

Behaviorism

About behaviorism

Some of the oldest learning theories belong to the behaviorism as [learning paradigm](#) and date back from the beginning of the 20th century.

Behaviorists view **learning as a visible change in ones behavior**. Behaviorism assumes that the learner starts off as a clear state and simply responds to environmental stimuli. Those responses **can be shaped through positive and negative reinforcement** increasing or decreasing the probability of repeating the same behavior.

The key component to this paradigm are observable behaviors and their measuring.

Learning theories:

- [Clasical conditioning](#) (Ivan Pavlov, 1849-1936)
- [Operant conditioning](#) (Burrhus Skinner, 1904-1990)

Important authors and contributors

- John Watson, Ivan Pavlov, B Skinner, E. L. Thorndike (connectionism), Bandura, Tolman (moving toward cognitivism)

Critic

Behaviorism today mostly **lost its influence** and let **cognitivism take its place** as the dominant paradigm. Critics of behaviorist learning usually argue that behaviorism **does not explain all kinds o learning** since it ignores inner mind activities. Behaviorism also neglects the fact that behavior also depends on learners inner subjective representation of environment and learning history.

Bibliography

[Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy: Behaviorism](#)

Read more

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Baum, William M. Understanding behaviorism: science, behavior, and culture. Wiley-Blackwell, 1994.

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