

## BRIEF SUMMARY

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**Aizpurua, A., & Koutstaal, W. (in press). Fluid intelligence. To appear in S. K. Whitbourne (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Adulthood and Aging*. Wiley-Blackwell.**

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Within psychology and the cognitive and brain sciences, the term *fluid intelligence* is used to refer to an individual's ability to flexibly and adaptively solve novel problems for which prior learning and culturally acquired knowledge provide little benefit. Contrasted with *crystallized intelligence*, or an individual's culturally acquired knowledge, fluid intelligence is a broad and overarching concept that involves multiple cognitive skills such as inductive reasoning, comparing relations, and abstracting, and is correlated with working memory and cognitive control. Tests intended to assess fluid reasoning, such as progressive matrices or figure classification, are often visual-spatial. Conceptual models of fluid intelligence are reviewed, together with alternative views. Prominent empirical findings relating to cognitive changes over the lifespan, historical changes in test performance, and the neural bases of fluid intelligence are considered, as well as individual and developmental differences that may contribute to and maintain flexibly adaptive "on-the-spot" thinking and reasoning capacity.

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