

Executive Skill Resource

When we talk about executive functions, we're generally referring to a set of cognitive skills that help us manage our thoughts, actions, and emotions to achieve goals. Our youngest learners are just beginning their journey to build these skills. Here are some of the core skills that make up executive functions, with short definitions:

- **Working Memory:** The ability to hold information in your mind and manipulate it over short periods, like remembering a set of instructions while you're carrying them out.
- **Inhibitory Control (or Impulse Control):** The ability to resist impulses, stop a behavior, or pause before acting, such as not blurting out an answer or waiting your turn.
- **Cognitive Flexibility (or Shifting):** The ability to switch gears, adapt to new situations, or think about problems from different perspectives, like easily moving from one activity to another or trying a new approach when one isn't working.
- **Planning:** The ability to set goals and map out the steps needed to achieve them, like figuring out how to build a LEGO tower or what materials you need for an art project.
- **Organization:** The ability to create and maintain systems to keep information or materials in order, such as putting toys back in their designated bins or keeping track of school supplies.
- **Initiation:** The ability to start a task or activity without procrastination, like beginning homework or tidying up a play area.
- **Self-Monitoring:** The ability to observe and evaluate one's own performance and adjust as needed, such as noticing a mistake in a drawing and correcting it or realizing you're off-task and getting back to work.
- **Emotional Regulation:** The ability to manage and respond to emotions in a constructive way, like calming down when feeling frustrated or expressing feelings appropriately.