

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FACTS

DAILY LIVING

WHAT IS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY?

Assistive technology, or AT, is any tool that allows individuals with disabilities to use their unique abilities to reach their goals. AT can range from low-cost tools such as a jar opener to more complex devices such as a power wheelchair or communication aid. Infants, children, adults and older persons with any type of disability can benefit from the use of AT.

What is an aid for daily living?

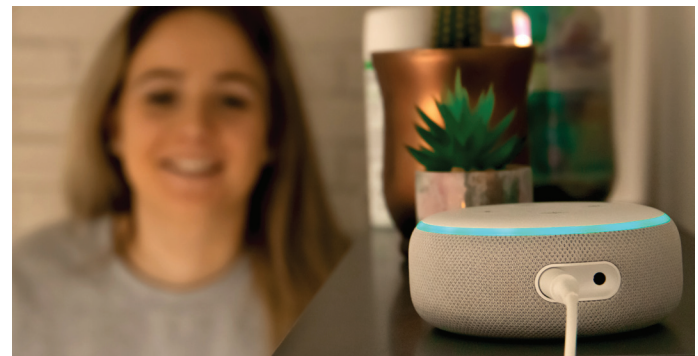
It's any piece of equipment or adaptation that increases an individual's participation or independence in daily activities such as eating and grooming as well as routine tasks such as getting out of bed and cooking a meal.

Who is able to benefit from the use of daily living aids?

They're probably the most widely used category of AT because almost everybody can benefit from them. Anyone who has ever used a gripper to open a stubborn jar lid has experienced the power of AT. Many products originally designed for people with disabilities have been embraced by the public because they make completing a task easier and more comfortable.

Where can I purchase aids for daily living?

They can be found in drug stores, general merchandise stores (like Target and Walmart) and hardware stores. There are also online sites offering hundreds of



clever tools and gadgets. These aids are easily accessible, usually do not require a prescription and tend to be affordably priced.

What are examples of aids for daily living?

- ◆ Modified meal preparation and tools and eating utensils
- ◆ Shower bench
- ◆ Long handled hair brush and comb
- ◆ Dressing stick
- ◆ Reacher
- ◆ Medicine planner
- ◆ Weighted drinking glass
- ◆ Levered doorknobs
- ◆ Gardening tools
- ◆ "Reminding" devices
- ◆ Electronic items such as Amazon Alexa or Google Home systems



When are these products of most use?

Daily living aids are used from the moment people wake up until the time they go to bed. In the morning, the use of a bed rail provides support as a person gets up from a lying down or seated position. Lunch may include the use of large-handled utensils so that gripping silverware is easier. In the evening, a zipper pull helps in getting dressed for a night out with friends. A book holder keeps reading material open and at a comfortable distance. And as lights are turned out at night, an electronic butler

like Amazon's Alexa makes that once-difficult task simple.

Is it possible to create my own aids for daily living?

Absolutely. Many commercial aids can be reproduced at home with minimum difficulties. For example, a length of pipe insulation, slipped over a utensil's handle, may make it easier or more comfortable for someone with limited grip to hold. Also, items created for one task can sometimes be adapted and used for another.

What are some questions to ask when shopping for daily living aids?

- ◆ What activity am I trying to make easier?
- ◆ Does this product perform the function intended?
- ◆ Can I try this product before I buy it?
- ◆ Will I need assistance to use this device?
- ◆ Will rearranging my environment eliminate the need for this aid?



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about Assistive Technology, please call
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