



Visual self-management tools

Practice brief

The practice

Teachers can help students to learn organisational skills and independence through visual self-management tools, such as task sheets and checklists.

How does it help?

Students on the autism spectrum often need support with tasks requiring executive functioning and working memory, including multi-step tasks. Visual self-management tools allow the student to be independent in the classroom and take an active role in monitoring their progress in assigned tasks.

Learning self-management skills can improve students' academic achievement, productivity, and organisational skills, and reduce off-task behaviours.

What is it?

Task sheets provide students with information about what they need to do in an activity and how they should do it.

Checklists allow students to break down a task into individual steps and remember the different materials needed for each step. Checking off items helps students to monitor their progress, and rewarding themselves for completing a task helps them to feel capable and successful.

How does it work?

Teachers help students to use visual self-management tools, which builds their organisational skills and classroom independence.

When tasks require multiple steps or materials, teachers:

- provide clear task sheets that outline the requirements of the task
- support students to create a checklist that lists all steps and materials needed for each step.

Some students may require teachers to read through and explain the task sheet to them, or assist them to identify which items need to be on their checklist.





How do I do it?

Task sheets

- Provide a clear and easy-to-understand task sheet to students for complex classroom tasks or assessment tasks. The task sheet outlines each component of the task and the requirements for the task.
- Explain how to use the task sheet.

Checklists

- Instruct students to create a checklist to help them remember the steps they need to take or the materials they need to achieve the task.
- If needed, assist students with choosing which steps and materials need to be on the checklist.
- Monitor students' use of the checklist and correct students if needed.

It works better if the teacher:

- allows students to create checklists – they are more powerful when created by the student
- starts with smaller task-based checklists and gradually moves to more complicated checklists
- writes task sheets that are clear and outline each component of the task
- initially monitors students' use of checklists to ensure students understand which items, steps, or materials need to be included on the checklist.

It doesn't work if:

- task sheets are overloaded with complex information.

How will I know if it's working?

Students will be on track with the steps needed to complete assigned tasks and will know which materials they require.

Where can I go to find out more?

- [tools for student self-management](#)
- [teaching organisational skills](#)





inclusion ED
supporting diverse learners

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)

Implementing this practice will meet the Australian Professional Standard/s for Teachers:

- 1.5 – Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities
- 3.3 – Use teaching strategies



inclusionED is an initiative of the Autism CRC, which receives funding from the Australian Government.



Australian Government
Department of Industry,
Innovation and Science

Business
Cooperative Research
Centres Program