A.A SELF HELP GUIDE

How to fill in your Attendance Allowance form step-by-step

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 Attendance Allowance works

VERY IMPORTANT

Attendance Allowance is for people who:

- Anyone of State pension age and over.
- Have a disability or health condition that has lasted 6 months or more
- Need help with personal care or supervision

It is not about your diagnosis

It is about how your condition affects your daily life

The most important rule: “Need for help”

Attendance Allowance is about the help you need, not just what you are currently getting.

You should explain if you:

- Need help but don’t get it
- Struggle without support
- Would be at risk without someone there

> **If you need help, you should say you cannot do it safely on your own**

Rates (no points system like PIP)

You get:

Lower rate	if you need help during the day OR night
Higher rate	if you need help during the day AND night, or you are terminally ill

> **If applying with a terminal illness or you have been given an SR1 form please tell our reception team who can offer you additional assistance.**

Writing tip VERY IMPORTANT

For EVERY answer, use this structure:

> "Because of my **[condition]**, I need help with **[activity]**. I need **[type of help]**. If I don't get this help, **[what happens]**. This happens **[how often]**."

Key types of help IMPORTANT

Use these words in your answers:

Supervision	someone keeping an eye on you for safety
Assistance	physical help from another person
Prompting	reminding or encouraging
Attention	help with personal care

How to answer each question

For every section, explain:

- Your condition
- What difficulty you have
- What help you need
- What happens without help
- How often it happens
- A real example

> **Always think: “What would happen if I had no help?”**

Important: daytime vs night-time needs

You must clearly show if you need help:

During the day

Examples:

- Washing, dressing, eating
- Taking medication
- Staying safe

During the night

Examples:

- Getting up to use the toilet
- Getting in and out of bed: do you need to stop and sit on the edge of the bed, to compose yourself before standing to ensure you do not lose your balance and fall when standing?
- Supervision to prevent falls or confusion
- Help due to pain, breathlessness, or distress

Care needs – how to answer

Washing, bathing and personal care

What this means:

Can you wash your body and stay safe?

You may struggle if you:

- Have balance problems
- Cannot reach parts of your body
- Feel unsafe in the bath or shower

Help includes:

- Physical help
- Supervision
- Help getting in/out
- Adaptations such as grab rails, shower seats or perching stools

Examples

"I need help getting in and out of the bath due to balance problems."

"I need someone nearby in case I fall."

"Without help, I would not wash regularly."

Dressing and undressing

What this means:

Can you dress yourself safely and appropriately?

You may struggle if you:

- Have pain or stiffness
- Cannot manage buttons or zips
- Get confused

Examples

"I need help putting on socks and shoes."

"I struggle with buttons due to arthritis."

"Without help, I would stay in nightwear."

"I need to use a dressing aid/ button hook to support me getting dressed"

Using the toilet

What this means:

Can you manage safely and clean yourself?

You may struggle if:

- You have accidents
- You cannot clean yourself
- You need help getting on/off the toilet
- You use incontinence pads

Examples

"I need help cleaning myself."

"I have accidents and need assistance changing."

"I need someone nearby at night."

"I rely on incontinence pads to manage my condition".

Eating and drinking

What this means:

Can you prepare and eat food safely?

You may struggle if:

- You forget to eat
- You cannot prepare food safely
- You are at risk of choking

Examples

"I forget to eat and need reminders."

"I need help preparing meals safely."

"Someone supervises me while eating."

Managing medication

What this means:

Can you take medication correctly?

You may struggle if:

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

Examples

"I need reminders to take medication."

"Someone organises my tablets."

"Without help, I would miss doses."

"I rely on a pill organiser to ensure I take my medication correctly".

Supervision for safety

> **This is VERY important for Attendance Allowance.**

You may need supervision if you:

- Are at risk of falling
- Leave appliances on
- Become confused or disoriented
- Have memory problems

Examples

"I need someone to supervise me to prevent falls."

"I leave the cooker on and forget."

"I can become confused and may put myself in danger without supervision."

"Without supervision, I may unintentionally create safety risks in my home."

Mobility inside the home

Attendance Allowance does not include mobility like PIP, but it still matters if it affects your care needs.

Explain if:

- You need help moving around indoors
- You need support to transfer (bed/chair)
- You use grab rails, a walking frame or stair lift

Night-time needs VERY IMPORTANT

You may qualify for the higher rate if you need help at night.

This includes:

- Getting up to use the toilet
- Needing supervision for safety
- Disturbed sleep due to condition

Examples

"I need help getting to the toilet several times a night."

"I need someone awake to supervise me due to confusion."

"I am at risk of falling if I get up alone."

"I need help at night to manage incontinence, including changing the bed."

Frequency VERY IMPORTANT

You must explain:

- How often help is needed
- Whether it is every day/night
- If your condition varies

> **Even if it's not constant, it still counts**

Final tips MOST IMPORTANT PART

Do:

- Give real-life examples
- Explain your worst days
- Be honest and detailed
- Say if you need help but don't get it
- Explain risks and safety issues

Don't:

- Just tick boxes without explaining
- Underplay your difficulties
- Say "I'm fine" if you struggle sometimes

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

Evidence, continued

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
- 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 A.A 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.**

Keeping a diary: what to include IMPORTANT

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

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.

A.A daily diary

Date / Time	Activity	What I struggled with	Help Needed	What happened without help

Attendance Allowance glossary QUICK GUIDE

These are key terms used in Attendance Allowance. They will help you explain your care and support needs clearly.

The most important rule: need for help

Attendance Allowance is about:

- The help you need, not just what you get
- What would happen without support

> **If you need help, you should say you cannot manage safely on your own**

Types of help

Aid or Adaptation	Equipment or changes in your home (e.g. grab rails, shower seat, perching stool)
Assistance	Physical help from another person
Prompting	Reminders or encouragement
Supervision	Someone keeping an eye on you to stay safe

Key words

Safely	Without risk of harm to yourself or others
Regularly	Help needed often or repeatedly
Reasonable Time	Not taking much longer than expected
Adequately	Done properly and to a good standard

Glossary, continued

Personal care needs

Washing/Bathing	Including getting in and out safely
Dressing/Undressing	Putting on clothes, socks, shoes
Toilet Needs	Using the toilet and cleaning yourself
Managing Incontinence	Using pads or dealing with accidents
Eating and Drinking	Preparing food or eating safely
Managing Medication	Taking medication correctly
Managing Health	Monitoring your condition and responding to changes

Supervision & safety

You may need supervision if you:

- Are at risk of falls
- Forget things (e.g. cooker left on)
- Become confused or disoriented
- Cannot stay safe on your own

> **Supervision can count even if no physical help is given**

Glossary, continued

Day and night needs

Daytime Needs	Help with personal care or supervision during the day
Night-time Needs	Help during the night (e.g. toileting, safety checks, disturbed sleep)

> **Needing help at both day and night may mean a higher rate**

Other useful terms

Award	The rate of benefit you are given
Care Needs	The help you require with daily living
Supervision Needs	Support to keep you safe
DWP Decision Maker	Person who decides your claim

Simple way to think about it

Attendance Allowance is not about your condition

It is about what help you need every day and night

Always ask:

“What would happen if I had no help?”