

# Assistive Technology for your child



Assistive Technology (AT) includes equipment or devices that can help your child with disability perform tasks more easily and safely.

Learn how you and your child can access the benefits of AT support.

## Adding AT to your child's NDIS Plan

The aim of any AT is to help your child achieve the goals outlined in their NDIS Plan. So your first step is to ensure the addition of AT aligns with these outcomes.

If your child's goals need to be changed, you can use wording such as:

- Maintain or improve independence
- Increase ability to access the community
- Improve quality of life

To have AT included in your child's Plan you may also want to get a letter of support from an allied health practitioner. If an assessment is required, it should outline how many hours they would need to select, purchase and provide training for the appropriate piece of AT.

## How is AT categorised?

There are different levels of AT funding and each has its own evidence and usage requirements.

How you approach purchasing AT depends on the category your equipment or device falls under.

This table shows the breakdown of the cost and risk levels of your AT devices – along with who to speak to for assessments and advice:

|  | Low-cost AT  | Mid-cost AT                       | High-cost AT                   |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cost per item                                | Under \$1,500  | \$1,500 - \$15,000                | Over \$15,000                  |
| What do I need to get funding in my Plan?    | No written evidence  | Written advice from an AT advisor | Assessment from an AT assessor |
| What do I need to do before buying the item? | Low-risk - suggest you seek advice from an AT advisor<br><br>High-risk – you must seek written advice from an AT advisor | Written advice from an AT advisor | Assessment from an AT assessor |
| Do I need a quote?                           | No   | No                                | Yes                            |
| Where is the funding in my Plan?             | Core budget  | Capital budget                    | Capital budget                 |

## Who can advise you on AT for your child?

Before you purchase any AT, be sure to get advice from professionals who are working with your child. These are called AT advisors and can include:

- Allied health practitioners
- Orientation and mobility specialists for the vision sector
- Continence nurses
- Rehabilitation engineer

For high-cost AT you need to consult with a **Specialised Assistive Technology Assessor**.

They will assess your situation and identify the equipment or device most appropriate for your child. They can also write assessments, which you'll need when purchasing high-cost AT.

Speak with your child's current therapy team to find an AT Assessor. Make sure you ask how much assessments will cost.

## If you have AT money left in your budget towards the end date of your Plan

You can use the remaining funds to buy low to mid cost AT, provided you have a supporting letter from your AT advisor.

If you have a Plan Manager, it's a good idea to also inform them of your intention before you purchase.

## Understanding your AT service agreements

When purchasing high-cost AT, a service agreement from your AT advisor is essential.

You will need to include a few hours in your Capacity Building budget to sign an initial shorter agreement.

This way you can ensure the AT advisor has a good understanding of your child's needs, as well as any NDIS requirements.

After signing the shorter agreement, you can sign a further agreement to complete the process. This will need to contain several hours allocated for:

- Trialling various brands of the equipment or device
- Liaising with suppliers for best price and ongoing manufacturer support
- Delivery and assembly needs
- Training on the equipment or device (across relevant settings)
- Providing repairs, maintenance and rentals

## What to do if your AT application is denied

If your application for AT is denied, you have options to appeal the decision.

If you have a Support Coordinator (SC) be sure to keep them involved through the process. Especially if you are requesting high-cost equipment or devices. Your SC should:

- Keep you informed on the status of your application
- Get the Local Area Coordinator to provide written reasons for the application denial
- Support you in requesting a review

## Useful links

What do we mean by assistive technology?

<https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/supports-you-can-access-menu/equipment-and-technology/assistive-technology/what-do-we-mean-assistive-technology>

Assistive technology explained

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/assistive-technology-explained#assistive-technology-explained>

## Related topics

Finding a therapist

<https://www.acd.org.au/finding-a-therapist>

Appealing an NDIS decision

<https://www.acd.org.au/appealing-an-ndis-decision>