



COMMUNICATION TIPS

to Support Autistic Individuals



BE CLEAR

State instructions clearly and concisely. Avoid open-ended questions. Offer choices or options when you can. Avoid sarcasm and figurative language.

ALLOW EXTRA TIME

Wait a few seconds after speaking to allow time to process information and formulate a response.



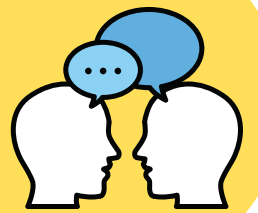
USE THE PERSON'S NAME



Address the person by their name so they know you are speaking directly to them. Make sure they are paying attention before you ask a question or give an instruction. The signs that someone is paying attention will be different for different people.

DON'T REQUIRE EYE CONTACT

Maintaining eye contact is difficult for many people with autism and may increase anxiety or decrease the ability to process information.



AVOID NOISY ENVIRONMENTS

Background noise can make hearing and processing information difficult. Reduce extra noises when you can. Sensory differences may be affecting how much someone can process.



BE SPECIFIC

An autistic person can find it difficult to filter out the less important information. If there is too much information, it can lead to 'overload', where no further information can be processed. Visual supports may be helpful if appropriate.



REACTIONS TO "NO"



'No!' is often used when someone is putting themselves or others in danger. If it's a safety issue, consider ways of explaining danger and safety. If you are saying 'no' because someone is behaving inappropriately, do not shout. A calm reaction and setting clear boundaries is best.

*Remember that how autistic people communicate is as varied as the experience of autism itself. Communication is important for everyone.

Be patient and keep trying to find the best ways to communicate with the individual person.