

# ACCESS METHODS

<https://communicationmatters.org.uk/what-is-aac/access-methods/>

Access methods are the different ways people can use their computer or **AAC** communication aid.

**AAC** is used to mean many different ways to help someone communicate. It could be simple things like pointing, signing, writing or drawing. It could also be using a special device like a machine that 'speaks' words for you. This is called a communication aid.

People may use the same access method to control different things like their computer and their wheelchair. They may also use different access methods for different things.

It is very important that people get the right access method for them.

## Different types of Access Method

- **Eye-gaze.** Eye-gaze may be a very quick and easy way to control their communication aid. It's good for people who have difficulty in controlling their body. You can communicate by looking at certain words or pictures. [See the section on Eye-gaze Systems.](#)
- **Pointing devices.** There are different types of pointing devices:

- **Tracker balls, or roller balls**

These are used in the same way as a computer mouse. They are good for people who can't hold and move a mouse

- **Lightpointers.**

These are worn on the head. They point light at the communication aid

- **Adapting a keyboard**

You can make a computer keyboard easier to use by:

- Changing the keyboard settings
- Putting a keyguard over the keys
- Using a special keyboard. You can get keyboards which have:
  - Large letters
  - Different colours
  - Pictures
  - Very small buttons – for people who can't move very much

- **Scanning with a switch**

This is where you can control where you are on a screen with a switch. It can be operated by any part of your body that you can move easily.

## **AAC and daily living**

People can now have more control over their home using their computer.

Using computers and phones to operate things in your home is called having a 'Smart Home'.

Smart homes help disabled people to be more independent.

With a computer or your phone you can now:

- Control your heating without having to go to the controls
- Switch your lights on
- Switch on your TV while you are away on holiday. So burglars think that someone is at home