

Observation: Event Recording

When the behavior you are observing can easily be counted, event recording may be the best method to use as it does not require much effort and may not interfere with ongoing activities. A behavior can be easily counted when:

- the behavior has a clear beginning and clear end
AND
- the behavior does not occur at such a high rate that it is difficult to document

There are several ways to keep track of behaviors as they occur. You can use a wrist counter, put paperclips, pennies, or buttons in one pocket and move them to a different “target” pocket as each behavior occurs, or make tally marks on a piece of paper. At the end of the observation period, calculate your results. This particular form makes use of tally marks. However, you may choose a different method to keep track of behaviors as they occur. Examples of behaviors you can measure by counting include leaving one’s seat, raising one’s hand, yelling out an answer, asking to use the restroom, tardy, on time for class, etc.

When you observe the behavior:

- Record the date
- Record a tally mark each time the behavior occurs
- At the end of your observation period, total the number of tally marks for that day (if using a different method to keep track of behavior, enter the total in the Total column. This information is what you will graph).

EXAMPLE:

Behavior of Focus: Leaving seat during class time

Behavior Definition: Being at least one foot away from desk/seat during class, any time after the tardy bell rings. This includes when he asked for permission to leave his seat.

Date	Start and End Time	Tally of Occurrence of Behavior	Total Number of Times Behavior Occurred
11/5	10:00 – 10:25 a.m.	### II	7
11/6	11:55 – 12:14 p.m.	IIII	4
11/7	10:15 – 10:32 a.m.	### I	6
11/8	12:35 – 12:47 p.m.	###	5
11/9	11:20 – 11:47 a.m.	### III	8