What to Ask About Assistive Technology

Does this tool address your child’s specific needs and challenges?

Does it use your child’s strengths?

Is there a simpler tool that would work as effectively?

Will it be easy to incorporate into everyday life?

Is it portable?

Is your child willing to use it?

Is your child able to use it? (Have her try a demo.)

How easy is it to learn to use the tool?

Will you have support or training in how it works, even if it’s only used at school?

Will teachers have support or training in how it works?

Is the tool compatible with the existing technology your child uses? (For example, will the software work on your child’s mobile device or a school computer?)

How reliable is the device?

What technical support is available?

If the tool is purchased for school use only, do you have access to a comparable tool that your child can use at home?

As you consider various AT tools, make sure your child is part of the process. Most AT companies offer free demos and trial subscriptions. You may find that your child is more comfortable—or less comfortable—with a tool than you expect. If the school is choosing the AT, ask them to let your child have a “test drive” first.

About the Author
Amanda Martin is a parent advocate, a former teacher and the author of *The Everything Parent’s Guide to Special Education.*

Reviewed by
Kylah Toome is an instructor in the department of special education at Hunter College.

Did you find this helpful?

Yes  No