

ADOS-2 Report Write-Up Cheat Sheet

Reviewed by the BastionGPT Clinical Advisory Board · July 2026

The ADOS-2 (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition, 2012) is a semi-structured observation for ages 12 months to adulthood, with five modules chosen by age and expressive-language level, each 40–60 minutes. Modules 1–4 return a classification (autism, autism spectrum, non-spectrum); the Toddler Module returns ranges of concern. A classification is not a diagnosis: report it with narrative behavior, and keep item content and cutoff numbers out of the record.

1 – Instrument, module, administration which module, and why

Do: name the module and why it was chosen (age and expressive-language level), the administrator's ADOS-2 training, and that it was one part of the evaluation.

Pitfall: no module stated, or the observation written up as if it produced the diagnosis.

2 – Behavioral observations, your words describe, do not transcribe

Do: describe eye contact, gesture, reciprocity, conversation, play, restricted interests, and sensory behavior in your own words.

Pitfall: reproducing the activities or presses; that exposes protected content and erodes the norms.

3 – Classification, not decoded the result, in words

Do: state the classification (or range of concern) and, if used, the comparison-score band in words.

Pitfall: printing algorithm totals, item scores, or cutoff numbers, or calling the comparison score a fixed truth.

4 – Integration with the battery the observation is evidence

Do: place the result beside developmental history, caregiver report, and rating or cognitive data; state where they converge.

Pitfall: an ADOS-2 section that never connects to the rest of the evaluation.

5 – DSM-5-TR formulation the diagnosis is clinical judgment

Do: state the determination and the judgment behind it, naming the ADOS-2 as one input.

Pitfall: a diagnosis resting on the classification alone; non-spectrum does not rule autism out.

6 – Limitations and validity what could shift the picture

Do: note language, setting, in-person or remote, masking, and co-occurring anxiety, trauma, or psychosis.

Pitfall: silence on masking, especially for girls and women, where the observation can under-detect autism.

7 – Recommendations linkage close the loop

Do: tie every recommendation, whether supports, services, or further assessment, to a specific finding.

Pitfall: recommendations that could follow any evaluation.

Before you sign

- ☐ Module named, with selection rationale
- ☐ Classification reported, no items or cutoffs
- ☐ Integrated with history and rating scales
- ☐ Diagnosis credited to DSM-5-TR, not ADOS-2 alone
- ☐ Limitations stated, masking noted
- ☐ Each recommendation traces to a finding

Drafting with AI

Paste the module, the classification, and your observations. Not the activities, not the presses, not cutoff numbers.

"Draft an ADOS-2 section: Module 3, autism spectrum classification; observed fluent but one-sided conversation, limited reciprocity, narrow intense interests, sensory sensitivity; integrate with an elevated caregiver rating scale and early peer-relationship difficulty."

Never paste client-identifying information into consumer AI tools. BastionGPT is HIPAA-compliant with a signed BAA on every plan.

300–600 words
ADOS-2 section

40–60 min
per module

Ages 12mo–adult
five modules

**Autism teams · payers ·
parents**
who reads it

ADOS-2 Results Section Template

Copy or print for your practice · Adapt fields to your organization's, payer's and jurisdiction's documentation requirements.

Client (initials): _____ Age: _____ Testing date(s): _____

Module used: _____ Administered by: _____ Referral question: _____

Instrument, module, and administration

Module used and why (age and language level); administrator's ADOS-2 training

Behavioral observations

Eye contact, gesture, reciprocity, play, restricted interests, sensory behavior; your own words

Classification

Classification or range of concern; comparison-score band in words; no algorithm totals or cutoffs

Integration with history and measures

Developmental history, caregiver report, rating and cognitive data; where they converge or diverge

DSM-5-TR formulation

The diagnostic determination and clinical judgment; the ADOS-2 is one input

Limitations and validity

Language, setting, in-person or remote, masking, co-occurring conditions

Recommendations linkage

Each recommendation tied to a finding

Discordant results addressed: _____ Re-evaluation considered: _____

Evaluator signature / credentials: _____ Date signed: _____

Supervisor signature, where required: _____ Date: _____