Getting Started with

Games & Activities

HelpKidzLearn™

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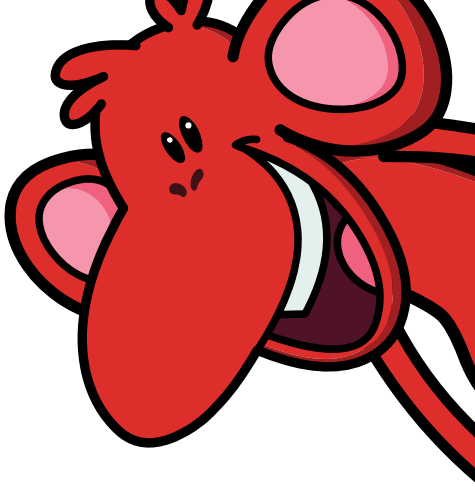


Welcome to Games & Activities.

This guide is designed to help you get started quickly and confidently with HelpKidzLearn Games & Activities.

It shows you how to choose an access method, spot early progress, and pick the right milestone so learners can build access skills step by step.

Welcome! Games & Activities is often where learners take their first steps towards more independent access - whether that's with touch, a mouse, switches, or eye gaze.

This guide is written for busy educators, therapists, and families.

You don't need to read everything in one go - aim for a quick win first, then come back when you're ready to choose the next step.

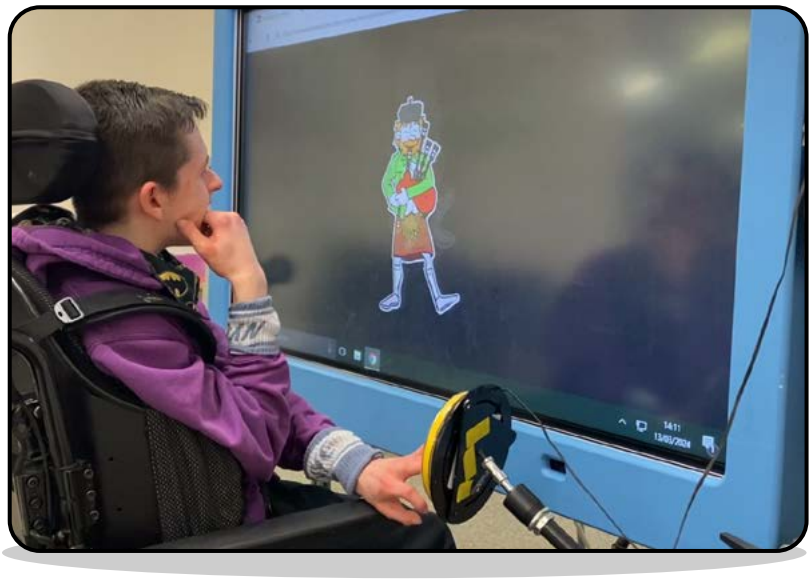
Throughout the guide, you'll see simple ideas for what to try, what progress might look like, and how to move forward with confidence.

What is Games & Activities ?

Games & Activities is an online collection of interactive activities designed for learners with special educational needs.

The activities are organised into progressive learning objectives, starting with early cause and effect and building towards choice making and more independent access skills.

Activities are designed to be language-light, visually clear, and motivating, so learners can focus on interaction and participation.



With Games & Activities you can:

- Build access skills step by step - from early cause and effect to more purposeful choice making.
- Support attention, anticipation, and timing through motivating pauses, prompts, and predictable patterns.
- Encourage early communication and participation using turn taking, shared routines, and simple language like “ready… go!”.
- Develop wider skills along the way, such as listening, visual tracking, early sorting and matching, and topic-based learning.
- Create calm, repeatable sessions that help learners experience success - even in short time slots.

Where it can be used.

- On a Windows or Mac computer, Chromebook, or interactive display.
- On an iPad using a supported browser.
- In one-to-one sessions, small groups, or shared turn-taking activities.

What it helps learners practise.

- **Access skills:** touch, mouse/ trackpad, switches, eye gaze.
- Cause and effect, anticipation, attention and timing.
- Targeting and control.
- Early choice making and decision making.
- Turn taking and communication opportunities.

Before you begin.

A few simple checks will help you get ready to explore Games & Activities or use an activity with a learner.

Choose who's playing.

When you open the software, you will be asked "Who's playing?"

Select **Default** if you want to explore the activities yourself. You can get started without creating a Student Profile.

Select **Change Profile** to choose an existing learner profile or create one. A Student Profile saves the learner's access settings and allows you to review their activity results in Student Analytics.

If you want to review an individual learner's progress over time, select **their profile** before they begin.

You'll find full setup instructions in the **Student Profiles** section later in this guide.

You can save the access method in a Student Profile or change it within an activity using the settings (cog) icon.

Supported access methods.

- **Touch** (direct selection, plus "fishing" in some choice activities).
- **Mouse** or **trackpad**.
- **One switch** (direct selection for cause and effect, plus scanning for choice activities).
- **Two switch** (direct selection for simple choices like two objects, plus scanning for choice activities).
- **Eye gaze** (direct selection or dwell).

Note: Each access method includes adjustable settings (where available), such as scan speed, dwell time, selection style, and other access options.

Quick setup tips.

- If using eye gaze, turn the mouse cursor on so you can see where the learner is looking.
- If using scanning, slow the scan speed at first so the learner has time to notice the highlight.
- If the learner is new to switch access, start with activities that give immediate feedback and a predictable pattern.

A quick first session.

The aim of the first session is a quick win – the learner realises: 'I did that!'

Step 1 – Pick a starting point.

- **If the learner is new to access:** start in Cause and Effect.
- **If the learner already understands cause and effect:** start in Sequential or Attention and Timing.
- **If the learner is ready to choose between options:** start in Introduce Choice.

Step 2 – Run 1–2 activities.

- Model once, then pause and give time for the learner to take the lead.
- **Use simple language:** "watch… wait… press" or "your turn".
- Stop while it is still positive. Repeat the same activity next time for familiarity.

Step 3 – Note what worked.

- Which access method was most reliable?
- Did the learner notice prompts (sound/visual)?
- Did they repeat an action to get the effect again?

What success looks like.

Progress can be small and still meaningful. Look for patterns that show growing understanding and control.

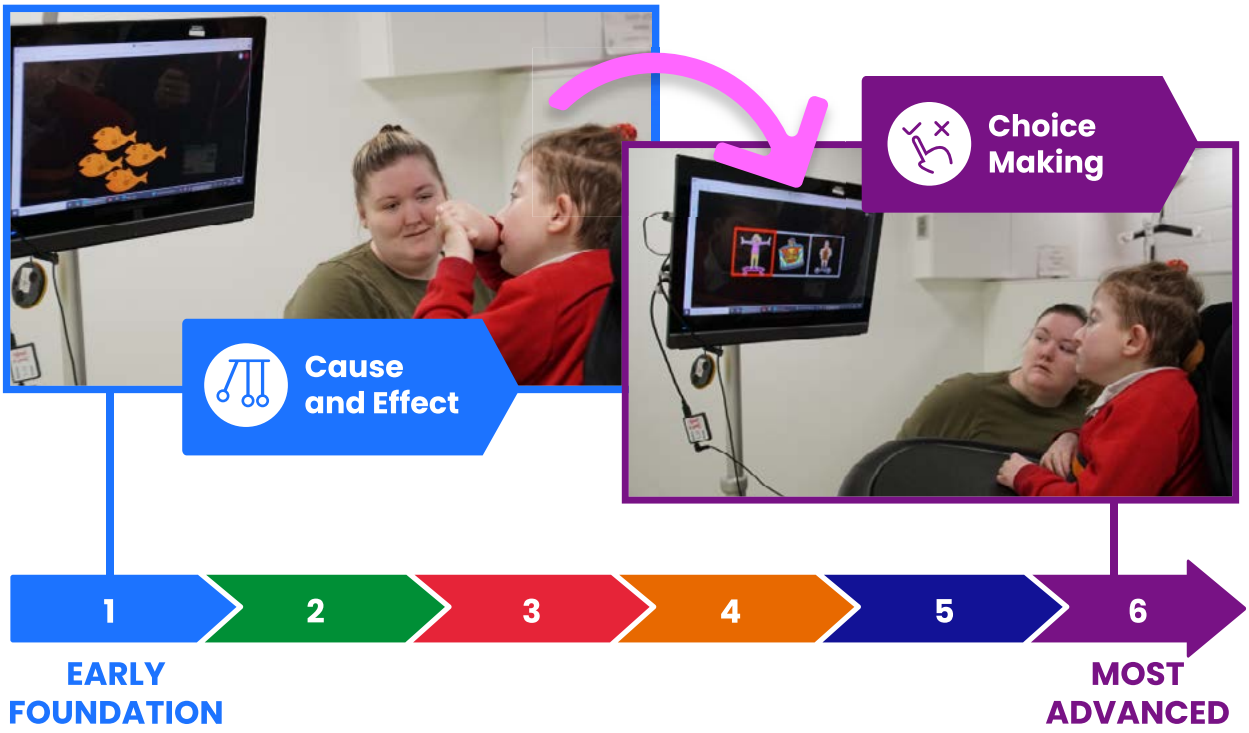
Early signs of progress.

- The learner repeats an action to make the effect happen again.
- They pause and wait for a cue instead of pressing immediately.
- They look towards the screen (or the target) before activating.
- They begin to anticipate the next step in a sequence.
- They show preference by choosing one option more often than another.

When to move on.

- Move to the next milestone when the learner is successful most of the time with support reduced.
- If a milestone feels too hard, step back and build confidence with an easier activity type.

Learning progression – how skills build.

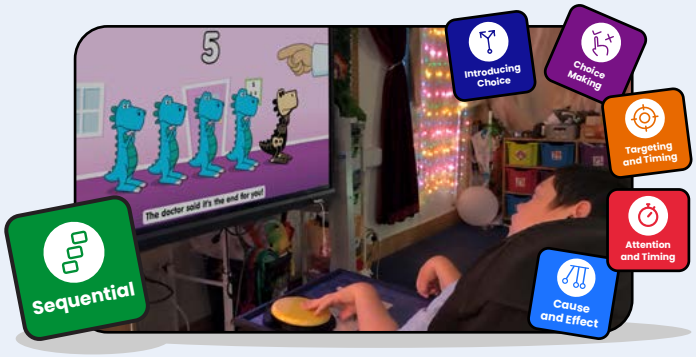


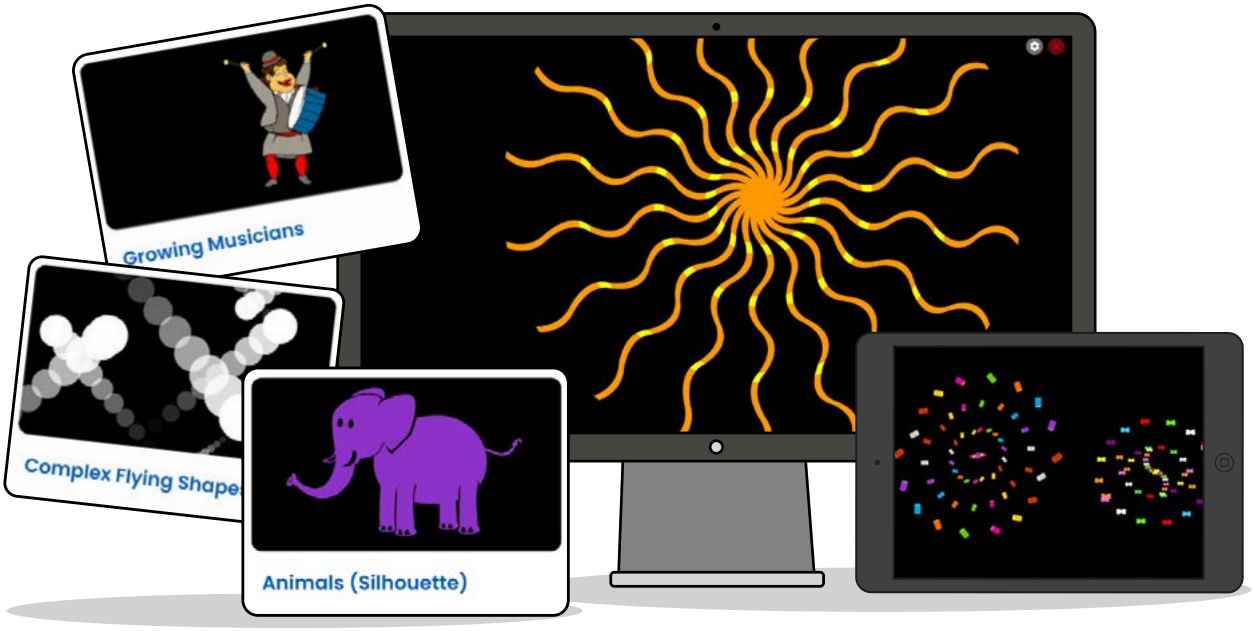
Games & Activities is organised into milestones that build access skills in small, achievable steps.

Our Learning Progression and Outcomes document maps activities to milestones and shows which access methods each activity supports.

Milestones overview and top activity picks.

Use the milestone that best matches the learner today. Each section includes who it is for, what to do, what to observe, the next step, and suggested activities to begin with.





Developing **cause and effect** means helping a learner understand that they can extend influence and control over their immediate environment; that an action on their part can cause a response, either from people or objects around them or events on screen.

Understanding cause and effect is one of the foundation stones upon which all future learning is built and is one of the most vital skills we use to explore the world around us.

Who it's for.

Choose this milestone when a learner is just starting out with an access method, or needs very clear, immediate feedback to stay motivated.

- Learners who are new to an access method.
- Learners building the first understanding that 'my action makes something happen'.
- Learners who benefit from predictable, immediate feedback.

What to do.

Start with one activity type and repeat it across a few sessions. Keeping things familiar helps the learner focus on control, not novelty.

- Start with **Press and Hold** for immediate, sustained control.
- Move to **Press and Watch** for single-press activation and waiting for the next turn.
- Use **Press It Again** for repeated single activations.
- Move to **On/Off** when the learner is ready to start and stop an action with separate activations.
- Try **Exploration** when the learner is ready to activate and move (where supported).

What to observe.

You're looking for signs of intention - repeating an action, pausing, starting again, or showing a clear reaction to the effect.

- Does the learner repeat the action to keep the effect going?
- Can they start and stop intentionally (especially in Press and Hold)?
- Do they notice the prompt and re-activate after the pause?

Next step.

When activations are becoming more consistent, you can add a pause-and-restart pattern (Sequential) or introduce waiting (Attention and Timing).

- If the learner can activate repeatedly, try **Sequential (Make More Happen)**.
- If the learner is pressing too quickly, try **Attention and Timing (Wait then Press)**.

1 Cause and Effect

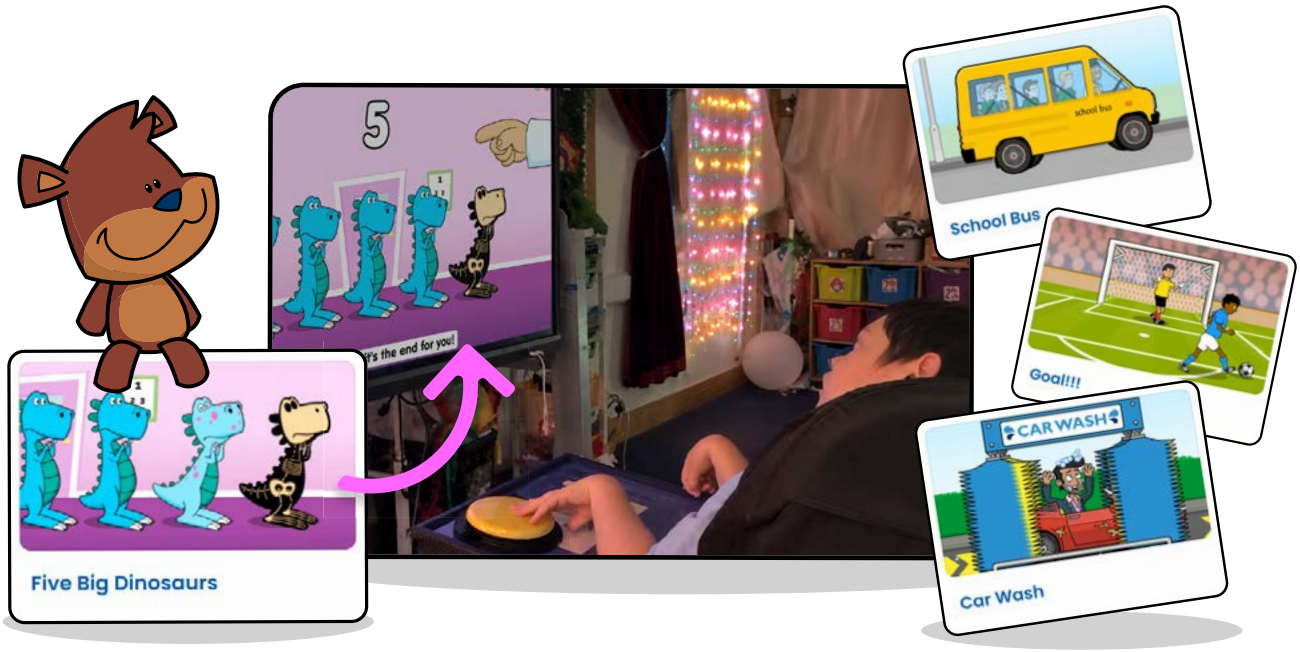
Top activity picks to start with.

These activities are reliable starters that tend to give clear feedback and a satisfying sense of control.

Press and Hold	Press and Watch	Press It Again	On/Off	Exploration
Growing Musicians	Animals (Silhouette)	Create Patterns	Musical Musicians	Explore Tiles
Growing Patterns	Changing Shapes	Create Ripples	Surprise Silhouettes	Explore Waves
Growing Ripples	Lucid Flying Shapes	Create Spirals	Vrooming Vehicles	Explore Swirls
Growing Spirals	Vibrant Tunnels	Create Musicians	Mighty Monsters	Hidden Stars

2 Sequential

Make More Happen



Sequential activities help learners practise "do one thing, then do it again" to make more happen.

The built-in pauses create natural moments to wait, anticipate, and re-activate - ideal for building early routines and step-by-step control.

Who it's for.

Choose Sequential when a learner can activate reliably and is ready to practise "press again to keep it going" with predictable pauses.

- Learners who can activate an activity and are ready to 'make more happen' in steps.
- Learners who benefit from predictable pause points and repetition.
- Learners ready to practise early sequencing, routines, and step-by-step events.

What to do.

Pick one activity and run it a few times. Use the pause as a built-in teaching moment - model, then wait for the learner to take the next step.

- Choose **one activity** and run it several times so the pattern becomes familiar.
- Use the **pause points** to build anticipation: "ready… press".
- Model once, **then wait for the learner to activate** the next step.

What to observe.

Look for the learner re-activating without extra prompting, staying engaged across steps, or showing anticipation (smiles, looking, waiting).

- Does the learner re-activate when the activity pauses?
- Do they stay engaged across multiple steps?
- Do they begin to anticipate what comes next?

Next step.

If the learner can complete short sequences reliably, you're ready to build waiting, anticipation and timing - move on to **Attention & Timing**. If sequencing is still emerging, stay with Sequential and keep the steps short and predictable.

- Move to **Attention & Timing** once the learner can complete short sequences consistently.
- Stay with **Sequential** if they still need repetition with predictable step-by-step actions.

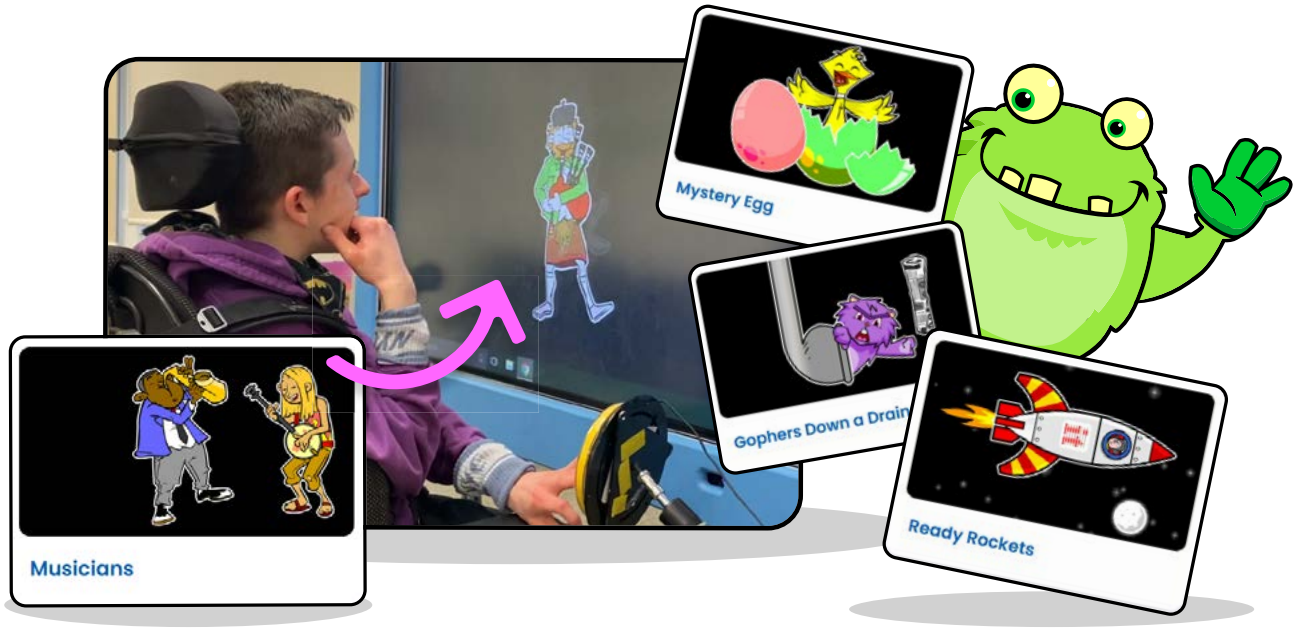
2 Sequential

Top activity picks to start with.

These are good first choices because the pauses are clear and the 'more happens' effect is motivating.

Make More Happen

Five Little Ducks	**A Rainy Day**	**Apple Picking**	**Getting Dressed**
Five Speckled Frogs	**Beautiful Rainbow**	**Grumpy Goat**	**Wash Your Hands**
Five Little Monkeys	**Thunderstorm**	**Scarecrow Sid**	**Clean Your Teeth**
	Windy Day	**The Chicken House**	**Have a Shower**



Attention and Timing activities encourage learners to notice a cue, wait, and activate at the right moment.

They're great for learners who press too quickly, need support with pacing, or are ready to build more purposeful timing.

Who it's for.

Use this milestone when a learner is learning to wait, watch, and activate at the right moment - especially if they press too quickly or randomly.

- Learners who understand cause and effect and are learning to activate at the right time.
- Learners working on waiting, watching, and impulse control.

What to do.

Keep language simple and consistent. Use cues like "wait… now!" and give plenty of processing time before prompting again.

- Start with **Wait then Press** - wait for the object to appear, then activate.
- Move to **Wait for Change** - watch for a change, then activate.
- Use **Locate Change** to build searching and quick targeting.
- Use **Experimental Play** and **Ready Steady Go** for varied timing and anticipation.

What to observe.

Look for improved pacing - fewer rapid presses, longer attention, and activations that match the cue more often.

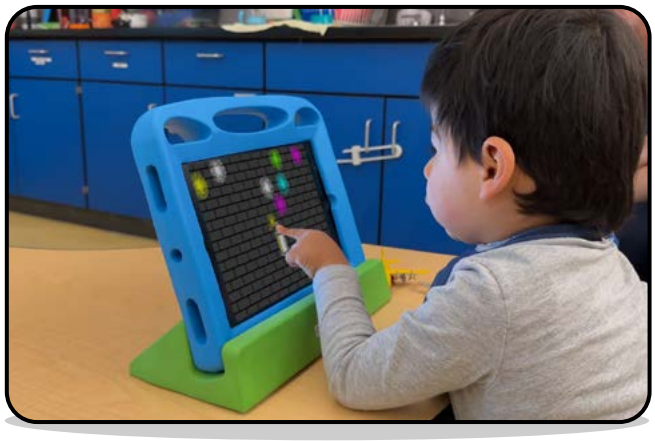
- Does the learner wait for the cue before activating?
- Do they track the screen and notice changes?
- Are they beginning to anticipate the 'right moment'?

Next step.

When timing is improving, build precision with Targeting and Timing, or introduce simple choices if the learner is ready to select between options.

- If the learner can time their activation reliably, move to **Targeting and Timing**.
- If the learner is ready to choose between options, try **Introduce Choice**.

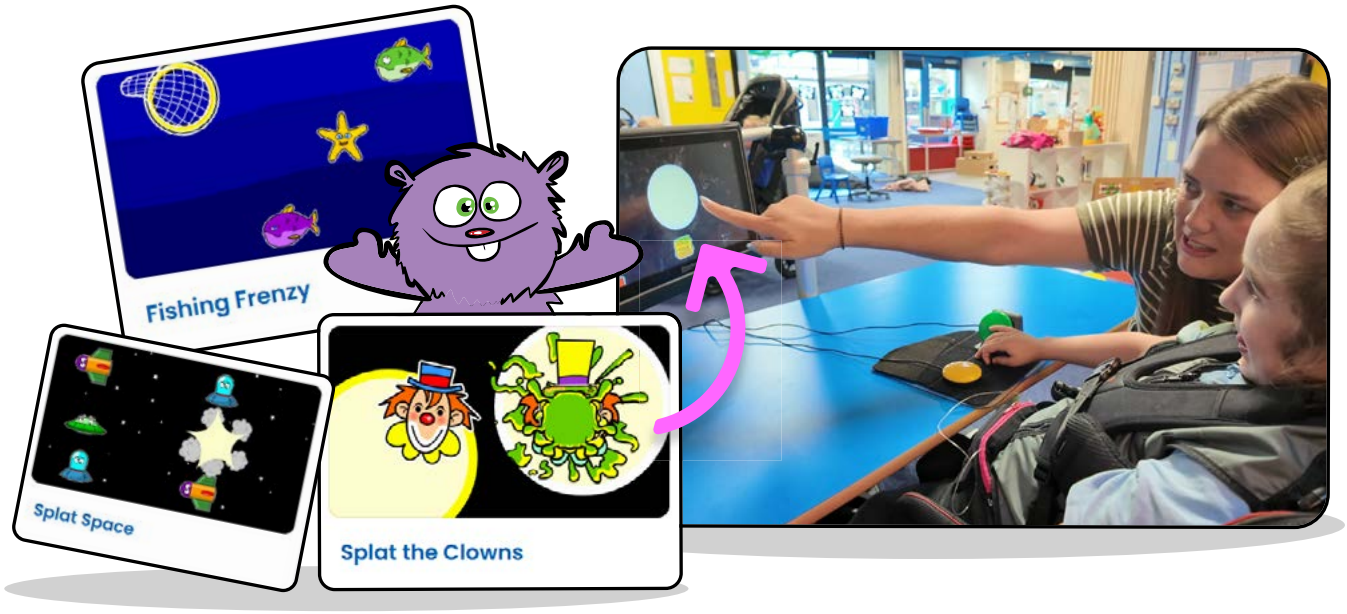
3 Attention and Timing



Top activity picks to start with.

These activities naturally encourage waiting and help learners practise activating with better timing.

Wait then Press	Wait for Change	Locate Change	Experimental Play	Ready Steady Go
Mystery Egg	Coconut Shy	Haunted House	Balloon Blast	Ready Rockets
Make It Work	Crazy Cats	Make a Fairy	Spray Art	Ready Steady Sprint
Noisy Trucks	Ten Pin Bowling	Make a Monster	Watering Can	
Musicians	Gophers Down a Drainpipe	More Crazy Cats	Custard Splodger	



Targeting and Timing activities support learners to aim for a target and activate with more precision.

They can build confidence with static targets before moving into variable timing, moving targets, and more challenging prompts.

Who it's for.

Choose this milestone when a learner is ready to aim - touching, clicking, scanning, or looking at a specific target with more intention.

- Learners ready to target a specific area and activate at the right moment.
- Learners developing accuracy with touch, mouse, switches, or eye gaze.

What to do.

Start with static targets, then gradually add movement or variable timing. Keep the challenge 'just right' so success stays high.

- Start with **Static Targets** - target stays in one place, timing is the challenge.
- Move to **Variable Targets** - targets appear in new locations, build searching and tracking.
- Use **Moving Targets** when the learner can visually track across the screen.
- Add **Variable Timing** - the target may stay in place, but the 'right time' to activate changes (e.g., wait for a cue, countdown, or pause). This builds anticipation, waiting, and better timing.

What to observe.

You may see the learner making more accurate selections, correcting errors, or showing more purposeful looking/pointing before activation.

- Can the learner wait and activate when the cue happens?
- Are they looking at the target before activating?
- Do they improve accuracy over repeated attempts?

Next step.

Once targeting is becoming reliable, you can introduce early choice making (Introduce Choice) and begin building more meaningful selection skills.

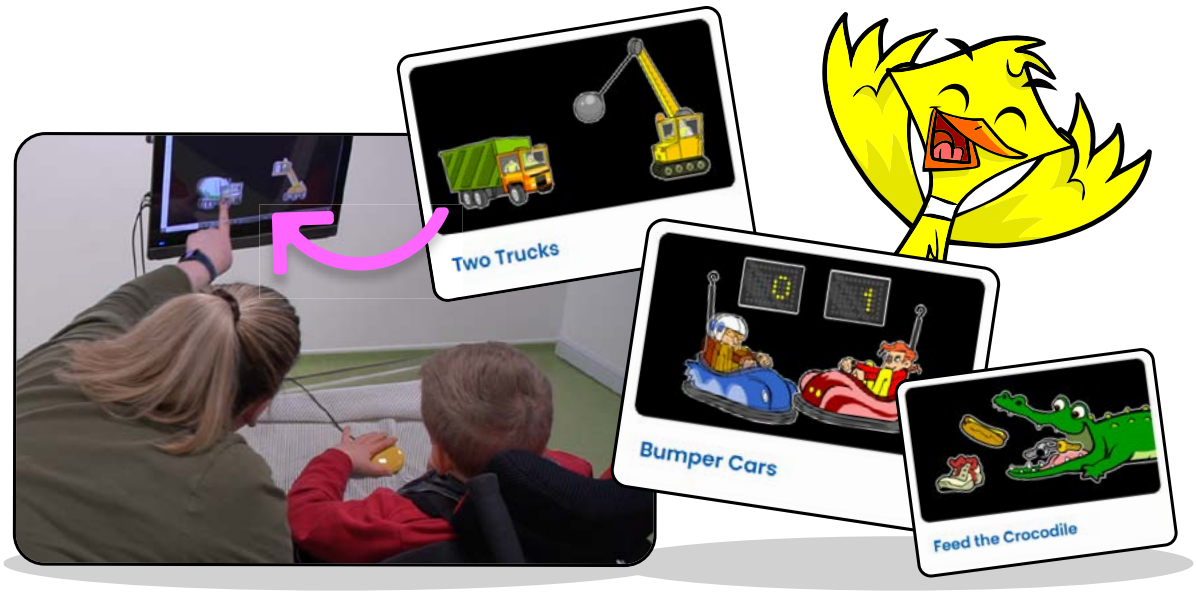
- If the learner is choosing between two options, move to **Introduce Choice**.
- If the learner can scan across several options, move towards **Choice Making**.

4 Targeting and Timing

Top activity picks to start with.

These are strong starters for building accuracy and purposeful activation.

Static Targets	Variable Targets	Variable Timing	Moving Targets
Space Blast	Find Curtains	Chopper Rescue	Splat
Championship Darts	Find Musicians	Firework Pyrotechnic	Splat Fruit
Sausage Fry	Peeping Musicians	Fishing Frenzy	Splat Ghots
World Cup Soccer	Objects in a Line	Jungle Adventure	Splat Insects
Jumping Jack			
Splat the Clown			



Introduce Choice activities help learners practise making a simple, meaningful selection between options.

They're designed to make choices feel safe and achievable - with clear visuals, predictable outcomes, and lots of repetition.

Who it's for.

Use this milestone when a learner can target or activate reliably and you want to introduce two clear options with predictable outcomes.

- Learners moving beyond cause and effect and starting to make meaningful choices.
- Learners ready to choose between two options (including two-switch selection).

What to do.

Keep choices meaningful and repeat them often. You can talk through options ("Do you want X or Y?"), then give time for a response.

- Start with **Two Objects** for clear, simple choice making.
- Move to **Related Objects** where one choice can interrupt or change the other.
- Try **Interacting Objects** for turn-taking, scoring, and playful 'action and reaction'.
- Use B**uild Up / Move and Get** when learners can keep a goal in mind across steps.
- Add **One Object, Two Actions** - same object, two different outcomes. Helps learners understand that their choice changes what happens, without extra visual clutter.

What to observe.

Look for consistent selection patterns, clearer preference, and reduced support over time.

- Does the learner make a purposeful choice between options?
- Do they show preference or repeat a favoured option?
- Do they understand that different choices lead to different outcomes?

Next step.

When learners start choosing with intention, move into Choice Making activities that involve finding items, completing sets, and creating outcomes.

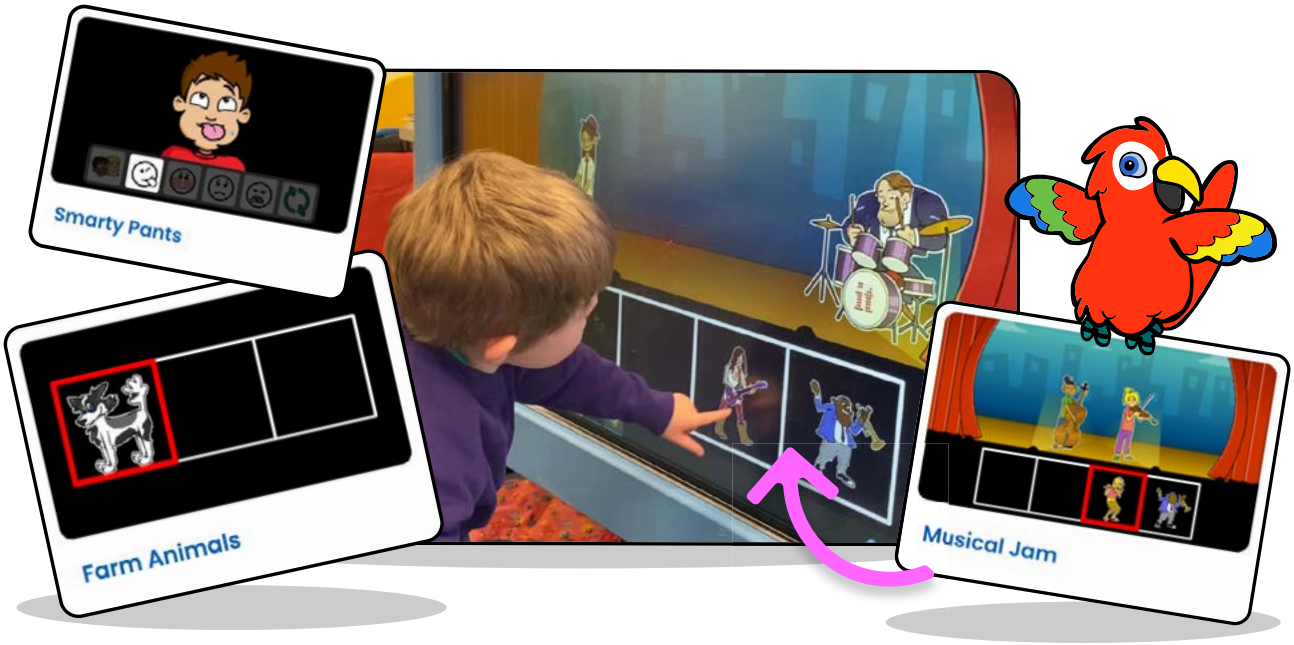
- When learners can choose between options more consistently, move to **Choice Making**.

5 Introducing Choice

Top activity picks to start with.

These activities make early choices feel simple and rewarding.

Two Objects	Related Objects	Interacting Objects	One Object Two Actions	Build Up	Move and Get
Balloon Play	The Big Show	Basketball	Balloon Pop	Balloon Blower	Basketball Team
Dancing Monsters	Tin Can Tower	Bumper Cars	Basketball Free Throw	Gophers Mower	Dance Step
Rocket Fun	Wake the Crocodile	Hungry Crocodile	Monster Trapdoor	Rocket Builder	Feed the Crocodile
Two Trucks	Shhh!	Gophers	Truck Play	Tin Can Topple	In the Spotlight



Choice Making activities build on early selection skills and support more intentional decisions.

Learners practise choosing what they want, finding an item, completing a set, creating scenes, and making choices that lead to different outcomes.

Who it's for.

Choose this milestone when a learner is ready for more intentional decision making - not just selecting, but selecting with a purpose.

- Learners ready to explore multiple options and make more independent selections.
- Learners practising scanning, discrimination, and early problem solving.
- Learners building choice making skills that support communication device use.

What to do.

Start with a small set of options and gradually increase complexity. Repeat favourite formats (find it, match it, complete it) to build confidence.

- Start with **Free Choice** for exploring and building confidence selecting.
- Use **Find the Object** to build visual scanning and discrimination.
- Use **Complete the Set** and **Create a Scene** for early problem solving and meaning-making.
- Move to **Exploration** for more open-ended problem solving (e.g., matching pairs, Treasure Island), where learners search, remember and try strategies to reach a goal.

What to observe.

You may see stronger preferences, improved accuracy, and more purposeful communication around choices (looking, reaching, vocalising, gesturing).

- Does the learner scan across options before selecting?
- Can they select the intended option with support reduced?
- Do they show understanding of a goal (find it, match it, complete it)?

Next step.

From here, build independence by increasing variety, reducing prompts, and using Playlists to practise the same skill across different contexts.

- Build endurance and independence by repeating familiar activities and gradually increasing the number of options.

6 Choice Making

Top activity picks to start with.

These picks offer clear structure and a satisfying outcome so learners can practise choice making with confidence.

Free Choice	Find the Object	Complete the Set	Create a Scene	Exploration
Aunty Maggie's Recipe	BBall and Cheer	Clowns	Farm Yard	Memory Pairs - 4 Cards
Smarty Pants	Big Trucks	Fireworks	Musical Jam	Memory Pairs - 6 Cards
Funfair	Cool Gadgets	Musical Fun	Railway Express	Mandy's House
Rockets	Farm Animals	Racing Cars	Sunny Street	Treasure Island
Gadgets				
Pick and Play				
Soundboard				

Tips for supporting learners.

Every learner's pathway will look different.

These tips can help you adapt sessions so learners can participate in a way that feels comfortable and achievable.

- **Reduce visual clutter:** full-screen, one activity at a time, fewer distractions nearby.
- **Support regulation first:** calm input, predictable transitions, and breaks when needed.
- **Offer meaningful choices** where possible (which activity, which theme, when to stop).
- **Watch for subtle communication** (eye movement, facial expression, changes in breathing) - and respond as if it's intentional.
- **Celebrate progress** that's easy to miss: longer attention, fewer prompts, more waiting, more repeat activations.

If something isn't working, change the demand - not the learner.
Try changing the access method, simplify the goal or shorten the session.

Teaching and therapy strategies.

A few simple strategies can make sessions calmer, more successful, and easier to repeat - especially when time is limited.

- **Keep the routine the same:** hello - one or two activities - finished.
- Model first, then pause and wait. Give time for processing before prompting again.
- **Use consistent language:** "ready… go", "your turn", "stop", "again".
- Repeat the same activity across several sessions before changing - familiarity builds independence.
- If support is needed, fade it slowly (less prompting, longer wait, lighter physical support).

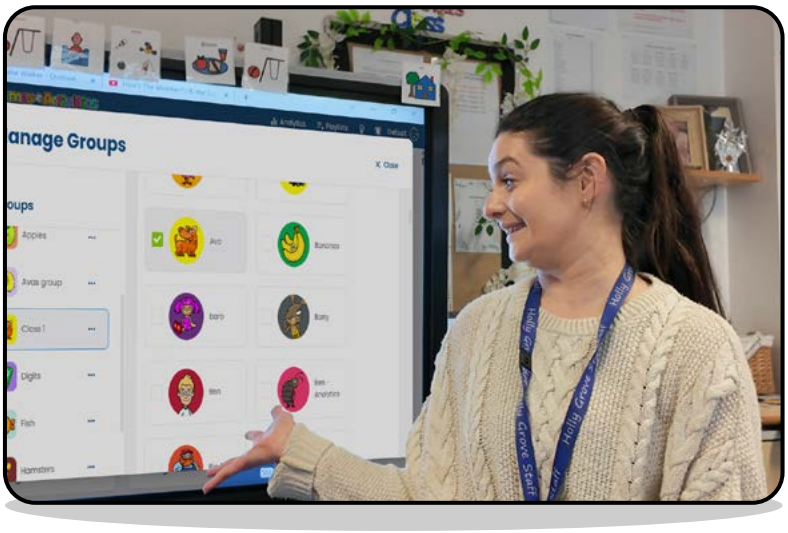
Aim for short, successful sessions.
Two minutes of confident control can be more valuable than 20 minutes of frustration.

Student Profiles.

Student Profiles help you personalise the experience and keep sessions consistent.

They're especially helpful if different adults support the same learner, or if you're working across teaching and therapy.

Use a profile to keep access choices and preferences consistent, and to make it easier to pick up where you left off.



Why Create a Student Profile?

- **Consistent experience:** Profiles remember access method.
- **Time-saving:** No need to reconfigure settings each time - just select the profile and go.
- **Supports independence:** Learners can access their preferred setup with minimal support.
- **Tracks progress:** Profiles link directly to the Student Analytics tool for meaningful progress tracking.
- **Works across titles:** Profiles apply to all HelpKidzLearn products.
- **Manage groups:** Create multiple groups of students – perfect for classrooms or therapy groups.
- **Easy playlists:** Create playlists of activities and assign them to your learners.

It's easy to get started.

Step 1:

Log in to your HelpKidzLearn Hub account.

Step 2:

Click the profile image on the top right to select profiles.

Step 3:

Select Create Profile.

Step 4:

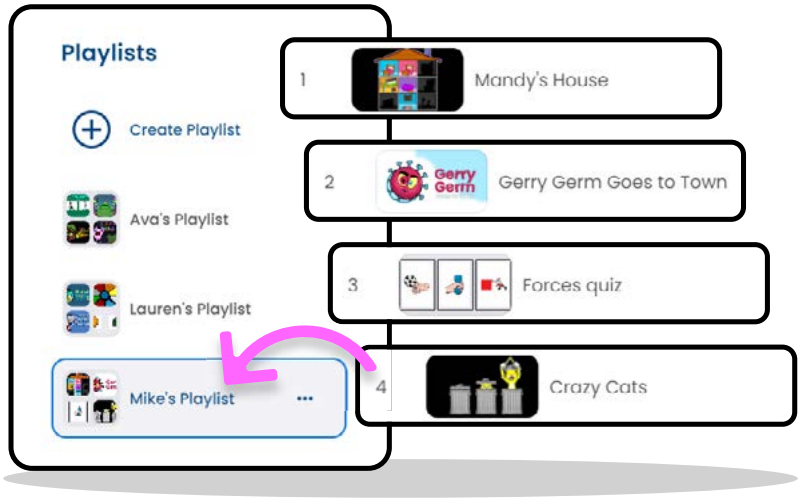
Add a name and set the access method.

Student Playlists.

Playlists let you group activities together so they're ready when you need them.

They're great for short sessions, structured routines, and specific targets.

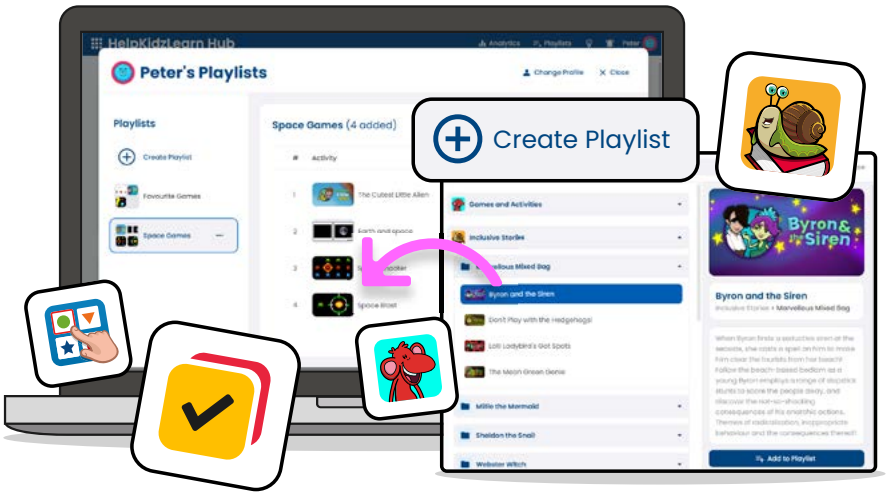
For example, you might create a 'Switch practice' playlist, a 'Waiting and timing' playlist, or a topic-based playlist (weather, farm, transport) to support wider learning.



Why Use Playlists?

- **Time-saving:** Set up once, use again and again.
- **Structured sessions:** Start with a calming activity, build to interactive tasks, and end with a familiar routine.
- **Flexible:** Group activities by theme (e.g. weather, colours, animals), skill (e.g. cause and effect, choice-making), or level of engagement.
- **Personalised:** Tailor each playlist to an individual's developmental goals and preferences.
- **Consistent:** When used with a Student Profile, access methods are applied automatically.
- **Insightful:** Use alongside Analytics to track engagement and adjust your plan as needed.

Tip: You can even mix activities from across the HelpKidzLearn range - including **Chooselt Maker** and **Inclusive Stories** - to create a complete, multi-sensory lesson plan.



Next steps.

If you'd like a quick planning shortcut, use the **Learning Progression and Outcomes guide** to pick activities for your learner's current milestone and access method. You'll easily be able to see which access methods you can use for each activity, helping you plan ahead how to progress their skills.

Download the Learning Progression and Outcomes guide.

helpkidzlearn.com/resources/guides

Looking for guides on developing Switch or Eye Gaze Skills?

We have dedicated guides that offer step-by-step advice on how to introduce these access methods to your learners. We've also created a matching learning journey guidebook for tracking and supporting progress using Games & Activities.

Download Switch Progression Guide.

helpkidzlearn.com/resources/guides

Download Eye Gaze Progression Guide.

helpkidzlearn.com/resources/guides

Games & Activities in practice.

Sandfield Park School, Liverpool, UK.

At Sandfield Park School in Liverpool, HelpKidzLearn Games & Activities plays a key role in supporting AAC development.

By helping students build switch use through engaging, low-pressure games, staff are laying the foundations for confident communication.

Learners are developing muscle memory, motor planning and independence, all while enjoying playful, personalised learning that fits seamlessly into their daily routines.

They are unconsciously developing automaticity using switches, which is the best way of learning.

Carly Hynes - Senior Teacher, AAC & Communication Team Coordinator.

Read the full case study

helpkidzlearn.com/resources/case-studies

Green Fold School, Bolton, UK.

At Green Fold School in Bolton, Games & Activities is opening up new ways for pupils with PMLD and autism to engage and connect.

Teachers are seeing meaningful responses, from tiny finger movements to clear anticipation and choice-making.

These small moments are full of significance, helping children communicate, build independence and enjoy learning in their own way.

For our PMLD learners, it's about building communication skills. The structured switch progression in HelpKidzLearn allows us to work towards using a communication device in a motivating way.

Caitlin McNiven - PMLD Teacher.

Read the full case study

helpkidzlearn.com/resources/case-studies

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