Care Skillsbase: Skills Check 19

Using Numbers in Care Work (B)

Interviewer's pack
Contents

- Skills Check guidance, answers and activity
- Feedback form
- Personal development form

Summary	
Suitable for	Senior care/support worker, care/support worker
Skill checked	Number skills
	Skills Checks 18 and 19 provide different exercises to check number skills through problem solving. Choose the Skills Check that suits your organisation best. If you need to check number skills frequently, vary the Skills Check you use.
	For a domiciliary version, see Skills Check 18.
Covers	Care work problems involving numbers and calculation including fractions and percentages
Learning for interviewer	Can the member of staff apply number skills to solve typical problems in care work?
Learning for member of staff	How number skills are used in care work
Approx time needed	Total: 30 minutes (15 minutes for Skills Check and 15 minutes for feedback)
How it works	Asks the person to use number skills to solve seven short problems typical of care work. Discuss the person's answers to check understanding.
Notes	Answers are included with the guidance overleaf.
Before you start	Read the **general guidance** in the **Skills Check** area of the Care Skillsbase website.

We welcome suggestions to improve this Skills Check. Please use the contact form on our website at www.scie.org.uk/careskillsbase

Using Numbers in Care Work (B)

Guidance

Use this Skills Check to find out if the person has the **number skills and knowledge** required for their job.

These problems offer the person an opportunity to use knowledge and skills relating to:

- four rules of arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)
- time (calculations involving hours and minutes; 24-hour clock, calendar)
- money (calculations involving pounds and pence)
- fluid measurement (ml)
- percentages
- ratio (1 part to 5 parts)
- useful symbols and language (e.g. £ and %, 'spoonfuls', 'every 2 weeks', 'not counting').

Check that the person understands that each problem offers three options:

- try to solve the problem by making calculations and arriving at an answer
- tick a box to show that they do not know how to solve the problem
- tick a box to show that they do not understand the question.

Say that at work it is not always possible to use a calculator and because of that you want the inductee to try to solve the problems without one.

Tell the person that no overall score is awarded. The point of the Skills Check is to see how they get on with the different problems.

Point out the instruction to note their workings. This will help you understand their answers afterwards.

Tell the inductee to spend about ten minutes on the Skills Check and not to worry if they can't do one or more of the problems. They should just move on to the next.

Tell them to let you know when they have done all they can. If they have not finished after ten minutes, stop them anyway and ask them to show you how they got on.

Before you go through their answers (correct answers below), ask the person what they thought of the Skills Check and if it seemed relevant to their work.

Note: Skills Checks 18 and 19 offer alternative sets of similar problems.

Answers

Note: The workings-out shown here are just one of the possible ways to arrive at a correct solution. There are other ways to arrive at the right answer.

1. Stair lift check

Calendar, multiplication, addition: 2 weeks = 2 x 7 days = 14 days; 4th June +14 days = 18th June; 18th June + 14 days = 2nd July (18th June + 7 days = 25th June; 25 + 7 = 32; June has 30 days)
Answer: Check 1: 18th June; Check 2: 2nd July

2. Working the night shift

24-hour clock, addition: 22:30 to 03:15 = 10.30 p.m. to 3.15 a.m. = 4 hours 45 minutes; 04:00 to 06:45 = 2 hours 45 minutes; 4 hours 45 minutes plus 2 hours 45 minutes = 7 hours 30 minutes
Answer: 7 hrs 30 mins (or 7½ hrs)

3. Medicine

Multiplication: 2 pills x 4 times a day = 8 pills a day; 8 pills x 7 days = 56 pills
Subtraction: 56 pills needed for 1 week; difference between 56 and 39 pills = 17
Answer: No, she is 17 pills short. She will run out of pills on the fifth day.

4. Pay rise

Percentages, division: 3% = 3 in every 100; 3% of £100 = £3; £50 is half of £100; half of £3 = £1.50; 3% of £50 = £1.50
Answer: Pat = £103; Chris = £51.50

5. Change for Mr Sadjic

Money, decimals, addition, subtraction: 1.79 + 2.25 + 0.99 + 0.75 = 5.78; 10.00 – 5.78 = 4.22

Answer: £4.22

6. Diluting detergent

Ratio, multiplication, addition: 35ml x 5 parts water = 175 ml water; 175ml water + 35ml detergent = 210ml mixture; jug holds 200ml; 200ml is less than 210ml

Answer: (a) 175 ml   (b) No

7. Earnings

Money, decimals, multiplication: 6.79 x 8 = 54.32; 6.79 x 13 = £88.27

Answer: (a) £54.32   (b) £88.27

Understand the Job: Using Numbers in Care Work (B)

Problem-solving is a vital part of health and social care work. Use this activity to learn more about typical problems and the **number skills** that help solve them.

First, write your name and today's date on the line below.

(First name)   (Last name)   (Date: Day-Month-Year)

....

Please show your workings! Even if you can do the problem in your head, please note the calculations you made to help the interviewer understand how you solved the problem.

Example problem showing how to note your calculations	
You work five days a week. You drive five miles to work and five miles back home each day. How many miles do you drive to and from work each week?	
For your workings	**Answer:** *50 miles*
5 + 5 = 10 miles *10 x 5 days = 50 miles*	
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

Problems

1. Stair lift check	
You have to do a safety check on the stair lift every two weeks. Imagine today is 4th June and you have just done a check this morning. On what dates will you make the next two checks?	
For your workings	**Answer:** **Check 1.** **Check 2.**
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

2. Working the night shift

You came on night shift at 22:30, had a break between 03:15 and 04:00 and left at 06:45. How long did you work (not including your break)?

For your workings	**Answer:**
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

3. Medicine

Miss Kay takes pills for her angina. There are 39 pills in her pill bottle. Her dosage is 2 pills, 4 times a day. Are there enough pills in her bottle for a week's supply?

For your workings	**Answer:**
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

Understand the Job: Using Numbers in Care Work (B) continued

4. Pay rise

Pat is a part-time carer who earns £100 a week. Chris is a part-time carer who earns £50 per week. Next month, both will get a 3% pay rise. What will each earn per week after the pay rise?

| For your workings | Answer: Pat will earn |
| | Chris will earn |

or   I don't know how to work this out ☐   *or*   I don't understand the question ☐

5. Change for Mr Sadjic

Mr Sadjic has asked you to do some shopping for him. Here's his list and the price of the items:

Pack of four AA batteries £1.79, toothpaste £2.25, sweets 99p, magazine 75p.

He gave you £10. How much change will you give him?

| For your workings | Answer: |

or   I don't know how to work this out ☐   *or*   I don't understand the question ☐

6. Diluting detergent

You are making up a cleaning solution by mixing detergent with water. You have 35ml of detergent and a 200ml jug. The solution needs 5 parts water for every 1 part detergent.

(a) How much water do you need to add to mix up all your detergent?

(b) Is your 200ml jug big enough to hold your solution?

For your workings	Answer: (a)
	Answer: (b)
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

7. Earnings

A care assistant earns £6.79 an hour. (a) How much will the care assistant earn in 8 hours?

(b) How much will the care assistant earn in 13 hours?

For your workings	Answer: (a)
	Answer: (b)
or I don't know how to work this out ☐	*or* I don't understand the question ☐

Feedback form	Date:
Staff member's name	
Staff member's job title	
Interviewer's name	
Interviewer's job title	

1. Interviewer's view The member of staff ...	No	Partly	Yes
a. Can solve typical care problems effectively.			
b. Can communicate effectively about typical care problems.			

2. Interviewer's reasons The member of staff ...	No	Partly	Yes
a. Understood the questions (knowledge of key words, symbols and concepts).			
b. Used number skills and knowledge to solve the problems; did not guess the answers (knowledge of how to solve problems).			
c. Gave the correct answer (ability to make accurate calculations).			
d. Wrote calculations and answers clearly (legibility).			
e. Completed the activity within the allocated time (ability to problem-solve quickly).			
f. Explained their answers clearly and coherently afterwards.			

3. Next steps to help develop skills and knowledge for the job	Yes	No
a. Interviewer will arrange monitoring, feedback and support from a supervisor.		
b. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve member of staff's understanding of key social care words and ideas.		
c. Interviewer and member of staff will plan personal development to improve member of staff's number skills and knowledge.		

4. Interviewer's signature	Staff member's signature

Use the other side of this sheet for notes.

Personal development form	Date:
Staff member's name	
Staff member's job title	
Interviewer's name	
Interviewer's job title	

1. Learning aim: to work safely and meet quality standards, the member of staff should develop the following number skills and knowledge	Tick (✓) if 'yes'
a. Knowledge of key words, symbols and concepts (to understand problems).	
b. Maths methods (to solve problems).	
c. Ability to make accurate calculations (to solve problems correctly).	
d. Ability to write numbers that are easily readable (to pass on information).	
e. Ability to solve problems quickly (to cope with work situations).	
f. Ability to explain problems and solutions (to support team work and help service users).	

2. How will the learning happen?

3. What support and resources will be needed to make the learning successful?

4. When will the learning happen?

5. How will we know the learning has been successful?

6. Progress review date

7. Interviewer's signature	Staff member's signature