

Computers and osteoarthritis



This factsheet tells you what helps people with osteoarthritis to use computers.

How to use this factsheet.



We are **AbilityNet**.

We are a charity that helps disabled people use technology.



Like computers, tablets, and smartphones.



This is an **Easy Read** factsheet.
You may still need help to read it.
You can ask someone you know for help.



For more information you can phone or email us.



Phone **0800 048 7642**

Email enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk.



1 What is osteoarthritis?



Arthritis makes joints hurt, like

- hips.
- knees.
- hands and wrists.



Osteoarthritis is the most common type of **arthritis**.

About 9 million people have osteoarthritis in the UK.



It can make joints **swell**.
This means get bigger.



More women have osteoarthritis than men.

Most people with osteoarthritis are over 45 years old.



If someone in your family has osteoarthritis you might have it too.

These things can make osteoarthritis harder for you



Age

As you get older, it is harder for your body to fix itself.



Weight

If you are overweight, it can be hard for joints like hips and knees to work.



Injuries

If you do not give time for your injuries to get better, it can be harder for your body to fix itself.

2 How technology can help.



Technology can help people with osteoarthritis do things for themselves.



But osteoarthritis can make it painful for people to use a keyboard and mouse.



This factsheet tells you some ways to make computers easier to use.

Accessible keyboards



You can get lots of different types of accessible keyboards. They can be easier to use.

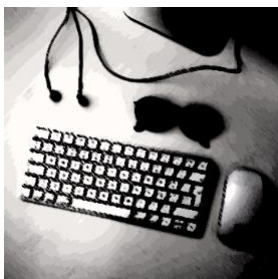
Some keyboards have two pieces which you can move so it is more comfortable.

Some keyboards you can use with just one hand.

Smaller keyboards



You can get smaller keyboards without a number pad on the side.



This means you can have the mouse closer to you and do not have to stretch.

Light touch keyboards.



Light touch keyboards have flatter keys so it is not so painful to type.



For more information, see our [factsheet on choosing a keyboard and mouse.](#)

Using an accessible mouse



You can get lots of accessible mice.

They can be more comfortable to use.



Vertical mouse

You hold a vertical mouse upright like you are shaking hands with someone.



Bar mouse

A bar mouse sits in front of the keyboard.

You use it with your thumbs or fingers when you type.



Handshoe mouse

A handshoe mouse fits the shape of your hand.



Rollerball mouse

A rollerball mouse stays still on your desk.

You rest your hand on it and roll the ball with your thumb or fingers or hand.



A new mouse can some time to get used to.



For more information, see our [factsheet on choosing a keyboard and mouse.](#)

Using predictive text.



You can also get **predictive text** software for your computer and tablet.



Predictive text guesses what words you want to type after you type the first few letters.

Then instead of typing the whole word, you can choose it.



This means you do not have to type as much.

Using your voice.



You can get software that types what you say onto your computer.

Most computers, tablets and smartphones have this.



This means you do not have to type using your hands.



You can also use your voice to tell your computer to do things like **Open Google**.

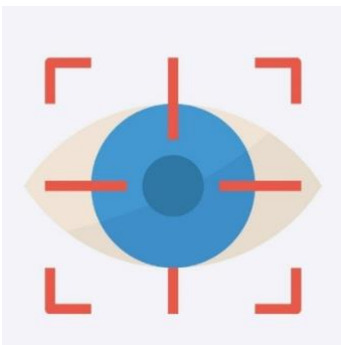


For more information, see our [factsheet about using your voice](#).

Using your eyes



Eye movement equipment follows your eyes when they move.



You can use it to control the mouse.

And to type on a keyboard on the screen.



Eye movement equipment costs lots of money.



People who cannot move much use eye movement equipment.

Check how high your screen is



Make sure your screen is straight in front of you and your eyes are level with the top of it. This will be more comfortable.



If you use a laptop for a long time, connect a separate screen, keyboard and mouse.



This can make it more comfortable for your wrists and neck.



For more information, see our [factsheet on comfortable computing](#).

3. Where you can get more help.



You can get more information from these organisations.

Arthritis Action



Freephone 0800 652 3188

Email info@arthritisation.org.uk.

Web www.arthritisation.org.uk.

Versus Arthritis



Phone 0300 790 0400

Email

enquiries@versusarthritis.org.

Website www.versusarthritis.org.

NHS



Living with Arthritis

www.nhs.uk/conditions/osteoarthritis/living-with.

4. How AbilityNet can help you.

My Computer My Way



The **My Computer My Way** website tells you how you can make your computer, tablet or smartphone accessible.

Website

mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk.

Advice and information



If you have any questions, you can contact us at **AbilityNet**.

We are here to help you.

Phone 0800 048 7642



Email enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk.

Support with technology at home



AbilityNet volunteers can help you with your computer, tablet or smartphone.



If you need support at home, you can book an AbilityNet volunteer to visit you.



You do **not** have to pay AbilityNet for support at home.

For more information, visit www.abilitynet.org.uk/at-home.