

How to create a Visual Timetable

What are they?

A Visual timetable is a pictorial schedule. The timetable should be used daily, and should provide an individual with information about what is happening next in their day. Just as diaries or calendars are used, a visual timetable can give a person more independence, helping them to change over to the next activity with greater ease.

Why are they used?

There are many people who struggle with concepts of time, who do not understand times on a clock, or words such as later or tomorrow. There is a lot of frustration that can go with this, for the person who does not know what is happening or has little control or choice over their day, and for a person supporting them when trying to convey the information, often repetitively.

How to create a timetable

The person's regular activities should be considered, so a weekly planner consulted, or a list of their activities compiled. There then should be photographs taken or pictures gathered to represent each of these activities. It is ideal to have pictures of the person actually doing the activity, although this is not possible for all activities, such as personal care or dressing. A photograph of the bathroom or their clothes often works for these.

The pictures can then be used to create the timetable. If possible, the pictures should be stored on a computer, as additional copies can then be printed out. They can also be re-sized according to what size the person needs in order to be able to see it clearly. If not, however a spare copy may be useful to be printed just in case. It is also useful to laminate the pictures where possible to protect them.

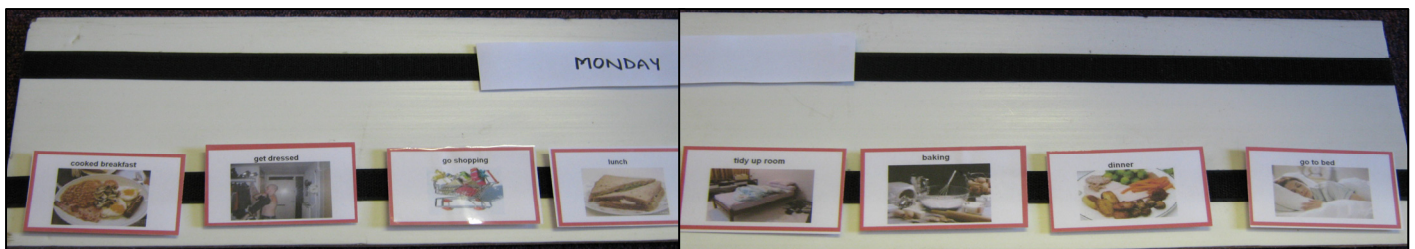
How to use

The timetable can either be displayed on a board, in the person's kitchen or bedroom, or can be portable so can go out with them. The pictures can then be stuck onto the board sequentially (it is ideal to use a Velcro strip), and then removed as each activity is completed. The board should be planned first thing in the morning. With a portable version, the pictures can be displayed in a small photo album, or credit card wallet and the page turned to show the next activity.

Things to consider:

- What size the pictures need to be – is there any visual impairment
- Can there be spare copies in case of any losses or damages
- Is there a safe place for pictures to be kept in between use
- Ensure new pictures are made as new activities are introduced

Examples of Visual Timetables:



Portable Timetable



Important!

- The Timetable must be used Daily
- It must be used in the same way each time
- The pictures need to be removed as an activity is completed
- The person should be shown the board or prompted to look at the board in between each activity, until they get used to using it themselves regularly
- The timetable needs updating, so new activities need to be added, or lost or damaged pictures replaced