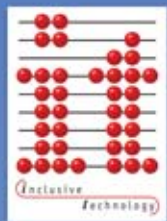# Switch Skills

1

## *Introduction*

This collection of easy switch timing activities is fun for all ages. The activities have traditional video game themes, to motivate students who understand cause and effect to learn to press a switch at the right time. It is also useful as a training tool for those who use a switch in an undisciplined manner (for example by repeatedly hitting the switch, without attention to the effect).

The activities also encourage speaking and listening and help develop concentration skills. The bright, clear graphics are suitable for those with visual impairment and there is lots of sound and music too.
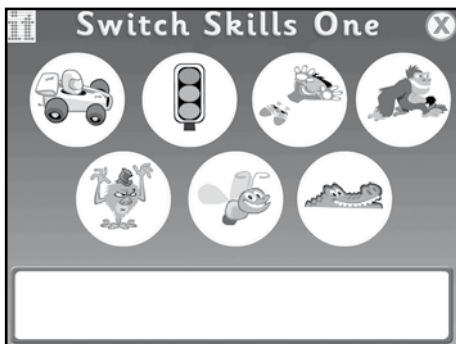
Racing cars: press when you see a car to make it race.

Gorilla: press when you see the fruit.

Soccer Shoot: press to kick the ball.

Traffic Lights: press when the traffic light turns green and you hear "Go!".

Catch the Crocs: press your switch when you see a crocodile. Can you get all six?

Monster House: an introduction to switch scanning. Choose a door and press to see if a monster is inside.

Sunflower: press when the bee reaches the middle of the flower.

Statistics of student's performance are displayed in a relevant and easily read format. You can print these and use them to provide evidence of a student's progress over a school term or year. The options allow you to make the games more difficult as the student progresses.
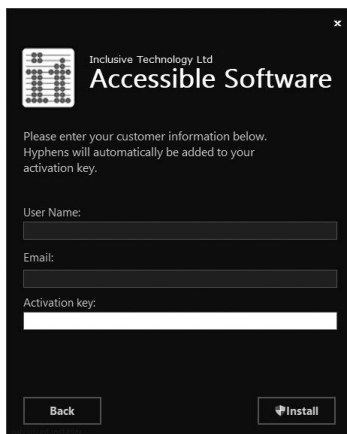
Installation

Please note: an active internet connection is required

To install *Switch Skills 1*, simply run the following file:

switch_skills_1.exe

The installer will prompt you to enter your name, email address and activation key (sent to you at the time of purchase). All fields are required.

When the activation key has been successfully validated, the installation will begin.

Running Switch Skills 1

If a *Switch Skills 1* icon is visible on the the desktop , you can double-click to launch directly into the program . If there isn't a desktop shortcut, you can find the software in the *Programs* list of your *Start menu / screen*.

Stopping Switch Skills 1

Whilst playing an activity, press the **Esc** key on the keyboard. This will take you to the statistics screen. Click the **Options** button to go to the teacher Options screen. Click on the **Exit** button to go to the title screen, then click on the **X** in the top right-hand corner of the screen to exit the program completely.

Activities

When *Switch Skills 1* begins, the title screen will appear. It has seven pictures, each representing an activity. Roll the mouse pointer over each picture to see a description of the activity in the box at the bottom of the screen. Then click a picture to start the selected activity.

To change the activity, press the **Esc** key on the keyboard to go to the **Options** menu. Then click **Exit** to return to the title screen, where you can select a new activity.

Switch Skills 1 Activities

Racing Cars

Simply press a switch when a car appears to make it race around the screen. Once 3 cars are caught a reward animation will play, with accompanying sound effects.
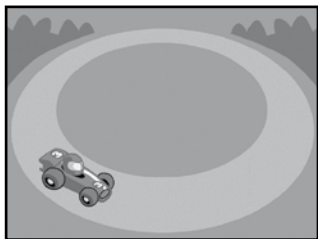
### *Statistics and Options: Racing Cars*

When playing **Racing Cars**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game.

This gives a performance summary, with a graph that shows the player's progress in more detail.

If the "switch was pressed correctly" value is low compared to the number of "opportunities", it indicates that the program options settings are too difficult for the student.

If the "switch was pressed incorrectly" value is high, it indicates that the player is pressing the switch indiscriminately.
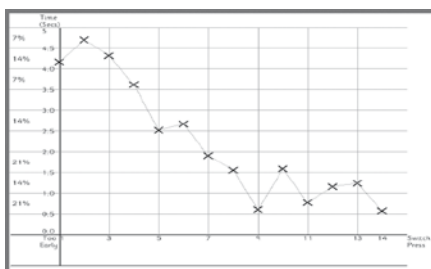
The following simple examples can help you to interpret the graph.
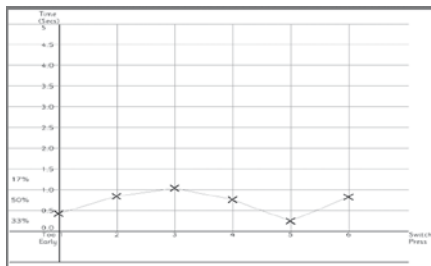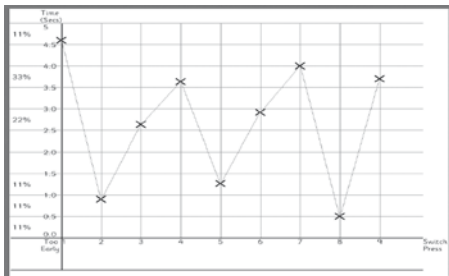
This graph indicates that the student is doing well and that you can try increasing the level of difficulty.
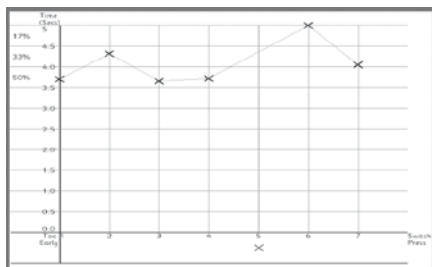
This graph indicates that the student is just coping with the game with the options currently set.

This graph indicates that the student's performance is improving.

This graph shows that the student's performance is erratic and that direct observation is recommended.

It is recognised that the statistics of this nature can only give very basic information. Personal observation is the only truly informed way of assessing performance.

The statistics screen also has buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Racing Cars.**

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Score Board

Here you can decide to have a score board display at the top of the screen. (Some users may find this distracting.) The scoreboard also shows the total number of cars that have been caught.
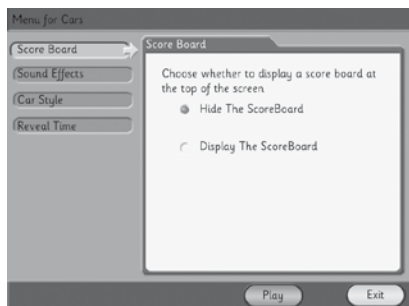
Sound Effects

As well as being able to turn all the sound off, you may sometimes want to test the player's ability to react to visual cues without auditory help. With this menu you can choose to play the background music, auditory clues and other sound effects, or any combination.
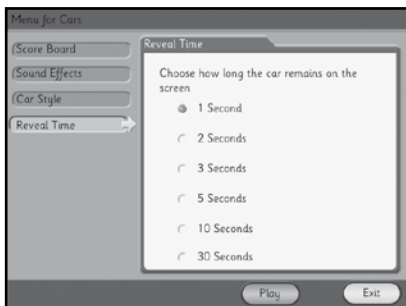
Car Style

Here you can make the activity more difficult by having a small car instead of the standard big car. You can also choose a 'peeping' car that will 'peep' out of the side of the screen, making it more difficult to see.
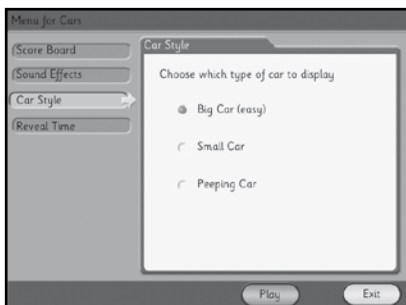
Reveal Time

If the car appears and the switch is not pressed, it will disappear again after a set time. You can adjust the length of time here.

Gorilla

This activity combines switch timing with vertical tracking. Press the switch when fruit appears, to make the gorilla run and eat it. After three catches a reward animation will appear.

Statistics and Options: Gorilla

When playing **Gorilla**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game. This displays information about correct and incorrect switch presses as well as reaction time. There are also buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Gorilla**.

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Score Board

Here you can choose to display an on-screen score board.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Fruit Speed

The fruit falls from the top of the screen to the bottom at a set speed. Here you can adjust how quickly it falls.

Soccer Shoot

This activity combines switch timing with horizontal tracking. Press the switch when the ball appears to kick the ball. Chance determines whether you score or not. After three goals a reward animation will appear.

Statistics and Options: Soccer Shoot

When playing **Soccer Shoot**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game. This displays information about correct and incorrect switch presses as well as reaction time. There are also buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Soccer Shoot**.

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Ball Speed

Here you can adjust how quickly the ball rolls across the screen.

Score Board

Here you can choose to display an on-screen score board.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Catch the Crocs

This game requires correct switch use in a more complex situation. Crocs will poke their heads out of the water in various locations before disappearing again. Press the switch when a croc appears to tickle it and make it fall asleep.

Statistics and Options: Catch the Crocs

When playing **Catch the Crocs**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game. This displays information about correct and incorrect switch presses as well as reaction time. There are also buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Catch the Crocs**.

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Reveal Time

Here you can change how long the crocs will stay on screen before disappearing.

Traffic Lights

This activity helps the student to learn to wait for the right moment before pressing the switch.

A traffic light will appear. The red light shines and a voice says, "ready". After a pause the amber light shines and it says "steady". After another pause, the green light shines and the voice says, "go!".
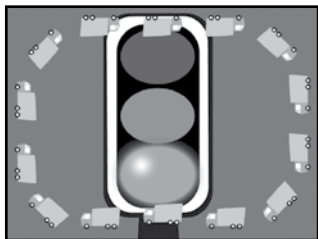
The user should now press their switch to see a reward. If they press before the green light comes on the voice will say "too soon!" and the light goes out. After 5 seconds the process begins again.

Statistics and Options: Traffic Lights

When playing **Traffic Lights**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game. This displays information about correct and incorrect switch presses as well as reaction time. There are also buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Traffic Lights**.

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Reveal Time

Here you can choose how long the green light will stay lit up.

Game Speed

Choose how long the red and amber lights stay on for.

Monster House

This game introduces scanning techniques. Three coloured doors will appear, along with a cartoon character. The character moves from door to door. When the player presses the switch, the character knocks on the door behind them. It will open to reveal either nothing or a scary monster. (There is a monster behind only one the doors.)
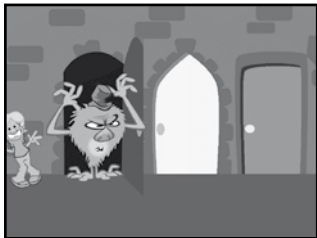
Once the monster has been revealed twice, the game is over and the screen is renewed with the doors in different positions.

Options: Monster House

When playing **Monster House**, you can press the **Esc** key to go to the **Options** screen. The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Note: there is no statistics screen for **Monster House**.

Stopping Time

Here you can adjust how long the character stops at each door. The two switch option means that pressing one switch will make the character move to the next door and pressing the second will make them knock.

Game Level

In the default game, the monster is behind a marked door. You can choose for the door to be unmarked, introducing an element of guesswork. (When the monster has been found once, the learner needs to remember which door he was hiding behind , practicing their short term memory skills .) You can also make the activity more difficult by making all the doors the same colour.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Sunflower

A simple targeting activity. Bees and other bugs fly over a large sunflower. Press the switch when it reaches the centre. If you catch the bug, a reward will appear.
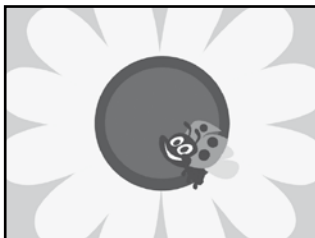
Statistics and Options: Sunflower

When playing **Sunflower**, you can press the **Esc** key to see a screen of statistics relating to the game. This displays information about correct and incorrect switch presses as well as reaction time. There are also buttons to allow you to clear the data, print the screen, play again or access the options menu for **Sunflower**.

The **Options** screen has a column of buttons on the left hand side. Click on these to see the changes you can make.

Score Board

Here you can choose to display an on-screen score board.

Sound Effects

Choose to turn the music and sound effects on or off.

Catch Time

This is the amount of time the insect remains in the centre of the sunflower, when you should press the switch to catch it.

Insect Speed

This is the speed at which the insect moves across the screen. It controls the 'anticipation' time.

Summary of Access Options

Mouse and Touch Screen

Any of the mouse buttons will operate as a single switch. If the program is set for two switch access, the left and right mouse buttons will operate as two separate switches.

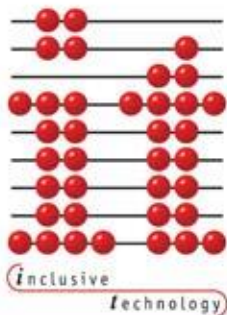Touch screens will work as a single switch. Just touch anywhere on the screen!

Keyboard

If *Switch Skills 1* is set up for single switch operation, the **Spacebar** will act as the switch.

If **Monster House** is set up for two switch use, **Spacebar** and **Enter** operate as two separate switches.

Switches

Switches can be connected to the computer in different ways. As a rule, *Switch Skills 1* requires interface boxes to act as if the **Spacebar** or **Enter** keys are pressed. See below for further details:

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