



PIP SELF HELP GUIDE

**How to fill in your PIP form
step-by-step**

**PIP Check and Send service
Thursday 10:30- 12:00**

We have quick review slots available on Thursdays to look over your form and suggest any minor changes before you send it. Please note, this is not a full form-filling service, but a chance to check your answers together and make any final adjustments.

FIRST – HOW PIP ACTUALLY WORKS (VERY IMPORTANT)

PIP is not about your diagnosis.

It is about how your condition affects your daily life.

You score points based on what you can and cannot do.

Points System

You need 8 points = Standard rate

You need 12 points = Enhanced rate

There are 2 parts:

Daily Living (e.g. washing, dressing, cooking)

Mobility (getting around, going out)

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE: “RELIABLY”

You must explain if you cannot do something reliably, meaning:

- ✗ Not safely
- ✗ Not to a good standard
- ✗ Not often enough
- ✗ Takes too long

👉 If this applies, you should still say you cannot do it

KEY WORDS (THESE SCORE POINTS)

Use these words in your answers:

- Aid = equipment (stick, shower chair, apps, etc.)
- Prompting = reminders, encouragement
- Supervision = someone watching to keep you safe
- Assistance = physical help from someone



HOW TO ANSWER EACH QUESTION

For EVERY activity, follow this structure:

- What condition affects you
- What problems you have
- What help you need
- What happens if you don't get help
- How often it happens
- Give a real example



WRITING TIP (VERY IMPORTANT)

For EVERY answer, use this sentence starter:

☞ “Because of my [condition], I cannot [activity] reliably. I need [type of help].
If I don't get this help, [what happens]. This happens [how often].”

Importance of Motivation and Encouragement

You might feel like you can do things like cooking, washing, taking medication, or going out but in reality, you may struggle to get started or keep going without encouragement.

This is very important for PIP.

If your condition affects your motivation (for example depression, anxiety, PTSD, or low mood), you should explain this. In PIP, needing encouragement or reminders is called “prompting”, and it can count towards your score.

 Ask yourself:

- Do I need someone to remind or encourage me to do this?
- What happens if nobody encourages me?
- How long would I go without doing it?

 Examples you can use:

- “Without prompting, I would go several days without washing.”
- “I do not eat unless someone reminds me.”
- “I stay in bed most of the day and need encouragement to get up.”
- “I avoid going out unless someone pushes me to go.”

 Key point:

Even if you can physically do something, if you don’t do it without encouragement, you should say this.

 This shows you cannot do the activity reliably on your own, which is what PIP looks at.



3. Preparing Food



What this question really means:

Can you prepare and cook a simple meal from fresh ingredients (not just microwave meals)?

This includes:

- Peeling and chopping
- Using a cooker safely
- Standing long enough to cook



You may struggle if you:

- Have pain, fatigue, tremors
- Get distracted or forget things
- Are at risk of burns or injury
- Cannot stand long enough



What help counts:

- Someone physically helping → assistance
- Someone watching you → supervision
- Someone reminding you → prompting
- Equipment (perching stool, adapted knives) → aid



Do you use Aids or need adaptations such as:

- Perching stool
- Adapted cutlery
- Electric can opener
- Microwave (if used because you can't safely use a conventional oven)



How to answer (structure):

- What you try to do
- What goes wrong
- What help you need
- What happens if you don't get help

Examples:

"I cannot chop vegetables due to arthritis. I have dropped knives and cut myself before. My partner prepares food for me."

"I forget I am cooking and have left the hob on. I need supervision for safety."

"I get too tired to stand and have to sit down halfway through cooking. I can only prepare microwave meals."



4. Eating and Drinking



What this means:

Can you:

- Cut food
- Eat safely
- Swallow properly



You may struggle if:

- You have weak grip or tremors
- You choke or have swallowing problems
- You forget to eat



Help includes:

- Cutting food
- Reminding you to eat
- Watching you to prevent choking



Examples:

“I cannot cut food due to hand pain. My carer prepares my meals.”

“I forget to eat due to depression and need prompting.”

“I choke on food and need supervision when eating.”





5. Managing Medication or Treatment



What this means:

Can you:

- Take medication correctly
- Remember doses
- Manage treatments (e.g. physio, insulin)



You may struggle if:

- You forget medication
- You get confused about doses
- You avoid treatment



Help includes:

- Reminders (alarms, carers)
- Supervision
- Help organising medication

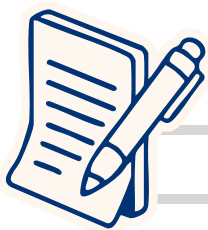


Examples:

“I forget to take medication without reminders from my partner.”

“I get confused about which tablets to take and when.”

“My support worker supervises me because I previously stopped medication and became unwell.”





6. Washing and Bathing



What this means:

Can you:

- Wash your whole body
- Get in/out of bath or shower safely



You may struggle if:

- You have poor balance
- You cannot reach parts of your body
- You feel unsafe



Help includes:

- Physical help
- Supervision
- Equipment (grab rails, shower chair)



Do you use Aids or need adaptations such as:

- Grab rails
- Bath seat / bath board
- Walk-in shower
- Long-handled sponge



Examples:

“I cannot get in the bath without help due to balance problems.”

“I use a shower chair but still need supervision.”

“I cannot wash my lower body due to pain and need assistance.”





7. Toilet Needs



What this means:

Can you:

- Get to the toilet in time
- Clean yourself properly
- Manage continence



You may struggle if:

- You have accidents

You cannot clean yourself

You need help transferring



Help includes:

- Cleaning
- Managing pads
- Physical assistance



Do you use Aids or need adaptations such as:

- Raised toilet seat
- Commode
- Handrails



Examples:

- “I need help cleaning myself due to limited movement.”
- “I have accidents and need help changing clothes.”
- “I need support getting on and off the toilet.”





8. Dressing and Undressing

👉 What this means:

Can you:

- Put clothes on
- Fasten buttons/zips
- Dress appropriately



You may struggle if:

- You have pain or stiffness
- You cannot bend
- You get confused



Help includes:

- Physical help
- Prompting
- Adaptive clothing



Do you use Aids or need adaptations such as:

- Button hook
- Sock aid
- Long-handled shoe horn



Examples:

“I cannot fasten buttons due to arthritis.”

“I need help putting on socks and shoes.”

“I forget to dress appropriately for weather without prompting.”





9. Communicating



What this means:

Can you:

- Speak clearly
- Understand others
- Communicate your needs



You may struggle if:

- You have anxiety, speech issues, hearing loss
- You cannot use the phone



Help includes:

- Someone speaking for you
- Communication aids
- Support understanding others



Examples:

“I struggle to speak when anxious and need support.”

“I cannot use the phone due to panic attacks.”

“I need someone to explain things to me.”





10. Reading and Understanding



What this means:

Can you:

- Read letters
- Understand written information



You may struggle if:

- You have vision problems
- You have learning or cognitive difficulties



Help includes:

- Someone reading for you
- Explaining information



Examples:

“I cannot read small print and need help with letters.”

“I do not understand written instructions without support.”





11. Mixing with People



What this means:

Can you:

- Socialise
- Cope with other people



You may struggle if:

- You have anxiety, PTSD, autism
- You avoid people



Help includes:

- Encouragement
- Support to attend appointments
- Someone with you



Examples:

“I cannot go out alone due to anxiety.”

“I avoid people and isolate myself.”

“I need someone with me to attend appointments.”





12. Making Decisions About Money



What this means:

Can you:

- Budget
- Pay bills
- Understand money



You may struggle if:

- You forget bills
- You overspend
- You don't understand money



Help includes:

- Someone managing finances
- Reminders
- Supervision



Examples:

“My partner manages my bills because I forget to pay them.”

“I cannot budget and spend money impulsively.”

“I do not understand bank statements.”





13. Planning & Following a Journey



This is about your mental ability to go out, not your physical ability to walk

You may score points if:

- You need encouragement or prompting to leave the house
- You feel too anxious, overwhelmed, or unsafe to go out alone
- You need someone with you to go anywhere
- You get confused, lost, or cannot cope with unfamiliar places
- You struggle to understand or follow directions



This also includes reading and understanding:

You should include if you struggle to:

- Read or follow a map
- Understand directions
- Read bus/train timetables
- Plan a route or journey on your own

Even if this is due to literacy difficulties, learning needs, or concentration problems, it still counts



Ask yourself:

- Can I plan a journey on my own?
- Can I follow directions without help?
- What happens if I try to go out alone?
- Do I avoid going out unless someone encourages me?



Examples you can use:

- “I cannot leave home alone due to panic attacks.”
- “I need someone with me to go anywhere unfamiliar.”
- “I cannot go out at all due to overwhelming anxiety.”
- “I cannot follow directions or read maps, so I get lost.”
- “I struggle to read bus timetables and need help planning journeys.”
- “Without encouragement, I would not leave the house.”



Key point:

Even if you can physically travel, if you cannot:

- Plan a journey
- Follow it
- Or go out without support

you should explain this clearly, as it can score points under PIP



14. Moving Around (Walking)

 This is about how far you can walk, not how far you push yourself
Think about:

- How far can you walk before you have to stop?
- Do you feel pain, breathlessness, or fatigue?
- Can you walk safely and repeatedly?

Do you use aids or need adaptations?

- Walking stick
- Crutches
- Walking frame
- Wheelchair or mobility scooter

 You should include:

- What you use
- How often
- Whether you still struggle even with it

Understanding distances (very important)

It can be hard to picture metres, so here are simple examples:

- 20 metres $\approx$ about 2–3 bus lengths
- 50 metres $\approx$ about 5 bus lengths
- 100 metres $\approx$ about the length of a football pitch

If you can't walk more than:

20 metres $\rightarrow$ this is a high level of difficulty

50 metres $\rightarrow$ still significant limitation



Ask yourself:

How far can I walk before I need to stop?

Do I need to rest? How often?

Can I walk that distance again after resting?

Do I feel unsafe or at risk of falling?

 Examples you can use:

“I can only walk about 20 metres (around 2–3 bus lengths) before I have to stop due to pain.”

“I use a walking stick but still need to rest every few minutes.”

“I cannot walk the length of a football pitch without stopping several times.”

“I feel unsteady and at risk of falling, so I need support when walking.”

“Even with a mobility aid, I cannot walk far and get very fatigued.”



Key point:

It is not about the furthest you have ever walked.

It is about what you can do reliably, safely, and repeatedly.

VERY IMPORTANT: SAFETY

You should mention if:

- You fall
- You forget things (e.g. cooker on)
- You self-harm or become unsafe
- You need someone to watch you

Examples:

“I leave the cooker on and forget, which is dangerous.”

“I need supervision due to seizures.”



FINAL TIPS (MOST IMPORTANT PART)



Do:

- Give real-life examples
- Explain your worst days
- Be detailed and honest
- Say if things vary
- State how an Aid or adaption could help even if you do not have one currently.

 Don't:

- Just tick boxes without explaining
- Say “I’m fine” if you struggle sometimes
- Underplay your difficulties



SIMPLE WAY TO THINK ABOUT IT

For every question, ask yourself:

“What would happen if I had no help?” Then write that.

Evidence (Helps a Lot)

 Providing evidence can make your claim stronger. This helps show how your condition affects your daily life.

 Useful evidence can include:

- GP letters
- Hospital reports
- Care plans
- Letters from carers, support workers, friends or family

Support from professionals (very important)

It is helpful to include any support you receive from health or support professionals, especially if it relates to specific difficulties in your form.

For example:

- If you have seen a dietician, include this in the eating section
- If you have a therapist or mental health worker, include this in mixing with people or going out
- If you see a physiotherapist, include this in moving around or washing/dressing
- If you have support with medication, mention who helps you and why

 This shows that your difficulties are recognised and serious enough to need professional support

 Examples you can use:

“I am under a dietician because I struggle to eat regularly.”

“I receive therapy for social anxiety, which affects my ability to mix with others.”

“My GP is aware that I forget to take medication and has advised support.”

Important:

Do not delay sending your form if you are waiting for evidence

You can:

Send the form on time

Send additional evidence later

 Key point:

Even if you do not have much evidence, your own detailed explanation is still very important

But including professional support helps to

- Back up what you are saying
- Show how your condition affects you day-to-day

KEEPING A DIARY (VERY HELPFUL)

Why keeping a diary is important

A diary is useful evidence to help the DWP understand how your condition affects you day to day, including:

- Daily living activities and Mobility and getting around

👉 You are the best person to explain your difficulties.

Writing a diary

Your diary should record:

- What you struggle with
- What help you need
- What happens without help
- How often this happens

If you find it difficult, you can ask:

A partner, relative, or friend

A carer or support worker

👉 If someone helps, explain this in your PIP form.

What your diary should show

Your diary should clearly show where you cannot do activities reliably, meaning:

- Not safely
- Not to a good standard
- Not often enough
- Takes too long

👉 If this applies, you should say you cannot do it.

IMPORTANT: What to include

You may score points if:

- You need aids or equipment
- You need prompting or reminders
- You need help from another person
- Tasks take you a long time
- You can only manage at certain times
- You have good and bad days
- You are unsafe on your own
- You need supervision

👉 If any of these apply, include them in your diary.

What to write about

Your diary should cover:

- Preparing food
- Eating and drinking
- Managing medication
- Washing and bathing
- Dressing
- Communication
- Mixing with others
- Going out and planning journeys
- Moving around

Practical tips

- Keep entries short and simple
- Write over a few days (including bad days)
- Use real-life examples
- Be honest and detailed

SIMPLE WAY TO THINK ABOUT IT

When writing your diary, ask:

👉 “What would happen if I had no help?”

Then write that.

PIP DAILY DIARY

Name:	
Address:	
National Insurance Number:	
Date:	

[illegible]

PIP GLOSSARY (QUICK GUIDE)

These are key terms used in PIP. Understanding them will help you explain your needs clearly.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE: RELIABLY

You must be able to do something:

- ✓ Safely
- ✓ To a good standard
- ✓ Often enough
- ✓ In a reasonable time
- ✗ If not, you should say you cannot do it reliably

TYPES OF HELP

- Aid or Appliance – Equipment that helps you (e.g. stick, shower chair, adapted tools)
- Assistance – Physical help from another person
- Prompting – Reminders or encouragement
- Supervision – Someone watching to keep you safe

KEY WORDS

- Safely – Without risk of harm
- Repeatedly – Able to do it as often as needed
- Reasonable Time – No more than twice as long as usual
- Acceptable Standard – Done properly

DAILY LIVING TERMS

- Prepare Food – Getting food ready (chopping, peeling)
- Cook – Using heat safely
- Take Nutrition – Eating and drinking safely
- Manage Medication – Taking medicine correctly
- Manage Therapy – Following treatments (e.g. physio)
- Monitor Health – Noticing changes and acting
- Wash/Bathe – Includes getting in/out safely
- Toilet Needs – Using the toilet and cleaning yourself
- Manage Incontinence – Managing accidents or using pads
- Dress/Undress – Putting on clothes, socks, shoes

COMMUNICATION & THINKING

- Communicate – Speaking and understanding
- Read – Reading written information
- Engage Socially – Mixing with people appropriately
- Budgeting
 - Simple – Everyday spending
 - Complex – Bills, budgeting, planning



MOBILITY TERMS

- Plan & Follow a Journey – Going out, following routes, coping with unfamiliar places
- Psychological Distress – Anxiety, panic, or mental health difficulties
- Stand & Move – Standing and walking (not wheelchair distance)



OTHER USEFUL TERMS

- Descriptor – How your ability is assessed (scores points)
- Case Manager – DWP decision maker
- Healthcare Professional – Person doing your assessment
- PIP2 Form – “How your disability affects you” (main form)



SIMPLE WAY TO THINK ABOUT PIP

- ☞ It is not about your condition
 - ☞ It is about how your condition affects your daily life
- Always ask: ☞ “What would happen if I had no help?”