

**EXP 3422**  
**Conditioning and Learning**

**Characteristics of Habituation**

From: Thompson & Spencer Psychological Review, 1966, 73:16-43.

1. Given that a particular stimulus elicits a response, repeated application of the stimulus results in a decreased response (habituation). The decrease is usually a negative exponential function of the number of stimulus presentations.
2. If stimulus is withheld, the response tends to recover over time (spontaneous recovery).
3. If repeated series of habituation training and spontaneous recovery are given, habituation becomes successively more rapid (potentiation of habituation).
4. The more rapid the frequency, the more rapid and/or pronounced is habituation.
5. The weaker the stimulus, the more rapid habituation.
6. The effects of habituation may proceed beyond the zero response level.
7. Habituation of response to a given stimulus exhibits generalization to other stimuli.
8. Presentation of another (usually strong) stimulus results in recovery of the habituated response (dishabituation).
9. Repeated presentation of dishabituator results in less dishabituation (habituation of dishabituation).

Habituation: Decrease in the strength of a response due to repeated presentation of the stimulus by itself.
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Sensitization: Increase in the strength of a response due to repeated presentation of the stimulus by itself.
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