

Chapter 6: Learning

Operant Conditioning

Operant Conditioning

- Learning controlled by the consequences of the organism's behavior
- The organism's behavior is shaped by what comes after it
- Also known as *instrumental conditioning*



Classical vs. Operant

- In classical conditioning, the organism's response is *elicited*
 - In operant conditioning, the organism's response is *emitted*—generated by the organism in a seemingly voluntary fashion
- In classical conditioning, the animal's reward is independent of what it does
 - In operant conditioning, the animal's reward is dependent on what it does
- In classical conditioning, the organism's responses depend primarily on the autonomic nervous system
 - In operant conditioning, the organism's responses depend primarily on the skeletal muscles