checklist to prepare the teacher for the tendencies of the new student, or to keep the doctor informed of symptoms.

Obsessions

**Symmetry or Exactness (ordering/arranging)
Perfectionism**

Needs to even up; achieve balance to avoid discomfort, disaster or bad luck. Writing must be perfect, things have to be "just right."

Checking

Concerned about making mistakes, injuries; afraid that something terrible might happen.

Scrupulosity: need to confess

Concerned about doing something sinful, doing the right thing or having told a lie. Overly concerned about morality in self or others.

Hoarding/Collecting

Worries something of value or importance (or that may be needed one day) will be thrown out.

Compulsions

- Writes-erases-rewrites words over and over to achieve perfection; often makes holes in paper; tests/assignment often not done on time or are incomplete.
 - Does excessive note-taking, becomes very upset about minor mistakes.
 - Cannot get started: "It won't be perfect anyway."; not "sure" about instructions.
 - Straightens and re-straightens, lines up books, papers, pens, pencils. Repacks book bag over and over.
 - Adjusts/re-adjusts clothing; slow in dressing; clothes just don't "feel right."
 - Taps on one side of body and then the other.
 - Walks down hallway in certain pattern; needs to repeat from beginning if interrupted.
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- Checks and re-checks math computations.
 - Checks and re-checks locker: "Is it locked?"; "Did I get the right book for class?"
 - Procrastinates leaving class; not sure if something important has been left behind.
 - Checks and re-checks locks on doors and windows (to be sure burglars can't enter).
 - Checks for injuries; listens/watches for evidence that he has caused harm to someone.
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- Confesses to behaviours he never did; seeks reassurance he wasn't responsible.
 - Confesses to sins of religious origins.
 - Gets stuck on rightness or wrongness of moral or social issue, e.g.: "John should not have cut in line in front of me." Cannot let go of perceived injustice.
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- Reluctant to clean out book bag; won't throw anything away.
 - Saves/collects anything that is perceived as important, e.g., string, paper slips, short pencils.
 - Can't stop thinking and talking about "completing" sports card collection.

Common Examples of Obsessions and Compulsions, continued

Table 3

Compulsions	Obsessions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Counts (out loud or silently) files, books, pens, footsteps, stairs. ■ Counts number of times activity must be performed, such as tapping wall, washing hands. ■ Counts a certain way to prevent something bad from happening. ■ If interrupted has to start over from beginning. 	<p>Has a need to count.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reads and re-reads text. ■ Counts and repeatedly checks for letters that look a certain way, e.g., has to count number of "S's" that look like a snake. ■ Has to skip over every word with the letter "S" in it. 	<p>Concerned about not understanding something just read; searches for a perfect phrase or word; has obsessive thoughts about shapes of certain letters in book.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeatedly asks questions over and over as related to obsession. Answers do not provide resolution or comfort. ■ Continues to doubt answer to his question. 	<p>Reassurance Seeking Not sure if something is right or understands it correctly. Concerned about something disturbing in the news or whether family is safe.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoids contact with peers, objects, e.g., door knobs, chalk, handouts, books. ■ Avoids messy/sticky projects. ■ Makes frequent and lengthy trips to bathroom; observer notices student has red, chapped hands. 	<p>Contamination Concerned about illnesses, dirt, germs, environmental contaminants, bodily waste.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoids using knives, scissors; avoids walking past windows in case they break. ■ Draws disturbing pictures or writes disturbing phrases/words. ■ Avoids speaking in public or in front of class just in case obscenity or insult is blurted. 	<p>Aggression/Sexual Concerned about harming self or others: "I'm not careful enough"; has violent or horrific images in mind, e.g., images of murders, violent acts. Concerned about homosexuality. Concerned about blurring obscenities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eats food in a particular order; food cannot touch other food. ■ Smells hands, food, people. ■ Repeats sounds, words, music over and over in head. ■ Repeats silently to self, or out loud, things he must not forget, e.g., old telephone numbers. ■ Avoids rooms, chapters in books, bus routes if they have unlucky number, e.g., 13. ■ Licks self or others. ■ Needs to finish verbalizations if interrupted. ■ Cuts or burns skin. ■ Picks at sores. ■ Bites nails. ■ Cracks knuckles, especially in a specific pattern. 	<p>Miscellaneous Obsessions Thinks about food and eating; needs to eat in a certain way; has superstitious thoughts, mental rituals (other than checking/counting); needs to know irrelevant information, e.g., license plates, old telephone numbers, names of actors on TV show; needs to experience feeling of self injurious behaviour. Thinks of "good" thoughts in head to undo "bad" thoughts.</p>