

Equipment for independent living and mobility

Stroke Helpline: 0303 3033 100
or email: helpline@stroke.org.uk



Read this online

Information about the types of equipment and technology you can use to help you with daily life after a stroke.

After a stroke, daily tasks such as getting around, cooking and bathing may be more difficult than before. Many people benefit from using equipment to help them with tasks, which could include specialist products as well as technology like mobile phones.

What types of equipment are available?

There is a huge range of equipment available to make everyday life easier. Some examples are:

- **Bathing aids** – grab rails, non-slip mats, bath and shower seats.
- **Dressing** – long-handled devices to help you do up your buttons, specialist clothing with easy-to-use fastenings.
- **Furniture** – electric beds to help you sit up and electric chairs to help you stand up.
- **Kitchen aids** – easy-to-use tin openers, kettle tippers, non-slip mats and cutlery with large handles for easy grip.
- **Mobility aids** – walking sticks and frames, wheelchairs, electric scooters, stair lifts.
- **Making life at home safer** – grab rails, sensor mats, movement sensory lights.
- **Personal alarms** – enabling you to call for help if you fall or become ill when you're alone.

- **Telephones** – landline phones are available with large displays and flashing lights.
- **Mobile phones and tablets** – most mobile phones and tablets have built-in accessibility features like voice-activated internet searches. Accessible technology charity Abilitynet has step-by-step guides about how to use the accessibility features on your phone or tablet at mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk.
- **Apps** – there is a wide range of apps to do things like reading text aloud or identifying products in supermarkets.
- **Digital assistants or smart speakers** – voice-operated smart home devices include the Amazon Echo and Google Home. You can use your voice to ask these devices to search the internet, set alarms and play music. They can also be used to operate home appliances like turning lights on and opening curtains.

Help with choosing equipment

If you need help and support at home after a stroke, contact your local authority. They can arrange for you to have a support and care needs assessment.

This assessment is usually done by an occupational therapist or social worker who will visit you at home.

As part of the assessment they will look at whether you need any equipment or adaptations in your home.

You can find out who to contact in your area at [gov.uk/apply-home-equipment-for-disabled](https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-equipment-for-disabled).

The help you can get from your local authority is means tested. This means that the amount of money you get depends on your income and other circumstances, so you may have to pay for some of the help you need yourself. There may also be some types of equipment that your local authority will not provide for free.

You may be able to apply for a grant towards the cost of equipment. Local councils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland offer Disabled Facilities Grants to help towards home adaptations like stairlifts. Independence at Home is a charity that provides grants for equipment and home adaptations [independenceathome.org.uk](https://www.independenceathome.org.uk).

If you are buying equipment, it is worth contacting a few different suppliers to get the best price. Some suppliers will let you try things out before you buy them, or you may be able to hire equipment if you only need it for a short time. The Red Cross hires out wheelchairs and toilet equipment [redcross.org.uk](https://www.redcross.org.uk).

Where can I get advice?

The Disabled Living Foundation (see 'Other sources of help and information') has a range of resources to help you decide which pieces of equipment could help you, and where you can buy them from.

Independent living centres and disabled living centres provide advice on aids and equipment, with products on show you can try out. There is a national directory of centres at [goingforindependence.org](https://www.goingforindependence.org).

Personal alarms

Personal alarm systems (sometimes called community alarms) can help you to stay independent in your own home. They usually involve an alarm system that is linked to your telephone, and a pendant with a button that you wear around your wrist or neck. In an emergency, you press the button and call for help.

Some systems include a base unit that connects to your telephone, but landline-free options are also available. Modern alarms use GPS technology, protecting you outside the home too.

For stroke survivors, a personal alarm can be a life-saving piece of equipment. Your local authority may be able to provide one or suggest a suitable alarm system for you. Alternatively, there are many affordable personal alarm providers in the UK.

Where to get help and information

From the Stroke Association

Helpline

Our Helpline offers information and support for anyone affected by a stroke. This includes friends and carers.

Call us on **0303 3033 100**, from a textphone **18001 0303 3033 100**
Email helpline@stroke.org.uk

Read our information

Get more information about stroke online at [stroke.org.uk](https://www.stroke.org.uk), or call the Helpline to ask for printed copies of our guides.

My Stroke Guide

The Stroke Association's online tool My Stroke Guide gives you free access to trusted advice, information and support 24/7. My Stroke Guide connects you to our online community, to find out how others manage their recovery.

Log on to mystrokeguide.com today.

Other sources of help and information

Advice about equipment and mobility aids

AbilityNet

Website: abilitynet.org.uk

Tel: **0800 048 7642**

Helps disabled individuals to access and use digital technology.

Living made easy

Website: livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Helpline: **0300 999 0004**

Email: info@dlf.org.uk

A website provided by the Disabled Living Foundation. It lists different types of products from a range of suppliers. You can also use the website to search for suppliers in your local area.

Research Institute for Disabled Consumers (RiDC)

Website: ridc.org.uk

Tel: **0720 7427 2460**

Email: mail@ridc.org.uk

RiDC produces a range of consumer guides to help you choose equipment and search for suppliers and other useful contacts.

Product suppliers

AA Mobility Scotland

Website: aamobilityscotland.co.uk

Tel: **01236 761 596**

Supplies a range of mobility aids and equipment in Scotland.

Able2Wear Ltd

Website: able2wear.co.uk

Tel: **014 1775 3738**

Supplies specialist clothing for people with disabilities.

Anything Left-Handed

Website: anythinglefthanded.co.uk

Tel: **01737 888 269**

Offers specialist products for people who use their left hand.

Health Care Equipment

Website: otstores.co.uk

Tel: **0845 260 7061**

Email: info@otstores.co.uk

Supplies a wide range of daily living, occupational therapy and physiotherapy aids. Has a specialist showroom and advice centre in Malvern.

NRS

Website: nrs-uk.co.uk

Tel: **0345 121 8111**

Email: customerservice@nrshealthcare.co.uk

Catalogue of aids and equipment for independent living and rehabilitation.

Performance Health

Website: performancehealth.co.uk

Tel: **03448 730 035**

Email: uksales@performancehealth.com

Offers a range of medical and rehabilitation equipment, including products to help with mobility, bathing and going to the toilet.

Remap

Website: remap.org.uk

Tel: **01732 760 209**

Remap is a charity that makes or adapts equipment for people with disabilities if nothing suitable is already available. There are groups across the UK that you can contact for help and advice.

Personal and community alarms

Careline365

Website: careline.co.uk

Tel: **01603 964 306**

Personal alarms supplier

LifeConnect24

Website: lifeconnect24.co.uk

Tel: **0800 999 0400**

Personal alarms supplier.

Telecare Services Association

Website: tsa-voice.org.uk

Tel: **01625 520 320**

Lists suppliers of alarms across the UK. You can search for local and national schemes on their website.

About our information

We want to provide the best information for people affected by stroke. That's why we ask stroke survivors and their families, as well as medical experts, to help us put our publications together.

How did we do?

To tell us what you think of this guide, or to request a list of the sources we used to create it, email us at feedback@stroke.org.uk.

Accessible formats

Visit our website if you need this information in audio, large print or braille.

Always get individual advice

This guide contains general information about stroke. But if you have a problem, you should get individual advice from a professional such as a GP or pharmacist. Our Helpline can also help you find support. We work very hard to give you the latest facts, but some things change. We don't control the information provided by other organisations or websites.

© The Stroke Association 2022
Version 4. Published November 2022
To be reviewed: September 2024
Item code: **A01R03**

Every five minutes, stroke destroys lives. We need your support to help rebuild them. Donate or find out more at stroke.org.uk.

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