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## Assistive technology explained

Assistive technology is equipment or devices that help you do things you can't do because of your disability.

Assistive technology may also help you do something more easily or safely.

All NDIS supports must meet the [reasonable and necessary](#) criteria.

We can't fund AT items that are more appropriately funded by other government services.

For more detailed information on how we define and fund AT, or how to add AT into your plan, please refer to our [Our Guideline - Assistive Technology](#).

## Understanding AT product risk

AT ranges from simple products to the complex systems. It is always a good idea to get advice from an AT advisor to determine the right AT solution for your needs. If the AT you are considering is higher risk AT (see below), then the NDIS requires you to get AT advice before getting that AT.

We use 2 product risk categories ('low' and 'higher') to assess the complexity of your AT needs.

- Low risk AT products are:
  - unlikely to cause harm in day-to-day life
  - available for trial and / or can be purchased in retail stores
  - easy to set up and safely use without professional advice.

- Higher risk AT products may be one or all of the following:
  - complex, such as a power wheelchair
  - known to have caused harm
  - used for a restrictive practice
  - require professional advice, setup or training for safe use.

Refer to the [Assistive technology product risk table](#) for a detailed explanation of different risk levels of AT that will help show the minimum level of advice and support when choosing AT you need.

## Low, mid and high cost AT

We recommend you get advice from an AT assessor to make sure you get AT that's right for you.

It's best to buy some items. For other items, it might be better to rent or borrow them. This is true if your needs are likely to change.

The [Assistive technology - Guide for minor trial and rental funding \(DOCX 61KB\)](#) has more information about how the NDIS works out the funding to include in your plan for minor trial or short term rental of AT. Some providers will also offer 'trial to buy' arrangements.

The NDIA has different processes for low, mid and high cost AT. You can learn more about the categories and which part of your budget the funding sits in the [How do we consider the cost of the assistive technology](#) section of the guideline:

- Low cost assistive technology: under \$1,500 per item
- Mid cost assistive technology: between \$1,500 and \$15,000 per item
- High cost assistive technology: over \$15,000 per item.

The [Assistive technology - Guide for low cost support funding \(DOCX 71KB\)](#) will help you understand how much funding you may need to buy low cost AT.

## Mid cost AT

You don't need to provide us quotes for AT items under \$15,000, but we still need [some evidence](#) (including a cost estimate) to make sure you get the right AT.

Only AT items valued over \$15,000 will need a quote.

More information is in [Our Guideline - Assistive Technology](#) .

[Transcript for 'We've improved the way we fund assistive technology'](#)

## Mid cost AT session recordings

Mid cost AT session recordings explain some of the improvements we introduced in March 2022

- [NDIS Assistive Technology changes \(1 March 2022\) for participants, families and carers](#)
- [NDIS Assistive Technology changes \(1 March 2022\) for health professionals](#)
- [NDIS Assistive Technology \(AT\) changes \(1 March 2022\) for AT providers and peaks](#)
- [NDIS Assistive Technology changes \(1 March 2022\) for support coordinators and plan managers](#)

## Additional features and other funding sources

You can use your own money or funding from other sources, such as Job Access, to buy additional features or access additional services which may not fall under reasonable and necessary supports in your NDIS plan.

If you require the same or similar AT for multiple purposes and locations you should discuss your needs with your planner, local area coordinator or support coordinator.

## Evidence of AT required and AT assessments

We need to understand your AT needs and how the right AT will help you pursue your goals. We'll need different information from you depending on the cost and risk.

Some AT will need a qualified AT advisor to talk with you about your needs and situation to help you identify the most appropriate AT solution. The AT advisor may be an allied health practitioner, continence nurse, rehabilitation engineer, AT mentor or other qualified practitioner.

For AT costing more than \$15,000, we require both an assessment by a professional AT advisor (sometimes called an AT assessor) and quote for the AT proposed.

If you have AT in your plan, you will also have at least \$500 included in your Capacity Building Improved Daily Living - Budget to seek advice from an independent advisor about your AT requirements.

You can learn more about AT assessments and how we assess risk in [How can you get assistive technology in your plan?](#)

The [Understanding assistive technology evidence, advice, assessments and quotes \(DOCX 66KB\)](#) also has information about the evidence you need to supply to get AT approved in your plan and what you need to do before you buy AT. Requests for AT funding should be submitted

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to [enquiries@ndis.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ndis.gov.au) or can be made at your planning meeting.

## Choosing an AT provider

NDIS participants can choose how they want to manage the funded supports in their plan.

Unless your plan indicates otherwise, you can choose the providers you want to deliver AT supports included in your plan.

You are generally able to use your NDIS funds to either:

- buy the AT outright or
- access the [AT through rental, loan, subscription or other arrangements](#) . This includes arrangements to access refurbished and reissued AT.

Make sure you understand your plan and supports before [choosing providers](#).

## Further information

Find out more information about:

- [Low cost AT during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [AT delivery, set up, trial and rental](#)
- [AT maintenance, repairs and replacement](#)

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