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# Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily living (IADL)

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**The full complete version includes –**

- Overview information
- Scoring/ Administration instructions
- Complete questionnaire/Assessment (8 sets of ADL question criteria)

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# The Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) Scale

**WHY:** The assessment of functional status is critical when caring for older adults. Normal aging changes, acute illness, worsening chronic illness, and hospitalization can contribute to a decline in the ability to perform tasks necessary to live independently in the community. The information from a functional assessment can provide objective data to assist with targeting individualized rehabilitation needs or to plan for specific in-home services such as meal preparation, nursing care, home-maker services, personal care, or continuous supervision. A functional assessment can also assist the clinician to focus on the person's baseline capabilities, facilitating early recognition of changes that may signify a need either for additional resources or for a medical work-up (Gallo, 2006).

**BEST TOOL:** The Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Scale (IADL) is an appropriate instrument to assess independent living skills (Lawton & Brody, 1969). These skills are considered more complex than the basic activities of daily living as measured by the Katz Index of ADLs. The instrument is most useful for identifying how a person is functioning at the present time, and to identify improvement or deterioration over time. There are eight domains of function measured with the Lawton IADL scale. Women are scored on all 8 areas of function; historically, for men, the areas of food preparation, housekeeping, and laundering are excluded. Clients are scored according to their highest level of functioning in that category. A summary score ranges from 0 (low function, dependent) to 8 (high function, independent) for women, and 0 through 5 for men.

**TARGET POPULATION:** This instrument is intended to be used among older adults, and can be used in community or hospital settings. The instrument is not useful for institutionalized older adults. It can be used as a baseline assessment tool and to compare baseline function to periodic assessments.

**VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY:** Few studies have been performed to test the Lawton IADL scale psychometric properties. The Lawton IADL Scale was originally tested concurrently with the Physical Self-Maintenance Scale (PSMS). Reliability was established with twelve subjects interviewed by one interviewer with the second rater present but not participating in the interview process. Inter-rater reliability was established at .85. The validity of the Lawton IADL was tested by determining the correlation of the Lawton IADL with four scales that measured domains of functional status, the Physical Classification (6-point rating of physical health), Mental Status Questionnaire (10-point test of orientation and memory), Behavior and Adjustment rating scales (4-6-point measure of intellectual, person, behavioral and social adjustment), and the PSMS (6-item ADLs). A total of 180 research subjects participated in the study, however, few received all five evaluations. All correlations were significant at the .01 or .05 level. To avoid potential gender bias at the time the instrument was developed, specific items were omitted for men. This assessment instrument is widely used both in research and in clinical practice.