

# How to ask for a workplace accommodation

## 1. Brainstorm first.

Think about what you're struggling with the most at work. If possible, try to identify changes that would help you with specific tasks or situations.

## 2. Decide what details to share.

It's up to you whether to share or "disclose" that you have a disability. For simple requests, you may not need to. But at some companies, you may need to disclose a disability in order to request any type of accommodation. If you share that you have a disability, your employer must keep this information confidential.

## 3. Decide when to ask.

You can ask for an accommodation at any time during the hiring process or on the job. It's best to be proactive. Try to ask before a challenge affects your work.

## 4. Start the conversation.

Talk with your manager or someone in Human Resources. This will start an "interactive process" that is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This part of the law says the employer must work with you to look for a solution.

## 5. Follow the company's process.

Different companies have different processes for requesting an accommodation. You may need to fill out forms and/or submit medical documentation.

## 6. Keep records.

Save any emails or copies of forms that you fill out. The first accommodation you try may work well. But it's not unusual to need to go through the process again to try something else.

## A workplace accommodation is...

a change at work that makes it possible for an employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of their job or to access benefits available to non-disabled employees.

## An example is...

noise-canceling headphones to help an employee with ADHD concentrate.

## Federal law says that...

companies with 15 or more employees must provide reasonable workplace accommodations. State laws often protect employees of smaller companies as well.

This resource is intended solely for informational purposes and is not a substitute for legal advice. For questions about accommodations, call the Americans with Disabilities Act information line at 1-800-514-0301 (voice) or 1-833-610-1264 (TTY), or visit [ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov). For more tips and resources about disability inclusion at work, visit [u.org/workplace](https://u.org/workplace)