

HANDOUT 5

Reinforcement Schedules

In real life, continuous reinforcement is rare. Sometimes responses are reinforced, sometimes not. Among the most important schedules of partial reinforcement are the fixed ratio (FR), variable ratio (VR), fixed interval (FI), and variable interval (VI). Identify the schedule in the examples below by writing your answer—FR, VR, FI, or VI—in the spaces on the left.

- _____ 1. Buying state lottery tickets and sometimes winning.
- _____ 2. A hotel maid may take a 15-minute break only after having cleaned three rooms.
- _____ 3. Checking your cell phone to see if you have a new text message when your phone is on silent.
- _____ 4. A baseball player gets a hit approximately every third time at bat.
- _____ 5. Checking the oven to see if chocolate chip cookies are done, when baking time is known.
- _____ 6. A blueberry picker receives \$1 after filling 3 pint boxes.
- _____ 7. A charitable organization makes an average of 10 phone calls for every donation it receives.
- _____ 8. Repeatedly calling a garage mechanic to see if your car is fixed yet. (Assume that the calls have no impact on your mechanic's behavior.)
- _____ 9. A student's final grade improves one level for every three book reviews submitted.
- _____ 10. A dog watches out the window to bark at the postal carrier who arrives every morning promptly at 10:05.