



The Aphasia Alliance's Top Tips for 'Aphasia Friendlier' Communication

During 2012, the Aphasia Alliance worked together to draw up some **'top tips'** about **communicating with people with aphasia**.

These 'top tips' are designed to help when **communicating with someone**, or people, **with Aphasia**. However, we believe these tips can help when communicating with nearly everyone.

You will find some **'top tips'** that will **help with please click on the words in red**

- **conversations** with people with aphasia
- **public speaking** when people with aphasia are in the audience
- **written** communication and **public speaking**

These are **some of our 'top tips'**. They are **not complete** lists.

Some of the **Aphasia Alliance** member **organisations** have developed **resources** to help specifically with **communication with people with aphasia**:

Aphasia Now Communication Strategies

http://www.aphasianow.org/Resources/Communication_Strategies_Aids~216/

Connect Various publications <http://www.ukconnect.org/publications.aspx>

Speakability Various publications

<http://www.speakability.org.uk/Publications+and+Training>

Stroke Association Accessible Information Guidelines

<http://www.stroke.org.uk/professionals/accessible-information-guidelines>

Written Communication

- use **large font** size - 14 or larger
- use a **Sans Serif** font - (e.g. Arial, Tahoma, Verdana, and many more)
- use **short clear sentences**
- leave plenty of **space between lines**
- use at least **1.5 spacing between lines**
- use **clear headings** to signpost information
- **highlight** the key points
 - **bold** - (be careful not to over use, because it feels like shouting)
 - bullet points
 - text boxes to highlight important information
- use **numbers (1, 2, 3)** instead of words (one, two, three)
- **do not use block capitals** (you lose the shape of the word)

For longer documents

- **add a brief summary** (3-4 bullet points) at the beginning of the document for those who can't read it all
- **divide** the information **into topics**
- **include**
 - an **index**
 - a **helpful words** section at the back

Using pictures

- **photos** are often better than clip-art, although not always
- put pictures **near the text** where appropriate
- use the **appropriate picture for the context**
- use a picture that **describes the idea, not the word** (e.g. do not use a picture of a cup of tea for 'making a cup of tea', show someone making the tea)





Conversations with people with aphasia

- **avoid background noise** where possible
- **make eye contact** with the person
- **speak clearly**
- **speak at a normal speed**, not too fast, not too slow
(If you speak fast normally, slow down)
- use **short clear sentences** – give one piece of information at a time
- **ask one question at a time** - Do you want tea? Do you want coffee?
- **don't rush** - allow time for the person to take in what you are saying
- **be patient** - give the person with aphasia space to respond at their pace
- **signal a change of topic**
- use facial **expression**, **tone** of voice, **pointing** and **gesture** to help explain what you are talking about
- have **paper and pen available** for both parties
- **write down key words**
- use **maps**, **calendars** and **photos** (e.g. family members) to **show** what you are talking about
- **encourage** the person to **communicate in any way** he/she can
- **encourage** the person to **let you know** when they have **not understood**
- **clarify** - and **rephrase** when necessary
- **listen to and watch for clues** in facial responses, tone of voice, pointing and gestures (non-verbal responses)
- **allow time for rests**



Public Speaking

- use **short clear sentences**
- speak clearly
- **pitch** - speak **loud enough** so that all can hear
- **vary** your tone of voice - don't speak at a monotone
- **pause** - don't rush, pause occasionally
- **pace** - speak at a normal speed, not too fast, not too slow
- **signal** a **change** of topic
- **clarify** - and **rephrase** when necessary
- **summarise**
- **do not speak for too long** - **allow for rests**