

Organize Your Life Using iOS 5 on the iPad, iPhone, and iPod Touch

**Making Cognitive Connections
at Home, School, and Work**

Michelle Ranae Wild, M.A.



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Michelle Wild is a professor at Coastline Community College and has taught in Coastline's Acquired Brain Injury Program for over 25 years. In addition to teaching cognitive remediation skills to adults with brain injuries, she teaches classroom and online computer courses. In creating technology-based compensation strategies for brain injury survivors, Ms. Wild has found the perfect niche to combine her passion for teaching and her fascination with computers. With Jan Heck, she has co-authored five books on web design. She was recognized for her accomplishments by being named the 2000 Orange County Community College Teacher of the Year and by receiving the 2001 David R. Pierce Faculty Technology award, sponsored by Microsoft Corporation and American Association of Community Colleges. Most recently, she was nominated for U.S. Professors of the Year. In 2011, Ms. Wild began conducting Webinars showing how to use iOS devices and demonstrating various apps, offering these to both individuals with cognitive challenges and the professionals who work with them. She also established an app review site (<http://id4theweb.com/appreviews/>) for those same groups, in hopes that the whole community can come together to help each other.

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Chapter 1: Making Cognitive Connections

You may have looked at the title of this book and thought, “I can always use help organizing my life, but what is this Making Cognitive Connections thing all about?” Making Cognitive Connections is a particular approach to learning information. Typically, as we learn about a new device, we just want to know how to do a specific task. In fact, most of us just start playing with the technology and learn as we go. This approach isn’t necessarily the best approach for everyone—that’s where the Making Cognitive Connections approach comes in.

The idea behind the Making Cognitive Connections approach involves learning to use technology while actually becoming aware of the cognitive skills (e.g., attention to detail, critical thinking, etc.) involved in learning the technology. For example, becoming aware of and focusing your attention on the cognitive skills involved in learning the iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch can provide a foundation for learning other types of technology. In addition, the Making Cognitive Connections approach can help to provide insights into how those same cognitive skills can be used in other, less technology-related aspects of your life.

Design of the Book

Many users find typical iOS device or smartphone manuals frustrating and overly technical. **This book is different.** It is much more than just a reference source, although you *will* learn lots of iOS 5 functions and you *can* refer back to the book as often as needed. But in addition to being a fine reference, this book is consciously structured to be a learning tool for individuals with cognitive challenges (e.g., issues with memory or organization); in fact, it was written with input from such individuals. As you work through the book, not only will you master most functions of iOS 5 devices; you will also see how the skills you apply to the device relate to your everyday life.

For each iOS 5 function, you will:

- Read about what it is and how to do it;
- Follow steps to perform that function on the device;
- Make the cognitive connection by learning what cognitive skills are being used to perform the task; and
- Identify real-life examples from outside the realm of the iOS devices that require you to use the same cognitive skills.

This book even includes fill-in graphic organizers like matrices and comparison charts so that you will have structured guidance in learning important features of the devices.

There are lots of cognitive exercises out there designed to build new neural pathways (physical connections within the brain)—paper and pencil tasks, computer games or exercises—and lots of memory compensation strategies (e.g., paper calendars and organizers, lists, portable and non-portable electronic calendars and organizers). What's different here is the link between the training to use an electronic tool people enjoy using as a memory compensation and organization device, the identification of the underlying cognitive skills involved, and the opportunities for you to identify applications to your life.

Before you begin working your way through this book, I want to take this time to assure you that this book was written with the following intentions:

1. To present information in a way that isn't too overwhelming:

- Each chapter is written with short paragraphs.
- Each chapter has lots of white space to break up the text.
- Steps are provided as easy-to-follow bulleted lists.

2. To include relevant images or pictures to help you know you are in the right place:

- Each chapter contains pictures that correspond with the information seen on the device screen.

3. To include practice exercises to emphasize skills:

- Each chapter includes numerous "Give It a Try" activities, allowing you to practice immediately after a skill is introduced.
- Each chapter includes "Making Cognitive Connections" exercises designed to help you see how the same skills being used on the device apply to your everyday life.

Importance of a Training Partner

You can use this book working alone, but it's a great idea to recruit a professional (e.g., therapist or teacher), or at least a relative or friend, to help you. Such a person can be a resource for staying on track and can serve as a sounding board to discuss applications to your own life. After you complete each exercise, you can check in with your training partner to discuss the outcome. Spend some time demonstrating how to perform the new iOS 5 function and then brainstorm what other applications of that particular skill may be issues in your life. Problems with memory or other cognitive challenges may make it hard for you to recall or identify incidents of cognitive difficulty, so you and your partner may need to get additional information from someone who has observed you at work, at home, or at play.

Making Cognitive Connections

Every step you perform with iOS 5 devices involves using particular cognitive skills (e.g., attention to detail, visual memory). This book helps you identify the skills you are using to perform each function. Just as important, the book helps you to make associations to the experiences in your life that involve the same skills. As you've read, we call this *Making Cognitive Connections*, and you will find one or more "Making Cognitive Connections" exercises in each chapter.

In Table 1-1 below, you can see the link between the cognitive skill(s) used to perform the iOS 5 functions and the life tasks that also require the same skill(s). Don't feel like you need to memorize this table. As you complete the various "Making Cognitive Connections" exercises throughout the book, you may find it useful to refer back to this table to help generate examples of activities in your own life.

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Table 1-1

**Cognitive Skills Used to Perform iOS Device Functions
and the Connections to Other Life Skills**

Skill	Definition	iPod Touch Examples	Life Examples
Attention to Detail	Paying attention to all parts of a task, no matter how small	Find the Home button; enter appointment information into the correct field	Check your writing for typographical errors; find spots on laundry to spray before washing; put your keys back into their storage location
Recognizing Visual Similarities and Differences	Distinguishing elements that are the same (or different) in color, shape, size or position	Distinguish between the Calendar's List, Day and Month views	Distinguish between two similar but unmatched socks; distinguish between closely sized drill bits
Visual Memory	Storing and retrieving from memory a previously seen image	Identify the Contacts icon	Identify the face of your doctor or the corner where you need to turn to go to her office
Visual Organization	Creating meaning by use of such elements as color, pattern, shape, repetition, and the relationships among these elements	Look to bottom section of screen to identify particular calendar view	Notice font styles of chapter or section headings in a book or article; identify page lay-out of medical bills
Memory Cues	Triggers or reminders (e.g., phrases, locations, songs, colors) to help retrieve memories	Identify parts of the List screen so you can recognize it	Identify position of your car in relation to store so you can return to it later; perform hygiene tasks in same order daily to avoid forgetting a step