

WVATS

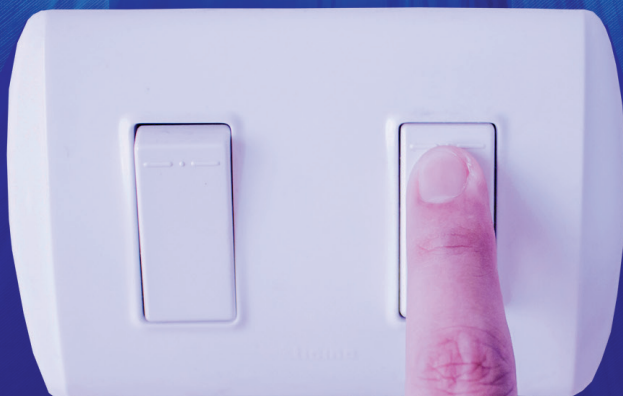
West Virginia Assistive Technology System Newsletter



Farm and Garden

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**SWITCH
ON**



**THE
WORLD**

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Switch on the World

A switch can be an assistive technology tool for accessing the world. A person with a disability can use a switch to turn something on or off, play, drive a power wheelchair and communicate with others.

A switch can be used to access items like battery operated toys, communication devices, environmental controls and computers. Some switches need to be plugged in to the device while others are wireless. There are switches that work with pressure, motion, sound, blinking or puffing and sipping. One popular switch is a pressure switch. It might look like a button or a flat pad. You can press it with a hand, foot, head or other body part.

It is helpful to think about where to put the switch so it is near the body part that will control it. It might take some practice to decide which part of one's body, like a finger or an elbow, can best trigger the switch. A body part the person has meaningful and consistent control over to access the switch is called a "switch site". It is best to find the switch site that needs the least amount of energy to use the switch, so the person does not get too tired.

It may be possible to adapt a device to be switch accessible. For example, a battery interrupter can make some toys work with a switch. Companies, like Enabling Devices, sell battery interrupters as well as products that have already been adapted. To learn more, visit www.enablingdevices.com or call **800-832-8697**.

Everyone is different. It can be fun to explore using different switches to find out what works best for you. One way to do that is by borrowing a switch and switch accessible device from the West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS). WVATS has a variety of switches and other assistive technology devices for loan and exchange on the WVATS Virtual Loan Library at vll.cedwvu.org. For more information, visit www.wvats.cedwvu.org or call **800-841-8436**.



Powerful Switches

Smoothie Switch

The Smoothie Switch has a slim, smooth 5 inch surface. It angles toward the user to make it easier for someone with limited movement to press the switch.

For more information, visit www.donjohnston.com or call 800-999-4660.



Thomas the Old McDonald Bear

Thomas the Old McDonald Bear is a toy adapted for children who use switches. Dressed in overalls and a bandana, Old McDonald carries along his farm friends, Pig and Duck. The bear dances and sings “Old McDonald had a Farm” when you press his foot or a switch (not included).

For more information, visit www.adaptivetechsolutions.com or call 918-637-7390.

Battery Interrupter for Switch Device

A battery interrupter can let you change battery operated toys and devices to use with a switch. Place the battery interrupter between the battery and its connection point in the battery compartment. Put the device in its ON position. Plug your switch into the input jack of the battery interrupter. You are ready to use your switch operated device.

For more information, visit www.adaptivation.com or call 800-723-2783.



A Calendar of Success

WVATS spoke with a caller whose mother was having trouble reading the print on her wall calendar. A WVATS team member talked with her about large print materials and referred her to companies that have large print calendars. The caller said, "Thank you so much for finding these. I didn't even know they made calendars with large print. This will really help her."

If you want to print your own calendar, there might be calendar templates on your computer software (e.g., Microsoft Publisher). You can print calendar templates from sites like <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us> or www.calendarlabs.com. Why not draw your own calendar? Find some colored markers, blank paper and create your own success!

Some resources include:

Independent Living Aids

www.independentliving.com

800-537-2118

LSS

www.lssproducts.com

800-468-4789

BrailleWorks

www.brailleworks.com

800-258-7544



Your Right To Fair Lending

The Fair Housing Act protects your rights to many things about housing. This includes your right to apply for and receive a loan, called a 'fair mortgage product', when you buy a home.

This is called fair lending. It means you have the same rights as everyone else when you apply for a home loan even if you are a person with a disability.

One of the most important things to remember is you have the right to apply. Brokers and lenders have to provide and accept a loan application from anyone who wishes to apply. If a lender refuses to

give you information on loans, asks you to pay fees or charges you rates that are different from other people, you may have a case for discrimination.

Discrimination can occur at any stage of the lending process whether you are purchasing or refinancing a home. Any lender, real estate and mortgage broker, appraiser, loan servicer or title company can commit discrimination.

If you have questions about fair lending, you can contact the WV Housing Advocate at **304-296-6091** or email cchantler@nwvcil.org.



<http://NLSBARD.loc.gov>

BARD App

The Braille and Audio Reading Download, or BARD, is a mobile application that downloads audio and braille books. It is free for people who are registered with the Braille and Talking Book Program, through the National Library Service (NLS) in the Library of Congress. It has almost 50,000 books, magazines and music scores available. The app works with an iPhone, iPad or iPod touch. An app for Android devices is being developed. BARD is available

through the Apple app store at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/bard-mobile/id705229586>.

To learn more about registering to use BARD, visit www.loc.gov/nls or call **888-NLS-READ (888-657-7323)**.

Braille and Talking Book Program

The National Library Service (NLS) in the Library of Congress has a Braille and Talking Book Program. It is a free library program for people who cannot use standard print because of a visual, physical or learning disability. Braille and audio materials, as well as playback devices, can be loaned and delivered to readers by postage-free mail. The NLS Braille and Talking Book Program is made available through a network of libraries, including the Special Services Library at the West Virginia Library Commission.

To learn more about applying for the NLS Braille and Talking Book Program, visit www.loc.gov/nls or call **888-NLS-READ (888-657-7323)**.

To find out more about the Special Services Library at the West Virginia Library Commission, visit www.librarycommission.wv.gov or call **304-558-4061** or **800-642-8674**.



Wrist Assured Gloves

Wrist Assured Gloves (WAGs) are therapeutic workout gloves. An occupational therapist came up with the idea to help stop or ease wrist pain during exercise. The palm of each glove has a contoured gel wedge inside for support.

For more information, visit www.wristassuredgloves.com or call **800-606-4577**.



Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints Blog

The Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints Blog is a fun and informative way to share gardening information with our online readers.

The blog keeps you informed with new messages, videos and pictures posted by our staff. It organizes gardening topics into categories so they are easier to find

and archives items that have been shared in the past. We hope you will check out the blog for monthly tips on gardening, accessibility and assistive technology.

To access the Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints Blog, visit www.greenthumbs.cedwvu.org/blog or call 800-841-8436.



WV Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture

WV Veterans and Warriors to Agriculture (VWA) is a project of the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. VWA helps veterans who want to become involved in farming. According to the project, VWA has veterans work with other veterans

so they can “learn about agricultural practices that will help them harvest crops and grow food”.

For more information visit www.wvagriculture.org or call 304-558-3200.



Farm and Garden Tools



EarthWay EV-N-Spred

The EarthWay EV-N-Spred is a hand operated spreader. The tool is made for smaller hands. You can put seed, ice melter or fertilizer in the scoop to spread over small areas.

For more information, visit www.earthway.com or call 800-294-0671.

Thermosink Livestock Waterer

The Thermosink Livestock Waterer delivers fresh self-circulating water to a herd of farm animals. The waterer comes in a one or two bowl model. One bowl can water a herd of up to 200. The flexible-hose water supply line is designed not to freeze. The product can make watering livestock easier for farmers with back, upper/lower extremity, strength and endurance related limitations.

For more information, visit www.thermosink.com or call 306-662-2449.



Weed Trimmer Shoulder Strap

The weed trimmer shoulder strap was made to make lawn and garden work less tiring. The shoulder strap can be used with weed trimmers, leaf blowers and similar tools. The strap balances the weight of the tool across your upper body, instead of just your shoulder.

For more information, visit www.wildsidecamo.com or call 888-930-5794.



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Website address: www.wvats.cedwvu.org



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Join the WVATS Advisory Council

The West Virginia Assistive Technology System is looking for new members for its Advisory Council. The WVATS Council is made up of people who use assistive technology or parents of children who use assistive technology.

The Council meets three times a year to discuss important issues about assistive technology services in West Virginia. All travel costs are paid for participants. The Council is made up of people from around the state so every area is represented. Right now, we are looking for individuals who live in either the Eastern or Northern Panhandle. If you do not live in these areas, we still welcome you to apply.

For more information on how you can be a member, visit www.wvats.cedwvu.org/board or call WVATS at **800-841-8436**. WVATS staff will answer any questions you have about council meetings, where we meet and how you can contribute. Everyone can help enhance assistive technology services in West Virginia. Join us!

