

Levels of Learning Disability

There are lots of different ways that a learning disability can affect a person's life. People with a learning disability are often divided into broad categories which are:

- mild learning disability
- moderate learning disability
- severe learning disability
- profound and multiple learning disability

These different levels are not exact and there is still debate around how useful they are. They are largely based on IQ tests and there are some people who say it would be better to base any level of learning disability on the amount of support a person needs.

However, at the moment the levels remain and we can define them in the following ways:

A person with a **mild** learning disability might have trouble learning things like formal educational skills. They often are quite good at everyday living skills.

Someone with **moderate** learning disability can have difficulty in learning most things. They will probably need help in learning and developing everyday living skills.

A person with **severe** learning disability may have a lot of difficulty with language and learning. They are likely to need support with many daily living skills.

Someone with **profound and multiple** learning disability usually has extreme difficulty with all learning. They are likely to have limited ways of communicating and may have extra health needs. The person may also have physical impairments as well as learning disability. They normally rely on others for support with personal care.

These are the different levels of learning disability, but talking about people in this way can sound very negative. It concentrates on what people cannot do and not what they can do. We should remember that these terms are all labels that are put on people with learning disability and that they are, first and foremost, people like us with a range of talents and personalities.