

Common examples of reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes to stop you being put at a disadvantage because you are autistic (or otherwise meet the legal definition of disability) compared to someone who is not. They can be requested at every stage of the employment cycle, including during recruitment.

For detailed information about reasonable adjustments, visit autism.org.uk/reasonable-adjustments

This resource includes:

- examples of common reasonable adjustments for autistic people
- the legal type of each adjustment
- an example scenario exploring why a person may need each adjustment
- reasons why each adjustment may be reasonable for an employer to make (please note that this can differ depending on the employer's resources, for example – see our web page content for more information).

The table below is not a list of every possible reasonable adjustment. You may need and be entitled to adjustments that are not included. There is a blank section on the final page for you to make notes about adjustments you may need.

This resource provides examples and suggestions only. It should not replace seeking specialist advice if required. Publicly funded services include [ACAS](#) for England, Scotland and Wales, and [LRA](#) for Northern Ireland.

Area of need	EXAMPLE What issue/challenge are you facing?	What is the disadvantage to you (compared to non-autistic employees)?	Example of an adjustment	Legal type of reasonable adjustment	Benefits to you and to your employer	Why the adjustment may be reasonable
Communication and social situations	I take things literally and find it hard to distinguish between office banter and specific instructions.	Because my manager's instructions are unclear or leave much of the instruction unspoken, I don't understand what I have been asked to do.	My manager and colleagues use clear and precise language and give clear instructions. For example, they avoid sarcasm.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I understand the instructions I'm given, and I am able to complete tasks to my manager's satisfaction.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption - has no effect on health and safety.
	I am frequently interrupted mid-task.	I find it difficult to focus and complete tasks if I am distracted, leading to work not being completed on time.	My colleagues to use my individual communication preferences: to be contacted by email when working on a task.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I can focus on tasks and complete them without interruption; I can respond to colleagues' questions when I've finished a task.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption - has no effect on health and safety.
	In meetings, I am 'put on the spot' and asked for immediate comment.	Not having enough time to process questions and frame a response can result in me shutting down, giving the impression that I can't or don't want to contribute and affecting my mental health.	Questions are circulated in advance of meetings, so I have time to prepare. If a question is asked in the meeting, I am able to answer at the end of the meeting, or it is noted in writing and I can respond after the meeting.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I have enough time to process questions and prepare responses. My contributions are valued by colleagues, who also find a written record of questions and answers useful.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption - has no effect on health and safety.
	I can find it difficult to remember verbal (spoken) instructions and information.	I may not understand what is required of me, what is happening in the workplace and ways I can improve. This may result in my employer having doubts about my ability to do my job.	My manager: - follows up verbal instructions and information with a written summary - gives feedback in writing.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I can refer back to written summaries and feedback so that I know what I have to do, what's going on in the workplace and how I can improve.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - there may be some disruption for the manager as writing summaries takes time, but this is likely to lessen as working patterns are set, and the benefits outweigh the time investment - has no effect on health and safety.

Area of need	EXAMPLE What issue/challenge are you facing?	What is the disadvantage to you (compared to non-autistic employees)?	Example of an adjustment	Legal type of reasonable adjustment	Benefits to you and to your employer	Why the adjustment may be reasonable
Communication and social situations	My employer arranges regular social events and there is an expectation that everyone joins in. But I find small talk, and turn-taking or being interrupted during conversations, difficult. I often take jokes literally and feel humiliated when I don't understand.	In the days before and after these social events, my anxiety increases to such an extent that it impacts my wellbeing and ability to work.	My manager makes social events optional and inclusive - for example, held in quieter environments or involving a structured activity (such as bowling), with the option to leave after the game.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	My anxiety levels at work are reduced, supporting my wellbeing and making me more productive. My colleagues understand and accept that social situations can be challenging for me, but value the ways I can engage.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost, or little cost to adjust activity plans - doesn't cause disruption - has no effect on health and safety.
Environment	I am much more sensitive to sounds, visual stimuli (like lights), smells and/or touch than non-autistic people.	I can become overwhelmed by sensory inputs, which are distracting and affect my ability to focus on tasks. Additionally, I can become burnt out from the stress and effort of trying to focus while experiencing sensory overwhelm.	My work station is moved to avoid areas that are: - busy (where lots of people are moving or meeting) - noisy (due to people talking, loud equipment or machinery) - strong-smelling (such as lunchrooms) - bright (fluorescent lighting). Visual and/or sound partitioning is set up around my workstation in an open plan environment.	Change to the physical work environment and/or Provide extra equipment or service.	I am no longer distracted or overwhelmed by my environment. I am less stressed and more productive as a result.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost, or relatively low, one-off costs if partitioning is needed - little or temporary disruption to move one or more workstations, for example if certain employees must work in close proximity - has no effect on health and safety (provided fire exits are kept clear).

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Environment	I am much more sensitive to sounds, visual stimuli (like lights), smells and/or touch than non-autistic people.	I can become overwhelmed by sensory inputs, which are distracting and affect my ability to focus on tasks. Additionally, I can become burnt out from the stress and effort of trying to focus while experiencing sensory overwhelm.	I am provided with / allowed to wear noise-cancelling headphones or noise-blocking earbuds.	Provide extra equipment or service.	I am no longer distracted or overwhelmed by my environment. I am less stressed and more productive as a result.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no or a low cost - doesn't cause disruption - has no effect on health and safety.
			I am provided with / allowed to wear sunglasses or other tinted glasses to reduce sensory input from lighting, visual stress and/or eye strain.	Provide extra equipment or service.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has a low cost if there is space available for a quiet area (perhaps for furniture and lighting) - causes temporary disruption to potentially create a long-term resource for all staff - has no effect on health and safety.
			I am provided with / allowed to use sensory tools, such as fidget toys or a weighted blanket.	Provide extra equipment or service.		
			I have access to a quiet space if I need it, such as a meeting or conference room (that is not usually used for people to work alone or rest in), or a dedicated quiet space is provided.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.		
				Provide extra equipment or service.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no or a low cost - doesn't cause disruption beyond communicating the dress code adjustment to other staff - has no effect on health and safety.
			I am allowed to wear comfortable clothing that is different to the usual work dress code.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no or a low cost - doesn't cause disruption beyond communication about the fixed workspace to other staff - has no effect on health and safety.
	Because of my employer's policy of 'hot-desking', every day I am anxious because of not knowing where I will be working.	I arrive at work feeling stressed every day, and it takes time for me to find a desk, lay out the things I need and to get comfortable at the new workstation. This makes me feel flustered and embarrassed, so I struggle to concentrate and be productive at the start of the day.	I am allocated a fixed workspace, as opposed to 'hot-desking', to increase predictability.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	As soon as I arrive at work, I feel comfortable and can concentrate and be productive, benefitting my wellbeing and my work.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption beyond communication about the fixed workspace to other staff - has no effect on health and safety.

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Flexibility and predictability	I have a strong preference for routine and can find changes to my routine challenging.	Starting a new role or coping with a major transition at work can be overwhelming because I have to adjust to new routines. Because I am overwhelmed, I struggle to process information (such as induction training) and find I am confused and unprepared.	A phased start is arranged when I begin a new role (starting on reduced hours) and major transitions are introduced slowly, in phases.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I am able to adjust to new routines gradually and process new information, benefitting my wellbeing and long-term productivity	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - unlikely to have a cost, as the employee may be paid pro rata for reduced hours - it may cause some disruption if the employer needed the employee to work full-time or make a transition immediately, but the employee may work more effectively with a phased start or through a phased transition and the long term benefits are likely to outweigh any initial inconvenience - has no effect on health and safety.
	I have a strong preference for routine and can find unexpected changes or tasks stressful.	If I don't know what's planned for each day, I feel stressed and can struggle to adapt to sudden changes.	I am given predictable and consistent work duties. My manager schedules daily check-ins to discuss the objectives for the day. My manager and I agree a period of notice regarding changes to a schedule, calendar or workload.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I know what is planned each day and I have adequate time to adapt to changes.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - minimal disruption (additional check-ins and respecting periods of notice) - has no effect on health and safety.
	I arrive at work feeling overwhelmed because of travelling through rush hour in loud, crowded environments where people are bumping into me, and find it hard to relax in the evening after travelling home.	I am less productive in the morning because it's difficult to concentrate when I am recovering from the sensory overwhelm and stress of the commute. My wellbeing is affected generally.	My working hours are flexible: starting and finishing earlier or later than the usual workplace hours, to miss rush hour.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I am more productive and less stressed, benefitting my wellbeing and my work.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - causes very little disruption (I can collaborate with colleagues during the core hours of working) - has no effect on health and safety.
			My employer provides taxis to take me to and from work.	Provide extra equipment or service.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has an ongoing cost, but this may be reasonable depending on the size and resources of the employer or the availability of funding, such as Access to Work - causes no disruption - has no effect on health and safety.

Area of need	EXAMPLE What issue/challenge are you facing?	What is the disadvantage to you (compared to non-autistic employees)?	Example of an adjustment	Legal type of reasonable adjustment	Benefits to you and to your employer	Why the adjustment may be reasonable
Flexibility and predictability	I can become overwhelmed at lunchtimes, when there are lots of staff using the canteen / lunch area. I find the noise, social interaction and congestion overwhelming.	Before lunch I become anxious in anticipation of this stressful event, and after lunch it takes time for me to recover and focus on my work.	I am allowed to take my lunch break at a different time to others.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.	I am more productive and less stressed, benefitting my wellbeing and my work.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption (colleagues are aware of my availability) - has no effect on health and safety.
	I can find the workplace overwhelming due to the amount of social interaction. I find that I have to mask to fit in, which is exhausting.	It can take me longer to refocus on a task or switch between tasks if I'm interrupted or distracted by social chat. The stress of masking makes me feel exhausted and overwhelmed.	I can work from home.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - some set up costs for IT and workspace equipment - doesn't cause disruption (unless the role requires on-site working) - has no effect on health and safety (provided appropriate checks are carried out).
	I find working for long periods of time exhausting.	I lose concentration and find it difficult to process information.	I work with frequent breaks.	Change to the way the employer usually does things.		- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - has no cost - doesn't cause disruption (colleagues are aware of my working times) - has no effect on health and safety.

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Workload and task management	I find starting a new job challenging, particularly processing lots of new information, coping with new routines and knowing who I can approach for support and queries.	I misunderstand what I am supposed to do and don't complete tasks as required.	I am provided with additional supervision from a manager, job coach or mentor.	Provide extra equipment or service.	I know who I can go to for support with queries and guidance with tasks, with the result that I understand and complete them accurately.	- it effectively overcomes the disadvantage - may have no cost and cause little disruption if an existing member of staff is available to act as a mentor; it may have a cost if an external mentor is needed - this may be reasonable based on the size and resources of the employer or the availability of funding, such as Access to Work. - has no effect on health and safety.

	The issue/challenge I am facing	The disadvantage this puts me at	The adjustment I need	The legal type of this adjustment	Benefits to me and my employer	Why the adjustment may be reasonable
My reasonable adjustments						