

Top tips for Adults with dyslexia

About us

We believe that everyone with dyslexia should be able to reach their full potential in life. We campaign for an inclusive society that acknowledges, accepts and empowers individuals with dyslexia so that we can help create a kinder, fairer and stronger world.

Around 10% of the population has dyslexia. Dyslexia doesn't discriminate, occurring across all ethnicities and in people from all social groups. A vast number of individuals are undiagnosed and do not receive adequate support.

As a result, they face daily barriers: in education, in the workplace and in life. They may be excluded from activities, shamed for their differences or simply disregarded. Too many children and adults with dyslexia find it hard to thrive within a system that often fails to recognise, value or encourage them. And as a society, we are poorer for it.

At the British Dyslexia Association, we want all children and adults with dyslexia to have the opportunity to flourish. We believe that our world should welcome different ways of thinking and celebrate neurodiversity. By representing our community as the voice of dyslexia, we aim to ensure that all members of society, and especially those most disadvantaged and least privileged, receive the support they deserve.

We welcome you on this journey with us as, together, we create a dyslexia-friendly society.

Top tips to support adults

At the British Dyslexia Association, we believe that every kind of brain should be valued for its unique way of looking at the world. If you or someone you know is dyslexic, here are some top tips to help with some common challenges, including some suggested reasonable adjustments to help at work.

Organisation

- List and colour code your regular tasks.
- Use sticky notes or a whiteboard or set reminders on your phone.
- Build planning time into the start and end of each day.
- Create a daily, dated TO DO list. Cross off completed tasks as you go.
- Use a calendar app with alerts for appointments or tasks to complete or keep a paper-based diary.

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- Use apps for adding to lists while 'on the go' such as Google Keep for shopping lists.
- Use specific places for objects e.g. always leave your keys in one place.
- Keep things in groups e.g. always keep football boots and shin pads on top of your sports bag.

Communication

- Ask for verbal and written instructions and for instructions to be broken into steps.
- Ask for information in formats that work for you – audio, video, drawings, diagrams and flowcharts.
- Use voice mail or audio messaging rather than emails.
- Use standard built-in accessibility features to enable spell-checking, screen reading and dictation or specialist software to improve accessibility.
- Print documents on coloured paper or change background colour on digital documents if this improves reading comfort.
- Ask for agendas and written documents in advance of meetings to allow time for reading.
- Ask permission to record online meetings or use a digital voice recorder.
- Ask a colleague to take minutes of a meeting or use a note taking app or software.

Virtual and computer work

- Find a quiet working area with minimal distractions.
- Noise cancelling headphones can minimise background noise – some people also like to listen to music or white noise to help them focus.
- Sit with your back to a window to minimise distractions.
- Change the background colour of the screen to suit your individual preference.
- Switch off automated notifications to improve focus and concentration.
- Use the built-in accessibility features including spelling checking, dictation and screen reading features, or request specialist assistive software if required.
- Some people find that using an anti-glare screen filter reduces fatigue.
- Take frequent breaks from the screen, at least every hour.
- Alternate computer work with other tasks where possible.
- Avoid continuous all day computer work.

Technology to assist reading

- Office lens App - scans documents/whiteboard for easy reading.
- Mobile phone accessibility functions – screen reading and dictation
- Speechify App - reads text to you
- Microsoft Immersive Reader- screen reading and dictation functions
- Google chrome - extensions for screen reading and dictation.
- Reading pens

Writing

- Create templates and standard words/phrases to use for report writing.
- Try using dictation software to help get your ideas onto paper.
- Explore the in-built accessibility features on your phone and laptop.
- Screen reading technology can help with proof reading .
- Chat GPT – can help generate ideas or be used to help improve spelling punctuation and grammar.
- Use transcription features on virtual meetings to facilitate note taking.
- Look at apps or software including Grammarly and Speechify.
- Mindmapping software can help structure reports and essays.

Using your phone

Get the most out of your smartphone as a tool to help you through the day.
You can use it to:

- Dictate texts, emails and internet searches.
- Send voice messages.
- Use the notes feature.
- Check spellings .
- Set reminders and alarms.
- Take photos of things you need to remember.
- Record meetings (with appropriate permission from participants).

Memory

- Make a list of activities you do each day and start a routine so that it becomes automatic.
- Use visual aids such as pictures or photos to help with memory recall and use reminders and alarms on your mobile phone or laptop.
- Imagine yourself doing an action e.g. walking downstairs, picking up your bag, keys, leaving and locking the front door. Visualising can help you to remember.
- Diagrams and flowcharts may be easier to follow and recall than lists.

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- Use sat navs for journeys or plan a journey using google maps and choosing landmarks to help with directions e.g.
- “turn left at the traffic lights by the church”.
- Use two-factor authentication, or facial recognition in place of passwords, or use secure password keepers.
- Ask your bank for alternative security features to access online accounts if you struggle with traditional password features.

Concentration

- Use headphones with or without music or put a screen around your workspace to minimise distractions from noise.
- Sit with your back to windows or doors, move to a quieter area or a meeting room.
- Build in regular rest breaks and do something different during your break.
- Alternate tasks between those that require longer periods of focus and those that are quick to complete.
- Turn off notifications on phones and set calls to voicemail. Check for messages at regular intervals.
- Have a clear idea about what you need to achieve. When you have completed a task mark it as completed so that you can see the progress you are making.
- Vary the way you approach a task – you could try working standing up, use notecards as well as paper, listen to text as well as read it.

Further information

Contact the British Dyslexia Association Helpline
Our helpline offers free, confidential, impartial information and signposting.

Call: 0333 405 4567

email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk
or direct message our team through Facebook and Instagram

Visit our website: bdadyslexia.org.uk