

Activities for developing switch use

This resource is designed to give some ideas those who are considering toys and activities for developing access to technology using switches. This is not an exhaustive list, but provides recommendations of non-specialised equipment local teams and families could try, and links to useful resources. There is a list of websites at the end of the document where you can find specific products and further support.

Please [contact us](#) if you would like further advice.

What is a switch?

A switch is a button, which can come in a range of shapes, sizes and styles, and can be pressed by different parts of the body to operate technology.

[This link from Call Scotland](#) explains more about what a switch is and some things to consider when choosing a switch.



Using one switch for one function

Toys for all ages

- Switch adapted interactive soft toys
- Switch adapted robot toys
- Switch adapted remote controlled toy cars and planes
- Switch adapted bubble machines

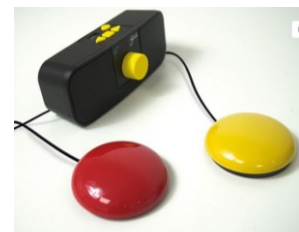


Music

- Switch adapted CD players
- Switch adapted musical instruments

Art

- Switch adapted art machines, such as spin art or doodle bug
- Switch adapted digital cameras



Games and other activities

- Switch adapted sensory toys
- Switch adapted board games such as Penguin race and dice spinners
- Switch adapted lamps and sensory lights
- Switch adapted pillows



You can also turn standard battery-operated toys and devices into switch toys using a **battery switch adapter**. To be adaptable, the devices need to have switches that can be left turned on.



Environmental controls

Environmental controls are technology that can be used to control devices in the home.

- **Doozy** - to control remote controlled devices such as televisions, DVD players and CD players
- **Click on 2** - to control devices which are powered by a socket such as lamps, fans and blenders
- **Enabler socket** – to control electrical devices and switch adapted toys.



Please refer to the device manuals to check which electrical devices are safe to use with these products.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

AAC devices are tools to aid people with communication difficulties to express messages by other methods. The following examples are known as single message devices:

- The **BIGmack switch**
- Recordable answer buzzers
- **This link from Liberator** provides some ideas of ways you could use a single message device. Remember to include a symbol on the device to support the person using it to understand its purpose in the particular activity it is being used in



Using switches for making choices and scanning

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

'Scanning' involves a person seeing or listening to a wider range of options and then making a choice. An example of this via partner assisted scanning using a paper chart can be seen [here](#). A choice can be indicated with a yes/no or using a switch with a single message to say 'that one'. There are also some devices with scanning options:



- Multiple message devices with scanning, such as the [Go Talk Express 32](#)
- Devices which operate by 1 switch per phrase, such as the [Supertalker](#)
- Single switch devices with messages on sequential or different levels pressed with 1 switch, such as the [Smoothtalker](#)

Computer games (free or with limited free trials)

- [Oneswitch.org](#)
- [Helpkidzlearn](#)
- [Ian Bean switch accessible resources](#)
- Computer games built into communication aid software packages, such as [Mind Express 5](#) and [Grid 3](#).



Implementation resources

- Ace Centre: [switch resources](#) available on their website.
- [Ian Bean switch progression roadmap](#): resource for developing switch skills.
- Call Scotland: [information available on switch skills and switch toys](#).

Switch accessible products and further support

Simply carrying out an internet search for switch toys will bring up a range of websites which sell switch accessible products and sites offering support services. Please find below some examples of websites and organisations who either sell switch and switch related products or offer support:

- [Special Effect](#), accessible gaming charity who offer assessments
- [William Merritt Centre](#) offer an assessment service and lending library for adapted toys, and switches. Also carry out gaming and home control assessments
- [Inclusive technology](#)
- [Liberator](#)
- [TFH](#)
- [Spacecraft](#)

- [Meru](#), also check out their [switch adapted toy service](#)
- [Independent life technologies](#)
- [Sensory guru](#)

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Inclusive Technology for their permission to use the images from their website in this resource.