

## Novice to Expert chart

The following chart shows common characteristics that a nurse will exhibit at each particular stage of development, from novice to expert. It also shows the implications of those characteristics for the preceptor.

Stage	Orientee Characteristics	Preceptor Implications
<b>Novice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No experience with situations in which they are asked to perform tasks</li> <li>• Inability to use discretionary judgement</li> <li>• Use of context-free rules to guide actions</li> <li>• No rule about which tasks are most relevant in a real-world situation or when an exception to the rule is necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach rules to guide actions that can be recognized without situational experience</li> <li>• Must be backed up by a competent nurse</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Beginner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates marginally acceptable performance</li> <li>• Is gaining experience with real situations to note meaningful patterns and attributes (or have them pointed out by preceptor)</li> <li>• Can formulate guidelines for actions in terms of patterns and attributes</li> <li>• Difficulty identifying important aspects; treats all attributes as equally important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift from teaching rules to guidelines</li> <li>• Help to recognize patterns and their meanings</li> <li>• Assist in prioritizing</li> <li>• Must be backed up by a competent nurse</li> </ul>
<b>Competent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begins to see his or her actions in terms of long-term goals or overall plan</li> <li>• Begins to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant attributes</li> <li>• Feels the ability to cope and manage the unforeseen events</li> <li>• Lacks the speed and flexibility of a proficient nurse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on improving decision-making skills and ways to improve coordination of multiple, complicated care needs of patient assignments</li> <li>• A good preceptor for a novice nurse</li> </ul>
<b>Proficient</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can discern situations as wholes rather than single pieces</li> <li>• Uses past experiences rather than rules to guide practice</li> <li>• Can recognize when the expected normal picture is absent</li> <li>• Considers fewer options and hones in on accurate elements of problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use complex case studies to facilitate learning</li> <li>• A good preceptor for a competent nurse</li> </ul>
<b>Expert</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practices holistic rather than fractionated</li> <li>• Grasps situation intuitively and correctly identifies solutions without wasting time</li> <li>• Extraordinary management of clinical problems</li> <li>• Considered an expert by others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often not possible to recapture mental processes</li> <li>• Encourage exemplars and descriptions of excellent practice</li> <li>• A good preceptor for a competent nurse</li> </ul>

Data from Benner, P. (1982). From novice to expert, *American Journal of Nursing*, 82, 402-407. Baltimore, 2004. *Orientee Characteristics and Preceptor Implications*.