**Psychology Key Term List 8 Neurons**

Copy these terms on index cards to use as flash cards.

1. neuron-nerve cell; the basic building block of the nervous system
2. dendrite-the branching extensions of a neuron that receive messages and send them to the soma.
3. Soma-the cell body of a neuron; contains the nucleus and helps keep the cell healthy.
4. Axon- the extension of a neuron through which neural impulses are sent.
5. Axon terminal-the endpoint of a neuron, where neurotransmitters are stored.
6. Action potentional-a neural impulse; a brief electrical charge that travels down the axon of a neuron.
7. Refractory period-the “recharging phase” when a neuron, after firing, cannot generate another action potential.
8. Resting potential-after the refractory period, when a neuron is capable of generating an action potential.
9. All-or-none principle-if a neuron fires, it always fires with the same intensity.
10. Synapse-the tiny, fluid-filled gap between the axon terminal of one neuron and the dendrite of another.
11. Neurotransmitter-a chemical messenger that travels across the synapse from one neuron to the next and influences whether a neuron will generate an action potential (impulse)
12. Excitatory effect-makes it more likely that the receiving neuron will generate an impulse.
13. Inhibitory effect-makes it less likely that the receiving neuron will generate an impulse.