

ABOUT VISUAL SUPPORTS



Visual supports are both communication and teaching aids. They are used to provide the learner with information about routines, activities, directions, behavioural expectations and more. They can be anything that provides a visual clue to learners, for example pictures, photos, images, words, text, tangible objects, key word signs, gestures or assistive technologies.



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education

Types of visual supports

You can create 3 different types of visual supports:

- visual boundaries are when you create a visual line that separates different activities or indicates the outer limit of something
- visual cues include labels, graphic organisers, choice boards and visual or procedural instructions which support a learner to organise thoughts and concepts and help with task completion, independence and understanding expectations
- visual schedules are a collection of visuals that communicate a series of activities or the steps of a specific task.

Elements of visual supports

Consider these elements of your visual support:

- visual items you will use
- format
- location
- length
- how the schedule will be manipulated
- size and visual contrast
- the instigator
- the next steps for the learner to get support
- reward for success.

Teach the visual support

Explicitly teach learners how to use the visual support until they can:

- attribute meaning to the visual
- carry out the task or behaviour with mastery
- transfer this knowledge across different settings and situations.

The ultimate goal is the learner completing the task or behaviour independently, and if appropriate without the visual support.