

Sensation

Sensation refers to the processing of senses by the [sensory system](#).

The sensation is the body's detection of external or internal [stimulation](#) (e.g., eyes detecting light waves, ears detecting sound waves). [Perception](#) utilizes the brain to make sense of the stimulation (e.g., seeing a chair, or hearing a guitar).

Sensation involves 3 steps.

1. Sensory receptors detect stimuli
2. Sensory stimuli are transduced into electrical impulses to be decoded by the brain
3. Electrical impulses move down neural pathways to specific parts of the brain wherein the impulses are decoded into useful information (perception)

For example, when touched by a soft feather, mechanoreceptors, which are sensory receptors in the skin register that the skin has been touched. That sensory information is then turned into neural information through a process called transduction. Next, the neural information travels down neural pathways to the appropriate part of the brain, wherein the sensations are perceived as the touch of a feather.

Children are often taught five basic senses: seeing (i.e., vision), hearing (i.e., audition), tasting (i.e., gustation), smelling (i.e., olfaction), and touching. However, there are actually many more senses including vestibular sense, kinesthetic sense, sense of thirst, sense of hunger, and cutaneous sense to name a few.

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