

Department of Psychology
200 University Avenue West
Waterloo, Ontario
Canada
N2L 3G1

Dear Colleague,

The Memory Failures Scale (MFS) is in the public domain and special permission is not required to use it for any purpose. It is a measure of memory failures that people tend to experience in everyday life. The MFS is highly correlated with, but distinct from, attention-related cognitive errors and has been validated using large student and community samples. Here we present the current version of the scale, along with psychometric and normative data comparing MFS deciles with a number of relevant measures, including the [MAAS-LO](#), [ARCES](#), [SART](#), [BPS](#), [BDI-II](#), and [ESS](#). The MFS is scored either by simple summation or by calculating item mean scores, as used below.

Feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions about the use of the MFS or our research.

Sincerely,

J. Allan Cheyne, PhD acheyne@uwaterloo.ca
Jonathan Carriere, MA jcarrier@uwaterloo.ca
Dan Smilek, PhD dsmilek@uwaterloo.ca

For more of our research visit <http://oops.uwaterloo.ca>

MFS

The following statements are about minor memory failures everyone experiences from time to time, but we have very little information about just how common they are. The great majority of time these little foibles are harmless, though they do have serious safety implications in industry and everyday life. We want to know how frequently these sorts of things have happened to you.

There are 12 Questions. Please answer by circling a number on the scale provided below each question.

1. I forget people's names immediately after they have introduced themselves.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

2. I forget to pass on messages (e.g., phone messages).

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

3. I forget what I went to the supermarket to buy.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

4. I forget passwords.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

5. I forget people's names, even though I rehearsed them.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

6. I forget important dates like birthdays and anniversaries.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

7. I forget appointments.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

8. I forget to set my alarm.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

9. I find I cannot quite remember something though it is on the tip of my tongue.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

10. I remember facts but not where I learned them.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

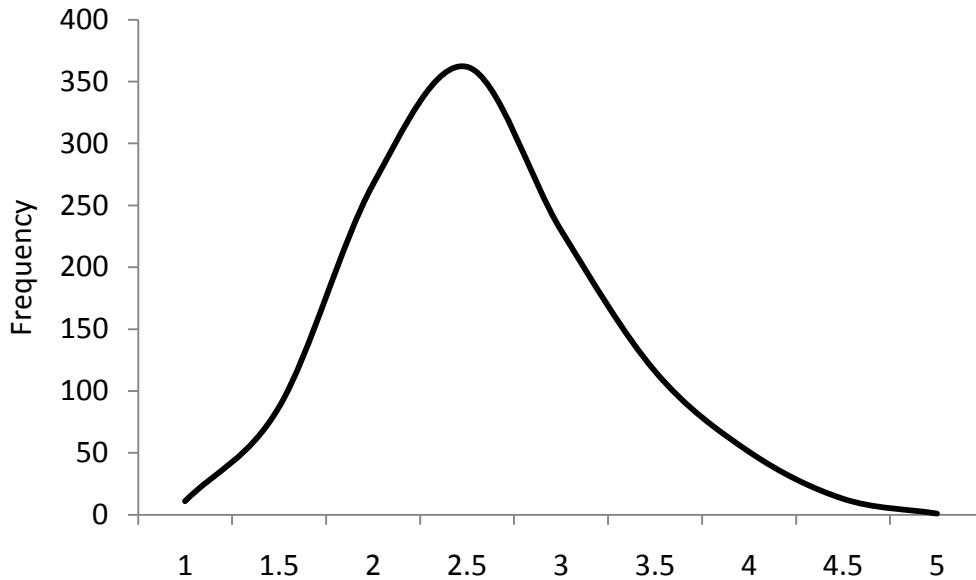
11. Even though I put things in a special place I still forget where they are.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

12. I double-book myself when scheduling appointments.

never	rarely	sometimes	often	very often
1	2	3	4	5

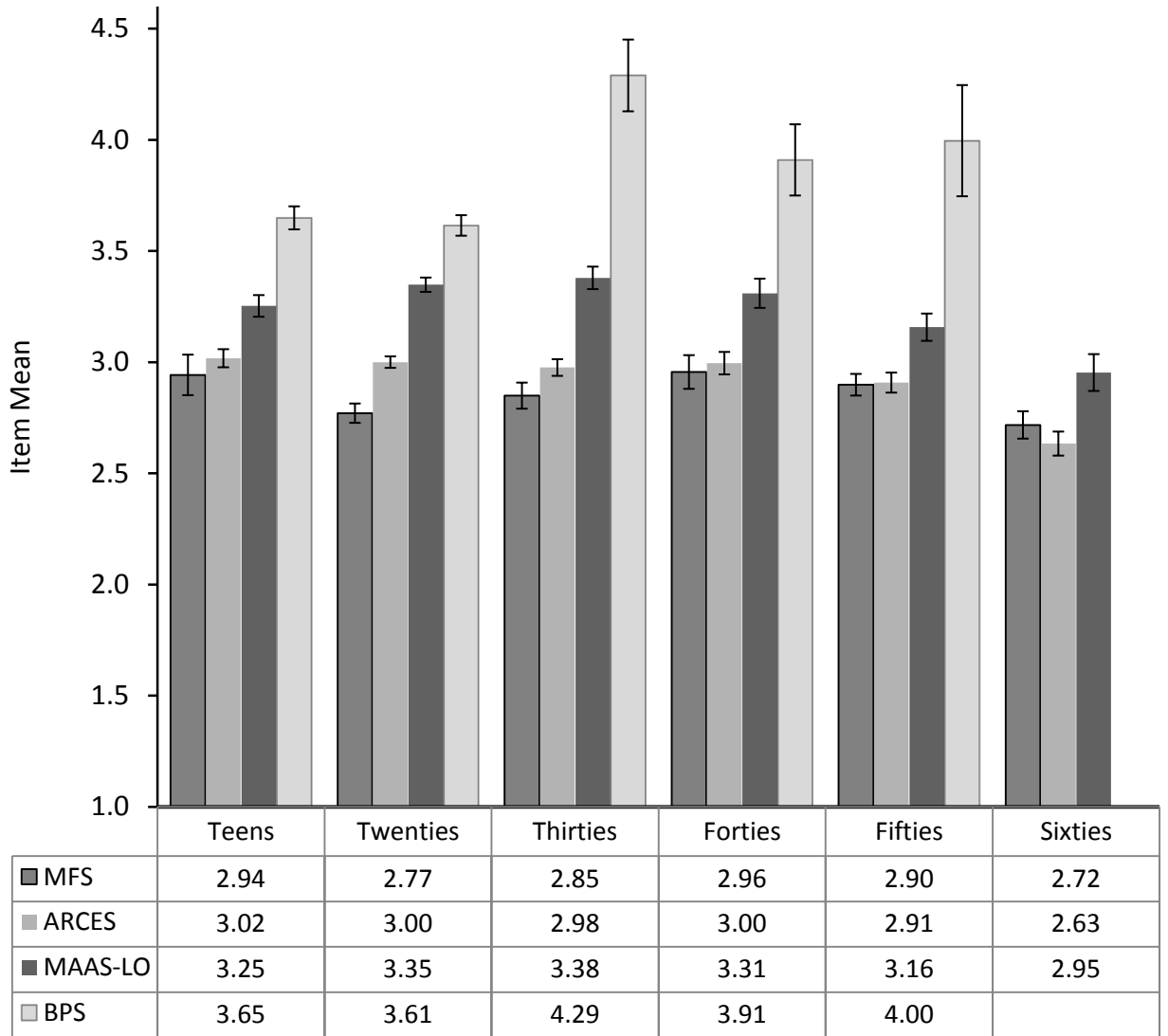
MFS Item Mean



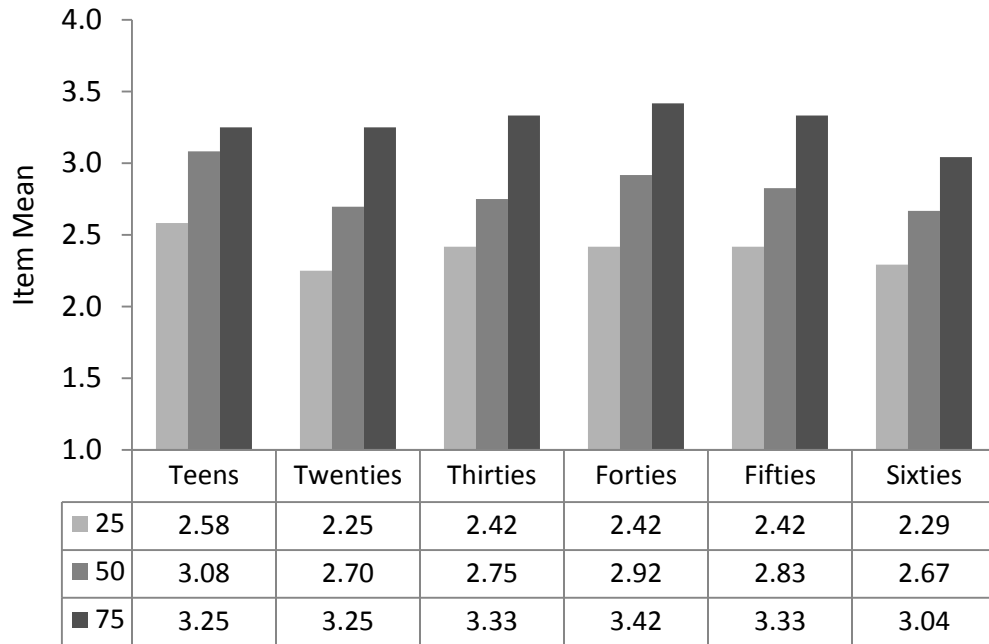
	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	
	11	87	267	362	230	116	51	13	1	Frequency
	1.0	8.6	32.1	63.9	84.1	94.3	98.8	99.9	100	Percentile
	1.0	7.6	23.5	31.8	20.2	10.2	4.5	1.1	0.1	Percentage
										Measure (N)*
-	2.29	2.58	2.93	3.24	3.62	3.77	-	-	-	ARCES (1120)
-	2.51	2.87	3.21	3.62	3.92	4.26	-	-	-	MAAS-LO (1125)
-	0.33	0.37	0.40	0.45	0.48	0.57	-	-	-	SART Errors (711)
-	3.09	3.32	3.65	3.87	4.08	4.57	-	-	-	BPS (359)
-	0.40	0.47	0.52	0.74	0.99	1.26	-	-	-	BDI-II (342)
-	0.74	0.92	0.99	1.17	1.35	1.34	-	-	-	ESS (768)

* Cells with n < 20 are excluded

Measure by Decade



Score Quartiles by Decade



Measures Included

- ARCES:** [Carriere, Cheyne, & Smilek \(2008\)](#). Everyday attention lapses and memory failures: The affective consequences of mindlessness. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *17*, 835-847. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2007.04.008
- BDI-II:** Beck, A. T., Steer, R. A., & Brown, G. K. (1996). *Manual for the Beck Depression Inventory–II*. San Antonio, TX: The Psychological Corporation.
- BPS:** Farmer, R., & Sundberg, N. D. (1986). Boredom proneness: The development and correlates of a new scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *50*, 4-17. doi:10.1207/s15327752jpa5001_2
- ESS:** Johns, M. W. (1991). A new method for measuring daytime sleepiness: The Epworth Sleepiness Scale. *Sleep*, *14*, 540-545.
- MAAS-LO:** [Carriere, Cheyne, & Smilek \(2008\)](#). Everyday attention lapses and memory failures: The affective consequences of mindlessness. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *17*, 835-847. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2007.04.008 (See also the original MAAS in: Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *84*, 822-848. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.822)
- MFS:** [Carriere, Cheyne, & Smilek \(2008\)](#). Everyday attention lapses and memory failures: The affective consequences of mindlessness. *Consciousness and Cognition*, *17*, 835-847. doi:10.1016/j.concog.2007.04.008
- SART Errors:** Robertson, I. H., Manly, T., Andrade, J., Baddeley, B. T., & Yiend, J. (1997). 'Oops!': Performance correlates of everyday attentional failures in traumatic brain injured and normal subjects. *Neuropsychologia*, *35*, 747-758. doi:10.1016/S0028-3932(97)00015-8