

Work Simplification

Work simplification aims to allow time and energy left over to spend on leisure activities.

There is no one way of doing a task which will be acceptable to all people.

The following pages provide suggestions of alternative methods of organising and doing tasks.

Work simplification is:

- › Doing a task in the shortest possible time.
- › Using the least amount of energy.
- › Completing a task in the most efficient way.

Before commencing a task decide:



Four ways to achieve work simplification:

- Elimination** › Can all or parts of the activity be eliminated (eg. online grocery shopping, click and collect shopping, hiring a gardener, cook your meal in the same dish you are going to serve it in).
- Changing the order** › By doing activities in a different order, you can sometimes conserve energy (eg. prepare the evening meal in the morning rather than at the end of the day when you are tired).
- Combining tasks** › Grouping things together to reduce the need to complete the task multiple times (eg. grouping items on your grocery list, plan your day to run errands in an ordered manner, collect all articles required for a task before starting).
- Simplification** › Is there an easier way to complete the task (eg. rather than chopping vegetables can you use frozen, pre-cut or tinned options).

Mobility

Transfers – sitting to standing

- › Shuffle your bottom forward on the seat.
- › Position feet slightly apart under chair/bed.
- › Lean forward slightly and use your arms to help push up from the seat.
- › When sitting down use your arms to help lower yourself.

Seating

- › Try to use a chair with a high supportive back rest.
- › Seat depth should not be too deep. It should allow your legs to bend comfortably at the knees.
- › Armrests are useful to help with transfers.
- › Seat height should be suitable to you; feet should be able to be flat on the floor when sitting. Having a slightly higher seat height reduces strain on hips and knees when standing up from sitting.

Beds

- › Sleep in bed rather than a chair if medically appropriate.
- › Research when purchasing a new mattress to find one suitable for you.
- › If your mattress does not provide enough support consider placing a sheet of chipboard or plywood underneath.
- › Mattress toppers are a cost effective way of increasing the comfort of your bed. Keep in mind that foam retains heat; some foam mattress toppers may not be appropriate for you.
- › Consider your bedding. Are your sheets and blankets suitable for you? Some people prefer light bedding whilst others prefer heavy (e.g. continental quilt vs heavy wool blankets).
- › Think about the depth of your pillow and if this is suitable for your body shape and how you sleep.
- › Pillows can also be used to assist with positioning in bed. Placing a pillow under your legs can reduce pressure on your lower back. Using a pillow under your top leg or arm can assist with supporting the hip and shoulder. Keep in mind that using more pillows may increase the difficulty with which you are able to get up out of bed and will take up more space.

Self-Care

Eating

- › Consider the weight of your cutlery and crockery. Some people prefer lightweight cutlery whilst others prefer a heavier option.
- › Knives with serrated blades and larger handles can be easier to use.
- › Consider purchasing adapted cutlery if appropriate for you. Larger or longer handles can be easier to grip.
- › Non-slip matting can be used to help stabilise plates and bowls.

Showering

- › Use non-slip tape on the floor to increase stability.
- › Some people find sitting to shower easier than standing.
- › Getting in and out of baths can be very difficult for some people. Avoid using a bath if you find it hard to transfer.
- › Use a soap bag or soap mitt to avoid dropping the soap.
- › Use a long handled brush to reach your back and feet.
- › Use a towelling dressing gown to assist with drying your back or attach loops to either end of a towel.
- › Consider sitting down to dry your feet and legs.
- › Use a dressing stick with a towel to dry between the toes.

Dressing

- › Trial a button aid if you have difficulty doing up or unfastening buttons.
- › Consider sitting down when dressing your lower body.
- › Pants with an elastic waistband can be easier to pull up than those with a zip and button.
- › If you have an injured limb always dress this limb first. When getting undressed always undress the injured limb last.
- › Consider a dressing stick or long handled reacher to assist if you are unable to reach your feet.
- › Shoe horns and sock/stocking donners can assist with putting shoes and socks on.

Meal Preparation

Shopping

- › Use a shopping list to write down items as you run out of them.
- › Organise your shopping list into sections (eg. grocery, toiletries, cold items, meats).
- › Have meals planned for the week so you can shop accordingly.
- › Use large metropolitan shopping centres for one-stop shopping.
- › Take groceries to the car in a trolley or use click and collect or home delivery options.
- › Shop with a friend or relation who can help with lifting and carrying to share the load.
- › Check the availability of an item before going shopping by telephoning the relevant store or by checking online.
- › Use the half trolleys to avoid reaching into the deeper trolleys.
- › Call ahead to the store to check if they have staff available to assist with your shopping.
- › Use a laundry trolley to take the shopping from the car to the kitchen.

Food preparation

- › Cook twice as much as you need and freeze half.
- › Use frozen vegetables, pre-cut or tinned vegetables to reduce preparation time.
- › Consider leaving the skin on when cooking vegetables.
- › Use electrical appliances where possible (e.g. food processors, slow and pressure cookers, rice cooker).
- › Ensure your knives are sharp.
- › Use a perforated spoon to lift vegetables out of a saucepan without having to empty the pot or drain the contents of the pot into a colander in the sink.
- › Use pot mitts so you can lift heavy pots and dishes with two hands rather than one, or consider sliding them along the bench top to avoid lifting.
- › Consider microwave cooking if available to you.

Serving

- › Use a tray or trolley to carry utensils and food to the table.
- › Slide saucepans and heavy containers along the bench rather than lifting them.
- › Serve food in the same dish it was cooked in.



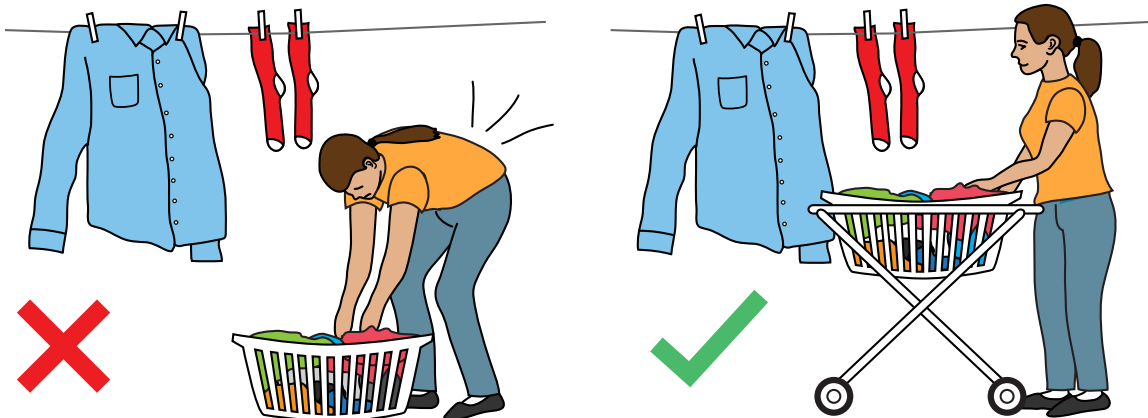
Dishwashing

- › Soak dishes immediately after using them.
- › Line trays and cooking dishes to prevent food from sticking and reduce cleaning.
- › Put a large ring on the sink plug to make removal easier.
- › Leave dishes to drain and dry in a rack after washing.
- › Open a cupboard door and rest your foot inside to alleviate pressure on your lower back.
- › Use a dishwasher if available to you.
- › If possible, set the table for the next meal after washing and drying dishes to save putting dishes away and then taking them out again later.

Laundry

Washing

- › Sort clothes on a work bench.
- › Use a laundry trolley to transport items to and from the clothes line.
- › Place your basket at waist height when hanging out or bringing in washing.
- › Consider hanging your washing on a clothes airer/horse if you are unable to reach a clothes line.
- › Placing items onto a coat hanger and then onto the clothesline can reduce reaching and holding the arms above the head.
- › Use a peg basket, leave the pegs on the line or have an apron with big pockets in the front to keep the pegs in.
- › Hang out half the load of washing at a time; this reduces the load to carry to and from the clothes line.
- › Fold clothes as you take them off the line to minimise creases and the need for ironing.



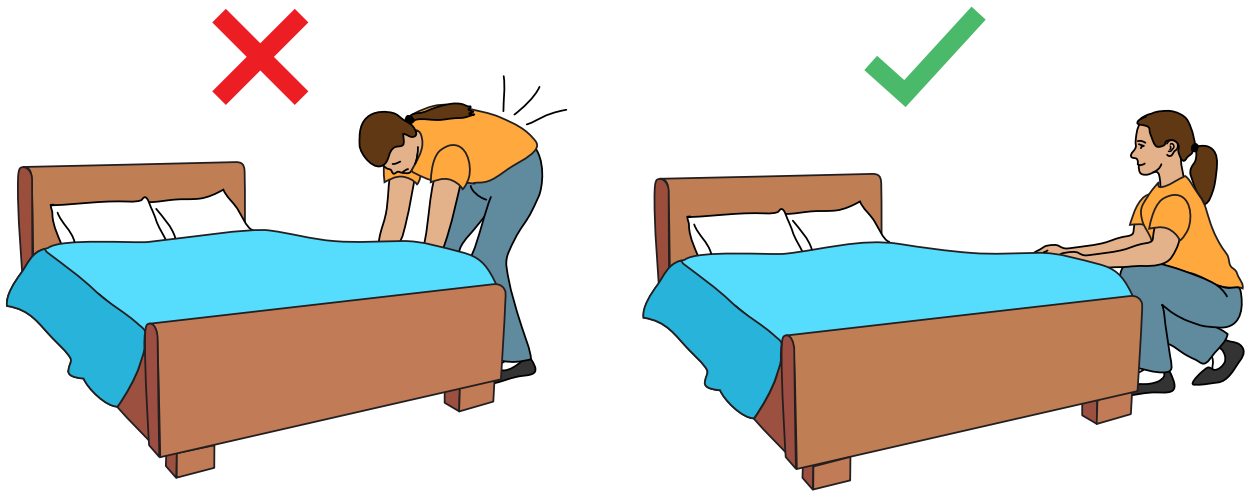
Ironing

- › Buy materials that require little ironing such as drip-dry garments.
- › Use a lightweight steam iron.
- › Sit down to iron if possible.
- › Eliminate unnecessary ironing such as tea towels, underclothes.

General

Bed-making

- › Consider using duvets and cotton blankets to make lighter work of bed making.
- › Have the bed arranged so that you can reach both sides easily.
- › Use fitted sheets a size larger to assist with making the bed.
- › View YouTube tutorials on how to don a duvet cover - it's easier than you think.
- › Consider vacuuming the mattress rather than flipping it over.
- › If you need to flip your mattress always arrange for someone to help with this task.
- › If you have children, give them the responsibility of making their own beds.



Cleaning

- › Use a basket or washing trolley to carry all your cleaning supplies.
- › Keep duplicates of cleaning equipment in places where they are used frequently (e.g. bathroom, kitchen).
- › Use long handled brushes, mops, dustpan and brooms to eliminate reaching and bending.
- › Use spray-on detergents or cleaning agents, which can be left on and wiped off later to avoid scrubbing.
- › Vacuum one or two rooms a day instead of the whole house at once.
- › If you have children, give them the responsibility of cleaning their own rooms.



Gardening

- › Transport gardening equipment in a wheelbarrow or laundry trolley to reduce carrying and lifting.
- › Consider hanging baskets, raised beds and pot plant stands to raise working heights.
- › A hose reel will assist in winding up garden hoses.
- › Garden kneelers are available to assist in rising from sitting or kneeling to a standing position.
- › Electrical and motor driven equipment such as garden vacuum cleaners, lawn mower, edge cutters are available.
- › Installing reticulation can reduce the time needed to hand water.
- › Use mulches to reduce weeding and water evaporation.
- › Contract garden maintenance services in your area.



Office workstation

- › Take advantage of free online workstation ergonomic assessments to ensure your workstation is set up appropriately.
- › Consider your seating and if it is appropriate for you.
- › Review supportive cushion options at your local office ergonomic equipment store.
- › Set up printers so you are required to stand and walk to them.
- › Set up your workstation so commonly used items are within reach.
- › Consider a head set if you are using the phone regularly.
- › There are computer programs available to force rest breaks and prompt stretching.
- › Consider computer adaptations for keyboards and mouse devices.



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