



IAM LEVELS SYSTEM

The IAM presents the IAM Levels system.

The Levels system is many things: It is a means for competitors to track their overall progress in memory sports and to compare against other athletes in a new and different way. It is also the first time events from multiple formats (Classical and Memory League) are part of one ranking. It can help you to motivate yourself to train and take part in tournaments if the next improvement of your competition total score seems out of reach: The next level in any discipline will always be just around the corner.

Let us lead you through the details:

I. How do the IAM Levels work?

1. Where to go, what to do?

First, to determine your level, go to <http://www.iam-memory.org/iam-levels-calculator/>. Enter all your competition results there. You can also enter your name to be shown your statistics page with your results (this should work for most athletes at the moment. If not for you, please check how your name is spelled on the statistics page: <http://iam-stats.com/athletes.php>). We hope to make this process even more automatic in the near future.

2. How many events, how many levels?

There are 22 different events (17 Classical, 5 Memory League). There are 30 levels for each discipline, for example getting 240 digits in 5 min would be level 13 and getting 60 words in 5 min would be level 12.

3. What is the “IAM Level”? How is this level average created?

The level average of the 10 best results you have had in competition in different events is your "IAM LEVEL". The 22 events are grouped into Numbers, Cards, Words, Names and Other (the latter containing Dates, Classical Images and Memory League Images). You must use at least 1 result from each group and may use at the most 4 results from a single group. The IAM Level is thus supposed to allow a comprehensive comparison of athletes' skill with a balance between the different sets of memo data. It will be used in certificates and other things and will also appear in your statistics.

4. Can I see other athletes' results?

We have prepared the results of many of the top athletes on our page: Just follow the link above, click on one of the names and see their level. This feature will be expanded in the future.

5. What is the difference compared to the traditional ranking system?

We love the traditional ranking system with total competition scores and it is here to stay. We just feel that sometimes it can be tough to only focus on the total score and then something happens, an event does not go well enough, and improving your total score is out of reach for the rest of the tournament. The advantage of the levels compared to that is that even if you have a horrible tournament and the total score would be bad, even improving a single one of your relevant levels (of your ten best) would increase your IAM Level and thus make the tournament a personal success.

II. Why did we choose the Levels exactly that way? Rationale and background

1. Why 30 levels?

After our first draft of the Levels system we received much feedback from the memory community, much of it encouraging and much with constructive criticism that we took to heart. We have chosen 30 levels instead of the initial 13 levels because we feel it is more motivating if the increases are smaller, having the next level always just within reach. It also allowed us to make the starting levels less steep, a request by many who gave feedback.

2. Is there a clear idea underlying the levels distribution?

The cornerstone of the level distribution for the 17 classical events is level 25: It is the average of the current three best results by three different athletes (at times with very slight rounding). This is for example 512 digits in 5 min or 132 words in 5 min. The levels descend from there in mostly linear fashion but in such a way that they start easier, with smaller increases from level 1

onward and with higher gaps later on. The gap between level 24 and 25 is continued in linear fashion from level 25 up to 30.

3. Where did we not use the level 25 formula and why?

Exceptions to the level 25 formula: For the Memory League events (1 min Names, Words, Cards, Images and Numbers) we did not simply choose the average of the best three results for level 25 but tried to also use our intuition and experience to choose levels that reflect the fact that there have been much fewer of these events in the past and also take into account the potential results seen in the (non-ranked) online tournaments. The latter results were weighed considerably less than the ranked real-life ML events because it often will be a bit of a difference if people have traveled a long way and are on site and have spectators and all compared to competing from home. But these tournaments can give a glimpse into the potential of these events. Also level 25 for Speed Cards and Memory League cards is identical. And because 5min Images has not had so much exposure yet and top results are still increasing, we put level 25 higher there.

4. What is level 30 supposed to represent?

Level 30 is not meant to be the final point, the end of all scores. Levels beyond 30 would continue similarly. Still, since level 25 is the current top and increases are continued in linear fashion in five more steps up to level 30, there is already a strong buffer between 25 and 30.

5. What about the times at Memory League?

The Memory League events are often decided on time if both sides get all of the limited memo data correct. Thus we also needed to include the times in our levels. The "time levels" for the Memory League events all follow a consistent formula, Words and Names on the one side and Images, Cards and Numbers on the other side.

6. INTERNATIONAL - ASSOCIATION - MEMORY: 30 letters, 30 levels

You will notice that the 30 levels under <http://www.iam-memory.org/iam-levels-calculator/> have the words INTERNATIONAL, ASSOCIATION and MEMORY written above them, that being exactly 30 letters (sorry to you, "OF" :). We intend these to potentially serve as a first large scale separation into three sets of levels, with level 25 being not only the average of the current best ever three results by three people but also the entry point into the elusive final set of six levels/letters.

Your input would be welcome on how to use this tri-partition nicely. At the moment we are considering something like "I-Levels", "A-Levels" and "M-levels".

7. Colours! Belts! Badges! (Hats?)

You will also notice that the 30 levels are separated into colours in sets of 3/3/3/4/4/4/3/3/3 with the colours being WhiteYellowOrangeGreenTurquoiseBluePurpleRedBlack. For the folks who were much in favour of this: Yes, that means the colours will be one central ranking system for the levels :). Think belts, badges, coloured hats, a coloured star next to your name in the rankings, whatever you like! Please give us your ideas here.

8. A ranking of IAM Level averages on the IAM page? Perhaps

We are also considering to make a separate ranking with people ranked according to their IAM Level. But that will be decided after we publish the new world ranking and have heard from you.

And now, go out and have some fun with the Level system, if you like! ;) :)

Sincerely,

Your IAM Board

