

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



How to Take the Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to help you identify your child's dominant Element according to the Five Element System in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

After thousands of years of observing the Five Elements in the earth's ecosystem, Chinese philosophers applied the Five Elements to the individual ecosystem of our body, mind and spirit. **The Five Elements are Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. Each Element has corresponding physical characteristics, personality traits, strengths, and weaknesses that shape each child's overall health and way of being with the world. One particular way of being will influence the child's personality, health and temperament above all others—their dominant Element. To determine your child's dominant element:**

1. Check the questions that apply to your child on a regular basis.

Think about how your child acts across multiple settings such as school, social gatherings, sporting events, and home as you check off the characteristics that resonate with your child's way of being in the world.

2. Have a lot of checkmarks in two Elements?

That's ok. It just means you've found your child's dominant and influential element. Continue observing your child and see which way of being seems more dominant. Read through the Guide for both Elements, which will also give you some clues to your child's dominant element.

3. Look in the Guide for Tips on Support Each Element

At the end of the questionnaire you'll find out the Elemental characteristics of your child along with suggestions regarding how bring out the best in your child. You'll find parenting tips, games and communication strategies to get you started.

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Metal Element

- ☐ Sweet, gentle and easygoing but also has stubborn side
- ☐ Can see the big picture, but also all the details
- ☐ Slow to warm up in social settings, but then friendly
- ☐ Prefers routines and rhythms in daily life
- ☐ Enjoys completing tasks and checking things off the list
- ☐ Likes to keep belongings and toys fairly organized
- ☐ Loves logic, patterns and puzzles
- ☐ Will follow the rules, you don't have to tell them twice
- ☐ Doesn't like to get in trouble
- ☐ Sensitive to the environment and other people's emotions
- ☐ Feels things deeply, can be easily embarrassed
- ☐ Gets upset when routines are disturbed or doesn't like change
- ☐ Will try really hard and wants to do "it" right
- ☐ May have perfectionist tendencies
- ☐ Can be stubborn and unbending when his mind is set on something
- ☐ Gets upset when others don't follow along or break the rules
- ☐ Can get hyper-focused on a task and gets behind on school work
- ☐ Is sensitive to tastes, smells and textures — may be a picky eater
- ☐ Tends to cry when upset, corrected or punished
- ☐ Is sensitive to the clothing on his body if it doesn't "feel" right, such as being bothered by a shirt tag
- ☐ Tends to get more colds or asthma in the fall
- ☐ Colds tend to create symptoms in the throat and/or chest
- ☐ Tends towards dry or rough skin
- ☐ Tends to have a softer voice than other children
- ☐ Physique is long and lean, possibly with sharp features

Total Number Checked _____

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Earth Element

- ☐ Loves being in a group setting
- ☐ Enjoys talking to people and making friends
- ☐ Is a natural caregiver or little mother/father
- ☐ Outgoing but doesn't want to be the center of attention
- ☐ Likes to help out
- ☐ Attached to parents, teachers and caregivers
- ☐ Gets behind on school work because of chatting with or helping others
- ☐ Is easygoing and goes with the flow
- ☐ Tends to worry or have anxiety about things
- ☐ Sensitive to others' emotions and feelings
- ☐ Tries to keep the peace at home or school
- ☐ Gets overwhelmed by details
- ☐ Craves sweets and white foods like breads, crackers and potato chips
- ☐ May soothe emotions through eating or eats when bored
- ☐ Has a more round and softer physique
- ☐ May have digestive problems/complaints (i.e. frequent belly aches, bloating, gas, loose stools, etc.)
- ☐ Can struggle with obesity or being overweight
- ☐ Often has excess phlegm, like runny/stuffy nose, "glue ear", phlegmy cough, etc.
- ☐ Tends to mull things over for a while before making a decision

Total Number Checked _____

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Fire Element

- ☐ Loves being the center of attention
- ☐ Enjoys entertaining others - singing, dancing, performing, jokes
- ☐ Sensitive to others' emotions, thoughts, feelings
- ☐ Can be moody and dramatic
- ☐ Can be impulsive and easily over-stimulated
- ☐ Charismatic, charming, friendly and enthusiastic
- ☐ Very sensory aware — enjoys touching different textures, playing with colors
- ☐ Learns best through music, games and play
- ☐ Intuitive learner
- ☐ Lives in the moment and doesn't always consider consequences (as appropriate for age)
- ☐ Tendency towards melt-downs and outburst — can turn on a dime
- ☐ Tendency towards hypoglycemia
- ☐ Sensory integration difficulties or craving different sensations
- ☐ Can have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- ☐ Easily over-stimulated by television and video games - hard to wind down after playing them
- ☐ Easily bored and wants to be entertained
- ☐ Gets flushed face or blushes easily
- ☐ Restless, has a hard time relaxing

Total Number Checked _____

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Water Element

- ☐ Quiet, prefers to be in the background of activity
- ☐ Attracted to deep thoughts and philosophy even at a young age
- ☐ Often described as an old soul
- ☐ Very imaginative — can have a very rich inner world
- ☐ Learns well using imagination — making up stories, creativity, inner exploration
- ☐ Can become withdrawn and depressed
- ☐ Can be stubborn or apathetic
- ☐ Often does not have an appropriate sense of time and dislikes being rushed
- ☐ Can harbor deep fears
- ☐ Takes a while to warm up to people outside of family and close friends
- ☐ May display developmental delays, slow growth, and dental problems
- ☐ Can crave salty foods
- ☐ Often quiet and contemplative, sometimes withdrawn
- ☐ Prefers to stay at home and needs alone time after school or social activities
- ☐ Easily overwhelmed by lots of noise and environmental stimuli
- ☐ Wants to be alone after an emotional upset
- ☐ Can be reasoned with since they crave wisdom/knowledge
- ☐ Enjoys magic, mythology, and mystical ideas, books and games
- ☐ Thinks outside the box
- ☐ Is constrained by structure, excels in flexible environment
- ☐ Quiet in class, may go unnoticed by teacher
- ☐ May have digestive complaints
- ☐ May suffer from malaise or back pain
- ☐ Tends to have a rounder body shape

Total Number Checked _____

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Wood Element

- ☐ Energetic, always on the go since a very early age
- ☐ Tends to get angry, frustrated easily
- ☐ Has trouble controlling temper, can lash out physically
- ☐ Pushes rules and boundaries and test limits
- ☐ May resist authority figures, like teachers, parents, etc.
- ☐ Curious about how things work
- ☐ May be described as having an intense, driven personality
- ☐ Wants to figure out how to do it themselves
- ☐ Communication may be blunt, can forget polite manners (please/thank you)
- ☐ Often attracted to competitive and team sports
- ☐ Goal oriented, goes "all out" to win and dislikes losing
- ☐ May have loud and frequent outbursts/tantrums
- ☐ Seeks adventure, movement, and stimulation
- ☐ Gets bored easily
- ☐ Has trouble sitting still or staying in seat during class
- ☐ May have muscle spasms, tremors, or tics
- ☐ Enjoys being the leader in a group
- ☐ Sometimes called a "trouble maker"
- ☐ Shows great determination & perseverance
- ☐ Argumentative and tenacious when they think they're right
- ☐ Athletic & has high physical endurance/stamina
- ☐ Eye disorders can be common (think conjunctivitis)
- ☐ Resists boundaries and responds well to compassion

Total Number Checked _____

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Interpreting the Results

The Element with highest number is most likely your child's dominant Element. Their dominant element characterizes and shapes your child's temperament and way of being in the world, including their personality, temperament and individual characteristics. By knowing a child's dominant Element, we can understand her strengths and weakness, predict the types of illnesses she is more prone to and which season she'll need the most support to keep her healthy.

If you're having a hard time deciding which element is dominant then your child may have both a dominant and influential element. Your child's influential Element can either strengthen or soften traits in the dominant element. After looking at the two highest scoring elements think about how your child is across multiple settings at school, home, and sporting activities.

Then read through the Guide for both Elements to help you decide which one is your child's dominant element. That will give you clues and help determine which element is dominant and which element is influential. For example, an Earth child with an influential Fire element will be outgoing and talkative and a natural caregiver, but instead of shying away from being the center of attention, she'll thrive by performing for others.

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



Five Element Guide for Parents

How to Support Your Child According to their Element

Once you've determined your child's dominant and/or influential element, you can read below to find out how you can best support your child. I've also given you tips on parenting styles that will work best for each element and behaviors that you want to model for your child to help them stay balanced as they navigate through life.

If you have a Metal Child

Your Metal child is likely really easy going about many things, but then they are likely to have a stubborn streak. They're probably particular about their routine or how their food is put on their plate or similar things. They're active but not as active as Fire and Wood children who keep their parents super busy. They enjoy a balance of activity and quiet time and thrive on routine.

You can support them best by being gentle with them when you're upset or if they're having a hard time. They take punishment very hard because they want to do their best to please you. Avoid reprimanding them in front of others because they'll take that especially hard and may shut down or start to cry.

Make transitions easier for your Metal child by giving them plenty of warning that a task will end and you'll have to leave or go somewhere. As they get older, get a calendar and review their weekly routine so they know what's coming up. When they are going to a new environment, such as school or camp, talk about it, walk them through it and even have them visualize it to make the transition easier. Before the first day of school, you can even have them write a letter to the teacher and imagine what their new teacher will be like. Demonstrate or model behaviors like flexibility to help them balance the rigidity of the Metal element. Metal children can get stuck in a negative thought spiral when things don't go their way. Show them how you shift out of negative emotions (like anger, fear and sadness) and into more positive emotions through deep breathing or other activities. Choose your

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



battles carefully because Metal children can be rigid and stubborn. Modeling flexibility is sometimes more important than imposing your will on your Metal child. This will show them what's truly important and allow them to be more flexible themselves.

Metal children enjoy puzzles, patterns and logic. Games involving timing and counting are particular fun for metal children. Time how long it takes to put their shoes on or make their bed and praise them for doing a good job!

If You Have an Earth Child

Your Earth child is friendly, outgoing and talkative, but they don't necessarily enjoy being in the spotlight. They are probably mommy's helper and are very attached to Mom, Dad, Grandma and anyone else who cares for them. Don't be surprised if your Earth child cries when you leave them at preschool for the first time! While your Earth child may go with the flow, she can also get worried about her family and friends, or even her pets.

The best way to support your Earth child is to be a loving source of support that listens to her worries and cares. She'll worry less if she knows that you're also taking care of things behind the scenes. You may want to introduce a "worry rock." Pick a pebble or stone that she likes. Then she can tell her worries to the stone and wash it under the faucet or in a stream (if you have one nearby), which will create a ritual to help her release worries and other negative emotions.

Have her help you in the kitchen with food prep and cooking to help her develop a healthy relationship with food. Since Earth children usually crave sugar and refined flours, exposing them to all the wonderful textures and flavors of healthy fruits and vegetables will keep her eating a balanced diet.

Even though your Earth child is outgoing she may not want to be in the spotlight. Go with her flow and don't force her onto the stage or in the spotlight if she doesn't want to be there. Modeling healthy relationships, stress management and self-care is very beneficial for Earth children. Earth children will often put the needs of others above their own needs and fail to

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



ask for help when they need it. Creating rituals and routines around self-care will make sure your Earth child gives to others from a place of abundance instead of depletion.

If You Have a Water Child

Your Water child is very creative and is a likely a deep thinker and feels more intensely than other children. They often understand emotional nuances and are considered wise beyond their years. Many parents describe their Water child as an "old soul." They can occupy themselves for hours in their own creative world, exploring these deeper thoughts and feelings. While they enjoy some activity they tend to shy away from lots of activity. They are usually introverted and need to refresh themselves by having quiet time alone. The risk for the Water child without adequate social stimulation lies in becoming stuck, depressed and lonely. While mostly a go-with-the-flow kind of kid they can demonstrate a terribly stubborn streak and may appear unmotivated by prizes or rewards.

You can support your Water child best by giving them space to explore and move through feelings. Allow and encourage them to talk to you about things when *they* are ready, not necessarily when you are ready. If you are a Fire or Wood parent this may be hard to understand at first, but giving them space to work through their feelings will help actually help her more. Using art, music and creative expression may help them express themselves and move through their emotions. If your water child is stuck and can't explain it to you, try offering some crayons and paper and ask her to show you what she feels. Or start making up a story about them with their name in it, letting them finish the story.

Having a flexible home environment is a great way to support a Water child. Water children do not tend to do well with routine and busy schedules. When the spirit moves them they can accomplish beautiful and amazing things, but they tend to have their own sense of timing. Making a request that a chore or a homework assignment happen within a time-frame (rather than on a specific day at a specific time) is helpful.

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



If You Have a Wood Child

Your Wood child is likely very energetic, curious and adventurous. He is active and needs physical outlets in order to manage his energy and feelings, which will enable him to stay balanced. Curiosity and a drive to understand things often lead to questioning and pushing the boundaries. Some say that Wood children are natural born leaders and an "I can" attitude.

You can best support your Wood child by helping them establish meaningful goals to help them channel their energy. They like having something to work towards, so helping them set realistic, individual goals for sports activities or school can channel their competitiveness in a positive way. Even setting a goal to have a great visit with the dentist can keep a Wood child brushing their teeth regularly.

These kids will push boundaries in order to understand their own strength. Once he knows his limits he can respond to challenges without triggering frustration or anger about being held back. Redirecting them away from an argument and towards the positive goal that they have an interest in will prove beneficial.

Physical activity is a must for Wood children. Team sports and dance troupes are a great way for him to find his way socially, as well as working out his energy. If they have a lot of energy in the classroom, make sure to get them some play time before school starts so they can keep themselves seated and pay attention in class.

If your Wood child is arguing with you or others, let them work it out physically through sports and healthy physical activity before you try to talk about it. Much of the charged anger or frustration will have moved on by then. Then speak in practical, compassionate terms and you will most likely get them to understand. When you explain the reasoning behind your decisions you will help him understand the "why" and satisfy his curiosity.

Five Element Questionnaire & Guide



If you have a Fire Child

Your Fire child is likely bright, vibrant and seeks lots of stimulation. She wants her parent to entertain her and play with her. She's a very active and engaging kid that likes constant movement, but can also be easily overwhelmed by uncomfortable sensory stimulation, textures, or fabrics.

You can support your Fire child best by offering a compassionate ear to their problem or dilemmas. Instead of reacting with criticism or harsh boundaries Fire children need to know that they are heard, valued, & cared for. With these kids, a hug or gentle touch will provide great comfort, and they often need to talk things out when they are confused or upset. Bear in mind that her reactions to certain situations can at times seem overly dramatic for what the situation calls for.

Being a natural entertainer, your Fire child probably craves being surrounded by friends. She is a charismatic and naturally likable child and, as if acting from a stage, they are often the center of attention in group situations. On the playground or in school settings they are typically the 'popular' kids, where everyone seems to want to be their friend. Although they thrive in the attention, too much of a good thing can make Fire kids overly sensitive at the end of the day. Try to balance play dates or extracurricular activities with adequate family or quiet time to prevent sensory over-stimulation.

Model behaviors like calmness and kindness to help counter their overactive nature. Since these children tend to be quick to react, avoid fueling the fire of a tantrum by staying as relaxed and supportive as possible. If you lose your cool as a parent, the fire child will feel ungrounded and may spiral into compulsive and reactive behavior. You can get down to their level and use words like, "I hear what you're saying" and "I see you're upset, how can I help you?" rather than "What's the matter with you?" or "Why are you acting like that?" A little love and understanding goes a long way with Fire children.

Be sure to keep a Fire child engaged in artistic and creative activities. These kids love hands-on projects that are full of expression. Consider art camp, circus class, or an after-school theater group to provide them with appropriate outlets for their active and artsy side.