

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology / Adaptations / Accommodations

Why This Is Important

Assistive technology refers to devices and tools that are created to help anyone and everyone participate more fully in the activities of daily life. The ability to respond to one's environment has a significant impact on a person's degree of independence, quality of life, and ability to learn. By providing appropriate adaptive equipment, assistive technology can extend movement and motor control to persons with physical impairments, bring voice and communication to individuals with speech and language difficulties, provide Braille and speech synthesis to a child with visual limitations and offer additional learning opportunities to all people.



Now For The Fun Part – Here's What You Can Find:

You can search by product type at a website that classifies over 29,000 products listed in the Abledata database of assistive technology by each product's intended function(s) or special feature(s). The products are classified in 19 areas. Clicking on an area will link you to a list of the major categories within that area from which you can see the list of specific product types in that category. Just point and click at website http://www.abledata.com/text2/prod_type.htm and find everything from architectural elements to workplace products described. Also, the Community Living Resources Section of Wheelchairnet has gathered links and resources from all over the Internet and can be accessed at http://www.wheelchairnet.org/WCN_Living/living.html. This checklist features just a few of the many resources available.

One generation plants the tree; 1 another gets the shade . . .

CHECKLIST OF RESOURCES, OPTIONS, ALTERNATIVES

- ✓ Adaptations to motor vehicles
- ✓ Augmentative communication devices
- ✓ Body position switches
- ✓ Cables and switch accessories
- ✓ Contact switches
- ✓ Joysticks
- ✓ Optical switches
- ✓ Remote switches
- ✓ Environmental control units
- ✓ Bed controls
- ✓ Signal controls
- ✓ Low vision thermostat
- ✓ Thermostat extension handle
- ✓ Light switch extension
- ✓ Door handles
- ✓ Door openers (see picture)
- ✓ Bathtub accessories
- ✓ Grab bars
- ✓ Hand showers
- ✓ Vertical lifts
- ✓ Transfer lifts
- ✓ Ramps
- ✓ Stair lifts
- ✓ Magnifying microscope
- ✓ Speech synthesizer
- ✓ Large LCD display on equipment

How to qualify for Assistive Technology Service

Assistive technology may be provided through several agencies, each with its own application process. Call the Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) network at: 1-800-327-5287 or (502) 327-0022m TTD (502) 327-9855 for information on local providers in your area. Visit their website at <http://www.katsnet.org>

Locally, be sure to visit EnTech – Enabling Technologies at the Louisville Free Public Library, 301 York Street, Louisville, KY 40203; phone 1 800-890-1840 or 561-8637.

If you are under 22, you may qualify for help through the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Special Services funding described in the Financial Assistance Section.



Assistive Technology Assessments and Consultations

- Staffed by Assistive Technology Specialists and a Speech Language Pathologist specializing in AAC
- Assessment includes a full written report
- Consultation includes a written summary

Specialized Trainings and Presentations

- Workshops and in-services
- Software and device training
- Curriculum modifications
- Local, regional and statewide availability
- Open to parents, consumers and professionals

Technical Assistance

- Assistive technology, augmentative communication, and computer systems

Product Demonstrations and Vendor Information

- Computer access hardware and software
- Computer-based and stand-alone communication systems
- Accessible workstation
- Low tech daily living aids

Loan Libraries of Assistive Technology and Adapted Toys

- Short-term loans
- Library includes: switches and switch interfaces, electronic communication devices, adapted keyboards, environmental controls, auditory trainers, adapted toys
- Call for fees and device availability

Office hours: Monday ~ Friday 9am - 5pm

Alliance for Technology Access Charter Member

Enabling Technologies of Kentuckiana (enTECH) is an assistive technology resource center specializing in the adaptive technologies that can create greater independence for persons with disabilities. enTECH seeks to share with the community at large the array of opportunities in education, employment, recreation and daily living made possible through technology for persons with disabilities.

Our Services:

- Assistive Technology Assessments and Consultations
- Occupational and Speech Therapy
- Specialized Trainings and Presentations
- Technical Assistance
- Product Demonstrations and Vendor Information
- Loan Libraries of Assistive Technology and Adapted Toys

A participating member of the **Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) network**

A project of the **Council on Mental Retardation**, a United Way agency

ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES OF KENTUCKIANA

Louisville Free Public Library

301 York Street

Louisville, KY 40203

1-800-890-1840

502-574-1637

FAX: 502-582-2448

Entechky@bellsouth.net

UNIVERSAL DESIGN: WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Remember the saying “What if you threw a party and nobody came?” Well, the equivalent saying for people with disabilities is “What if they built me a home and I couldn’t live in it?” That’s exactly what has been happening to people with physical disabilities and persons who use wheel chairs for many, many years. There is no sign in our society that more clearly says that persons with disabilities don’t count than the fact that “universal design” principles have not been widely adopted and applauded. Universal design is an approach that works to ensure products and buildings can be used by virtually anyone and everyone, regardless of their level of ability or disability. The term, coined by the late Ronald L. Mace a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, represents a concept that sprang from the movement to make buildings accessible to people with disabilities. **Universal design means simply designing all products, buildings, and exterior spaces to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible.** It is not a style but an orientation to design based on the following premises:

- Disability is not a specialty of a few;
- It is an ordinary condition and effects most of us for some part of our lives;
- If a design works well for people with disabilities, it works better for everyone;
- Usability and aesthetics are mutually compatible.

Most people will experience some form of disability, either permanent or temporary over the course of their lives. Given this reality, if disability were more commonly recognized and expected in the way that we design our environments or our systems, it would not seem so abnormal. The question centers on “normality”. Who said it was normal to have electric outlets 6 inches off the floor? Who said it was normal to have a door so heavy that it takes a bodybuilder to open it? Why are signs in buildings so small that it forces people to expend a lot of energy unnecessarily searching for rooms and offices? Design changes are a sensible and economical way to make a more usable world for all of us.

Principles of Universal Design

1. Equitable use: The design does not disadvantage or stigmatize any group of users.
2. Flexibility in Use: The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. Simple, Intuitive Use: Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
4. Perceptible Information: The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.

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5. Tolerance for Error: The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. Low Physical Effort: The design can be used efficiently and comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue.
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use: Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of the user's body size, posture, or mobility.

(Information on the above may be viewed in its entirety on several websites, among them: [Http://www.accessiblesociety.org/topics/universaldesign/](http://www.accessiblesociety.org/topics/universaldesign/)
<http://www.adaptenv.org/universal/index.php>

Building a World Fit for People, a new book published by Adaptive Environments shows how designers with disabilities are contributing to the style of our buildings and products. More information on this project is available at:

http://www.disabilityworld.org/06-08_02/access/designers.shtml)