

What Helps in the Kitchen?



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Keep it simple and reduce cognitive load

- **The more involved the recipe, the more attention required:** use quick and easy recipes or pre-cooked meals that require heating in the microwave

Plan the task

- Have a clear simple recipe with **checklist** (laminated and use a dry wipe pen)
- Use a **prompt sheet** or have someone supporting with verbal prompts
- Before starting to cook, **gather ingredients** and utensils (visual prompt)
- **Prepare ingredients** before cooking
- **Concentrate on one thing** at a time
- Allow plenty of **time**
- **Rest between stages** if fatigued

Avoid distractions

- Work in a **quiet environment** (avoid constant chatter and distraction)
- **Turn off mobile phones**

Organise the kitchen

- Use a **checklist** for following recipes
- **Repeat recipes** to help learn and increase confidence
- **Keep a clear working area** to avoid confusion
- **Simple instructions** supported by picture material
- Use **prompt cards** for important safety tasks ie turning off cooker
- Put **stickers** on drawers/cupboards to remind what is stored in them
- Use **kitchen timer** to remind when food is cooked
- Ensure the **smoke alarm** is functioning properly

Equipment: Useful kitchen aids

- **Perching stool** or chair to rest when preparing food
- **Trolley** to move items around kitchen or from one room to another
- **Blender** to modify the consistency if required
- **Electric whisk** or food mixer
- **Non-slip mats**
- **Spike board**
- **Kettle tippers**
- **Adapted cutlery** and utensils

Discuss kitchen aids with your local occupational therapist