In occupational therapy, evaluation is viewed as a collaborative process that aims to understand people as occupational beings and how they create meaning in their lives through occupation (Cohn, Schell, & Neistadt, 2003). A home evaluation seeks to understand and analyze the dynamic transaction between people, their occupational patterns, and the home environment. Using a top-down approach and an occupation-based framework, occupational therapists analyze occupational performance by first seeking to understand the roles and occupations of importance to the person and the impact of the injury, impairment, or health condition on the person’s life. The therapist then observes and examines the person’s performance, the home environment, and occupational elements (activities, tasks, and sequences) to identify barriers and facilitators to performance. Clients are considered to be central to the evaluation process, actively contributing to the therapist’s understanding of their experience and capacities, the value of the activities they engage in, and the intricacies of the home environment.

Given the unique and complex nature of occupational performance in the home, therapists rely heavily on professional reasoning to deal with the diversity of information they gather during the evaluation process. This chapter describes the range of reasoning styles therapists use and how they are used throughout the process to develop and test hypotheses, understand the client’s perspective, and determine what is achievable to ensure the best possible outcomes. The chapter also details the variety of evaluation strategies therapists use to understand and interpret occupational performance in the home—including informal and structured interviews, skilled observation, and standardized assessment tools—and discusses what each strategy contributes to the home modification process. Criteria are also provided to guide therapists when they are selecting and evaluating standardized assessment tools.

**Chapter Objectives**

By the end of this chapter, the reader will be able to:

+ Describe the purpose of a home evaluation
+ Explain the framework therapists use for evaluating occupational performance in the home
+ Describe how professional reasoning is used throughout a home evaluation
+ Identify the types of evaluation strategies occupational therapists use during a home visit and what each contributes to the evaluation process
+ Identify important considerations in choosing standardized assessment tools for home modifications