

Welcome

SVP 5 Age, Education, Work Experience
and Specific Vocational Preparation



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Factors in Hypothetical Questions

[Age](#)
[Education](#)
[Work Experience](#)
[Specific Vocational Preparation](#)
[Physical Exertion](#)

[20 CFR 404.1563 and 416.963](#)
[https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/public_experts/Vocational_Experts_\(VE\)_Handbook-508.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/public_experts/Vocational_Experts_(VE)_Handbook-508.pdf)



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Overview

Vocational Factors Considered in Each Hypothetical Question

- **Age** ([CFR 404-1563](#))
 - Younger Person: Under Age 50.
 - Person Closely Approaching Advanced Age: Age 50-54
 - Person Of Advanced Age: Age 55-59
 - Person Closely Approaching Retirement Age: 60 ([CFR 404-1568\(d\)\(4\)](#))
- **Education** ([CFR 404-1564](#))
 - Illiterate
 - Marginal Education: 6th Grade Level Or Below
 - Limited Education: 7th Through 11th Grade Level
 - High School Education Or Above
 - Inability To Communicate In English
- **Work Experience** – AKA 15 Year Rule ([CFR 404-1565](#))
- **Skill Requirements** ([CFR 404-1568](#))
 - Unskilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled
- **Physical Exertion** ([CFR 404-1567](#)) (Per Grids) – To be covered in SVP 6.
 - Sedentary, Light, Medium, Heavy, and Very Heavy



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GRID RULES EXAMPLE**

Rule	Age	Education	Previous work experience	Decision
202.01	Advanced age	Limited or less	Unskilled or none	Disabled
202.02	do *	do	Skilled or semiskilled—skills not transferable	Do _
202.03	do	do .. *	Skilled or semiskilled—skills transferable ^R	Not disabled
202.04	do	High school graduate or more—does not provide for direct entry into skilled work ^R	Unskilled or none	Disabled
202.05	do	High school graduate or more—provides for direct entry into skilled work ^R	do	Not disabled
202.06	do	High school graduate or more—does not provide for direct entry into skilled work ^R	Skilled or semiskilled—skills not transferable	Disabled
202.07	do	do	Skilled or semiskilled—skills transferable ^R	Not disabled

* "do or do." is an abbreviation for "Ditto."
 ** This Grid (202) is for Light Work Only
 Full GRID Table found at: https://www.ssa.gov/OP_HHS/p1904/404-app-902.htm



Claimant's Age

[CFR 404-1563](#)

Five Age Categories

18 – 44 years	Younger Individual
45 – 49 years	Older Individual
50-54 years	Closely Approaching Advanced Age
55+ years	Advanced Age
60 – 64 years	Closing Approaching Retirement



Claimant's Age - Subcategories

- Age = chronological age.
- Age categories - not mechanically in borderline situations.
- Subcategories - in two of them that apply in some cases.
- It's the ALJ's responsibility to determine when to use an age category that is different from the chronological age.
 - [CFR 404-1563](#)

18-44 years	
45-49 years	Older Individual <i>"We also have a rule for some claimants who are age 45-49 and who are illiterate in English or unable to communicate in English."</i>
50-54 years	Closely Approaching Advanced Age
55+ years	Advanced Age
60-64 years	Closing Approaching Retirement <i>"We also have separate rules for some claimants in this category who are closely approaching retirement age (age 60 or older)."</i>



Claimant's Age Definition Used in Rules

20 CFR 404.1563 Cont'd

[1] However, our regulations provide that we do not apply the age categories mechanically in a borderline situation. 20 CFR 404.1563(b) and 416.963(b). It is the ALJ's responsibility to determine when to use an age category that is different from the claimant's chronological age.



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Why does a claimant's age matter?

SSA "consider(s) advancing age to be an increasingly limiting factor in the person's ability to make an adjustment to other work."

[CFR 404-1563](#)



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Vocational Adjustment

- The impairment must prevent the claimant from making an adjustment to any other work. [Step 5 - 20 CFR 404.1520g](#)
- Once attaining age 55 and limited to sedentary work, or 60 and limited to light work, there must be very little skill transferability/vocational adjustment in terms of work tools, work processes, work settings, or the industry. [Grid rule 201\(f\)](#)
- To establish transferability of skills, semiskilled or skilled job duties of the past work must be so closely related to other jobs which they can perform that they could be expected to perform these other identified jobs at a high degree of proficiency with a minimal amount of job orientation. [SSR 82-41](#)



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How does a VE address vocational adjustment when answering a hypothetical?



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How does a VE address vocational adjustment when answering a hypothetical?

	Younger Individual (ages 18-49)	Closely Approaching Advanced Age (ages 50-59)	Advanced Age (ages 55-59)	Closely Approaching Retirement Age (ages 60-64)
Sedentary		X USE GENERALLY TRANSFERABLE OCCUPATIONS*	Y USE CLOSELY TRANSFERABLE OCCUPATIONS*	Y USE DIRECTLY TRANSFERABLE OCCUPATIONS
Light			X	Y USE DIRECTLY TRANSFERABLE OCCUPATIONS*
Medium				
Heavy/Very Heavy				

X = transferability of skills material.
 Y = transferable skills material, with little, if any vocational, adjustment.
 * = 2007-2012, Skill TRAN, Help for Job Browser Pro, Spokane, WA 99206.

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Claimant's Education

20 CFR 404.1564 Four Age Categories

High School & Above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> high school graduate or above. high school equivalency diplomas can do semi-skilled through skilled work..
Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formal schooling at the 7th through 11th grade level. Not enough reasoning, arithmetic, and language skills to do semi- or skilled jobs.
Marginal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> formal schooling at the 6th grade level or below. reasoning, arithmetic, and language skills which are needed to do simple, unskilled types of jobs.
Illiterate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cannot read or write a simple message in English, even though can sign their name.
Inability to Communicate in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not speak and understand English.

Note: the grid rules treat illiteracy and inability to communicate in English as a single category.

Education - 20 CFR 404.1564

Education primarily means formal schooling or other training that contributes to a claimant's ability to meet vocational requirements (for example, reasoning ability, communication skills, and arithmetical ability). Our rules provide that lack of formal schooling does not necessarily mean that the claimant is uneducated or lacks abilities achieved in formal education, although the ALJ will use the claimant's formal education level if there is no evidence to contradict it.

Our rules recognize that the importance of a claimant's education may depend on how much time has passed between the completion of formal education and the alleged onset of disability. The ALJ may also consider what the claimant has done with his or her education in a work or other setting (e.g., in hobbies). The rules provide the ALJ with the authority to determine that a given claimant's education is higher or lower than the actual grade he or she attained depending on a variety of factors, but such a finding is unusual.

General Educational Development

Reasoning - Math - Language*

GED	Rating	Reasoning	Math	Language
High	6	Intellectual	Adv. Calculus	Graduate
	5	Scientific	Statistics	College
Medium	4	High School	Algebra	High School
	3	Grade 7-8	7-8	7-8
Low	2	Grade 4-6	4-6	4-6
	1	Grade 1-3	1-3	1-3

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*Further defined with examples in RHAJ Ch. 7

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Work Experience and Skill Requirements

- *Work experience* means the claimant's Past Relevant Work.
- PRW - 15 years, length of job, earnings/Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA).
- [20 CFR 404.1565](#)
- Work History & SSA Form 3369.
 - Title, DOT code, physical (SLMHV) & skill level SVP 1-9.
 - As typically performed and how the claimant performed the job.



Work Experience and Skill Requirements

[20 CFR 404.1565](#)

- Where to find the claimant's work history
 - Disability Application – Adult
 - Work History Report (SSA Form 3369)
 - <https://www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-3369.pdf>
- What do you need to do with this information?
 - Identify DOT Title & code, exertion (SLMHV,) & skill levels (SVP 1-9).
 - Determin "typical" and "actual" performance.



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How Skill Levels are Defined - SVP

- SVP – Specific Vocational Preparation.
- Amount of lapsed time required by a typical worker to learn the techniques, acquire the information and develop the facility needed for average performance in a specific job-worker situation. This training may be acquired in a school, work, military, institutional or voc environment.
- The Social Security administration defines unskilled as SVP 1-2, semi-skilled as 3-4, and skilled as 5 and above.
- SSR 82-41 (2d) concedes that semi-skilled work may not be much more than unskilled work; and
- Transferability is distinct from the usage of skills recently learned in school which may serve as a basis for direct entry into skilled work (Appendix 2, section 201.00(g)).



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How Skill Levels are Defined –SVP Cont'd

- 20 CFR 404.1564 (b)(4) and/or 20 CFR 416.964 (b)(4) High school education or above means that abilities in reasoning, arithmetic, and language skills acquired through formal schooling at the 12th grade or above. We generally consider someone with these educational abilities can do semi-skilled through skilled work.
- 20 CFR 404.1565 and/or 416.965 if you cannot use your skills in other skilled or semi-skilled work, we will consider your work background the same as unskilled vs. because it requires little or no judgment and can be learned in a short period of time. The importance of your educational background may depend upon how much time has passed between the completion of your formal education and the beginning of your physical or mental impairment(s) and by what you have done with your education in a work or other setting.



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Specific Vocational Preparation (SVP)

Level	Time
1	Short demonstration only
2	Anything beyond short demonstration up to and including 1 month
3	Over 1 month up to and including 3 months
4	Over 3 months up to and including 6 months
5	Over 6 months up to and including 1 year
6	Over 1 year up to and including 2 years



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Unskilled – SVP 1 And 2

- Unskilled work is work which needs little or no judgment to do simple duties that can be learned on the job in a short period of time, usually 30 days or less. For example, unskilled occupations include work where the primary work duties are handling, feeding, and off-bearing, or machine tending in which a person can usually learn to do the job in 30 days or less, and little specific vocational preparation and judgment are needed. ***A person does not gain work skills by doing unskilled jobs.***



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Semi-Skilled – SVP 3 And 4

- Semiskilled occupations are more complex than unskilled ones and simpler than the more highly skilled types of occupations. They contain more variables and require more judgment than unskilled occupations. Even though semiskilled occupations typically require more than 30 days to learn, the content of work activities in some semiskilled occupations may be little more than unskilled. Therefore, close attention must be paid to the actual complexities of the job in dealing with data, people, or objects and to the judgments required to do the work.



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Semi-Skilled – SVP 3 And 4

Cont'd

- Semiskilled occupations require less attention and close attention to machine processes; inspecting, testing or looking for irregularities; tending or guarding equipment, property, materials, or persons against loss, damage or injury; or other types of activities which are similarly less complex than skilled work, but more complex than unskilled work. An occupation may be classified as semiskilled when coordination and dexterity are necessary, as when hands or feet must be moved quickly to do repetitive tasks.
- In such cases there will not be skills that fit the definition and there would not be skills that transfer.
- SSR 82-41 (2d)



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Skilled – SVP 5 Through 9

- Skilled occupations are more complex and varied than unskilled and semiskilled occupations. They require more training time and often a higher educational attainment. Abstract thinking in specialized fields may be required. For example, skilled work may require: judgment to determine the machine and manual operations to be performed in order to obtain the proper form, quality or quantity of material to be produced; laying out work, estimating quality, determining the suitability and necessary quantities of materials, making precise measurements, reading blueprints or other specifications, or making necessary computations or mechanical adjustments to control or regulate the work; or dealing with people, facts, figures, or abstract ideas at a high level of complexity.



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SVP change example

- 372.667-030 GATE GUARD Light/3
- Guards entrance gate of industrial plant and grounds, warehouse, or other property to control traffic to and from buildings and grounds...
- If <30 days to learn job, then SVP 2



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To Change an SVP have References/ Resources

- Through information from the State of Tennessee and survey of security companies training is less than 30 days and typically provided by the hiring company.



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Practice Classifying Age, Education, Past Relevant Work, and Skill Requirements

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr. Claimant 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 2/14/1995 • Educ: finished high school • PRW: Fruit picker, convenience store cashier, park laborer. 2. Ms. Claimant 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 1/1/1972 • Educ: Associate of Applied Science / Nursing • PRW: Fast Food Worker, Certified Nurse Assistant. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Claimant 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 8/21/1985 • Educ: finished 8th grade • PRW: Assembler, auto parts; fast foods worker; convenience store clerk. 2. Mr. Claimant 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB 1/2/1999 • Educ: High school, certificate in welding from local community college • PRW: Farm laborer, machine shop welder. |
|---|---|



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Practice Classifying Age, Education, Past Relevant Work, and Skill Requirements

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. <u>Mr. Claimant 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 1/6/1959 • Educ: Some college (no degree, computer classes) • PRW: Computer store clerk, computer repair technician. | <p>1. <u>Ms. Claimant 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 7/31/1950 • Educ: finished 4th grade (cannot read or make change) • PRW: Laborer on tobacco farm. |
| <p>2. <u>Ms. Claimant 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB: 9/23/1968 • Educ: Bachelors of Arts / English, secondary education teaching license. • PRW: Dormitory resident assistant, elementary education teacher. | <p>2. <u>Mr. Claimant 8</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOB 1/2/1960 • Educ: Master of Science in Accounting, Certified Public Accountant. • PRW: Accounting Clerk, Certified Public Accountant. |



References and Resources

- *Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 4th Edition, Revised, 1991, U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration*
- *Selected Characteristics of Occupations Defined in the Revised Dictionary of Occupational Titles, 1993, U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration*
- *Vocational Expert Handbook*, (August 2017), Social Security Administration, Office of Hearings Operations, Office of the Chief Administrative Law Judge, accessed at [https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/public_experts/Vocational_Experts_\(VE\)_Handbook-508.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/appeals/public_experts/Vocational_Experts_(VE)_Handbook-508.pdf)
- Part 404 - Federal, Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Benefits, accessed at https://www.ssa.gov/CP_Home/cfr20/404/404-40000.htm
- *The Revised Handbook for Analyzing Jobs*, 1991, U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.
- *Occupational Outlook Handbook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections*, <https://www.bls.gov/osh/>, last update on 10/24/27.
- *O*NET OnLine*, National Center for O*NET Development, n.d. Web. 4 Sep. 2018. <<https://www.onetonline.org/>>.
- *SSA - POMS: DI 25001.001 - Medical-Vocational Quick Reference Guide*, 2016, U.S. Social Security Administration, accessed at <http://policy.ssa.gov/poms>
- *JobBrowser Pro and OccuBrowse Plus*, SKILLTRAIN, LLC, Spokane Valley, WA. Accessed at <https://skilltrain.com/index.php>
- *Job Stenath*, accessed at <https://jobstent.com/>


