



What Are Your Compulsions? ^[1]

[Liya Panayotova](#) ^[2], Psychologist, [liyap.com](#) 8K reads

Now that you have a completed list of your obsessions, it's time to take another step towards a better understanding of your OCD. As you already know, compulsions represent actions or rituals that a person struggling with OCD engages in, as a way to reduce the anxiety caused by his/her obsessive thoughts or images.

Below, you'll find a list of the most common compulsions that people with OCD may often engage in. Note that some of these behaviors may also be found in people who do not struggle with OCD. The difference comes from those behaviors being compulsive in OCD individuals – you'd like to stop engaging in them, but you are not able to.

Keep in mind that a behavior can be called compulsive only when it's done in an excessive manner and with the sole purpose of eliminating anxiety. For instance, washing your hands after going to the bathroom is not considered a compulsive behavior, but disinfecting your hands each time you touch something in public use, such as a door or a banknote, would be considered compulsive. If you are unsure whether a behavior is compulsive, consider this – do most people you know engage in it as well? If not, then it might be a compulsion.

Feel free to add to the list any compulsions you believe you engage in, but are not included here.

COMPULSION
Handwashing or showering (multiple times a day)
Cleaning, scrubbing, disinfecting, rinsing, etc.
Wearing gloves, masks and other protective gear (except when you're working in hazardous environments)
Keeping things labeled, coded and in perfect order

Collecting various items (magazines, newspapers, napkins, etc.)

Arranging objects in a certain manner

Tapping or touching things for an exact period or a certain number of times

Eating, drinking, reading, driving, writing, sleeping, walking, etc. in a certain way (with no exceptions)

Dressing in a certain order or manner, every time

Checking electrical appliances, stoves, locks, doors, windows, etc. a certain number of times

Making sure you didn't hurt yourself or others, by mistake or intentionally

Rewriting, rereading or retracing the steps of a certain action, to make sure you didn't forget anything

Having to categorize or delete an e-mail, immediately after you've read it

Checking for mistakes, errors, imperfections, etc.

Praying after each mistake, fault, sin or omission

Self-inflicted punishment

Having to recite a prayer or a mantra a certain number of times

Repeating certain words, out loud or quietly

Making lists for everything

Refusing to get rid of useless items or delete files from your computer
Keeping old notebooks, records, flyers, brochures, etc.
“Adopting” every animal you find on the street
Avoiding certain places, objects or people
Taking excessive and unnecessary medical tests and treatments
Having to use a product/item for a strict period of time (even though the product/item is still usable)
Mental rituals (mentally repeating a certain phrase, counting to a certain number, etc.)
Seeking reassurance about your sexuality
Avoiding relationships
Other compulsions/rituals

It's important not to lose this list because you'll need it for the rest of the course. If you think that you might misplace it, save it to a memorable directory on your computer and phone, or print a few copies.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/e/what-are-your-compulsions?gid=21785>

Links

[1] <https://explorable.com/e/what-are-your-compulsions>

[2] <https://explorable.com/users/Liya%20Panayotova>