



Dyslexia: a guide for employees

A short guide with facts and tips for managing dyslexia at work

An estimated 10% of the population is dyslexic so it is unlikely that you will be the only person in your workplace who is dyslexic.

Dyslexia is a thinking or learning difference. It is likely that you will experience some challenges with processing information, though you might also have many strengths that others do not. Many of these things will be apparent at work.

Strengths can be the ability to think up new ideas, good problem solving and practical skills and being an effective communicator.

Challenges can include difficulties with reading, writing, memory and organisation.

Everyone with dyslexia is different, but in the right environment and with the right support, people with dyslexia can achieve their full potential.

Should you tell your employer?

It's up to you whether you tell people that you are dyslexic, or if you think you might be. It might depend on:

- how much you feel dyslexia affects your work
- how comfortable you are with telling people and how understanding you think they might be
- whether you feel that you can suggest changes that could help you work your best.

You might be worried about talking to your employer about dyslexia, however:

- your employer can't help you if they don't understand what you need and why
- under the Equality Act (2010) your employer might have a legal obligation to help you
- you might inspire or encourage others to talk about their dyslexia.

If you speak to your employer, it is useful to think beforehand about some of the things that might help you. Think about how you could work better. What might help you with any challenges you face? How can you maximise your strengths at work?

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are changes your employer can make to help you do your job. They can include making changes to the way work is done or provision of equipment. Some of the costs of reasonable adjustments can be covered by the Access to Work programme. You need to apply for this online at [gov.uk/access-to-work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) or telephone Access to Work on 0800 121 7479 for help with the application.

Benefits of asking for Reasonable Adjustments:

- positive working environment
- increased confidence
- ability to work at your best
- less isolating
- less pressure.

Examples of reasonable adjustments

Difficulty	Adjustment
Writing paperwork, minutes or emails	Save templates you have to write regularly; use text-to speech software; use assistive technology; keep your own list of frequently used words for spelling; use bulletpoints where possible; find out if you can submit reports or messages in another format, such as voice recording.
Managing emails	Flag important ones; file them under headings; use spellcheck; ask for training; find out how other colleagues manage their emails and see if you can use some of their approaches.
Reading	Identify colours or fonts which help you read from paper; use text-to-speech tools or change text and background colours on screens.
Taking notes	Use a recording device or mobile phone (let other people know if you are recording them); use transcription software.
Remembering to do things	Take notes in diagram form; use assistive technology to record notes or set reminders; ask a colleague to demonstrate new tasks rather than talk about them, and let them know they may need to show you more than once; use crib sheets with step by step instructions for tasks.
Organising and prioritising	Write to-do lists; use coloured or highlighter pens; use mind maps; break work into smaller chunks; use images rather than words; use an electronic diary's reminder and task list; find out how colleagues organise and prioritise their work. Find a system that works for you.
Focus and concentration	Identify what times of day you work best and do the hardest jobs then; use noise-cancelling headphones; ask if you can get back to people; let people know you need to work quietly and without interruption; ask to work somewhere that helps you concentrate such as a less busy part of the work space; ask for flexible working options, such as working from home or at different times of day.