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It is common for people on the autism spectrum to have hyper- and/or hypo-sensitivities to one or more senses

Quick tips for employers

Sensory issues and their severity are specific to each individual.
Prevention is key. Get to know your employee/colleague and discuss a plan to avoid and respond to sensory overload.

Movement

Having a standard working location where movement (e.g., of others or machinery) is out of sight or minimal can assist.

Smell

Ask about odour sensitivities. Moving the work space away from kitchens/bins, and asking others not to wear strong perfumes/body sprays can help.

Light

Check lighting is not too bright or loud (e.g., fluorescent lights may hum). Remove, dim, and/or change light bulbs to warm light.

Noise

Give warning about potential loud noises where possible (e.g., a fire drill, building maintenance).

Noise

Noise-cancelling headphones can help block external noises.

Light

Tinted glasses or sunglasses can help reduce brightness levels.

Focus

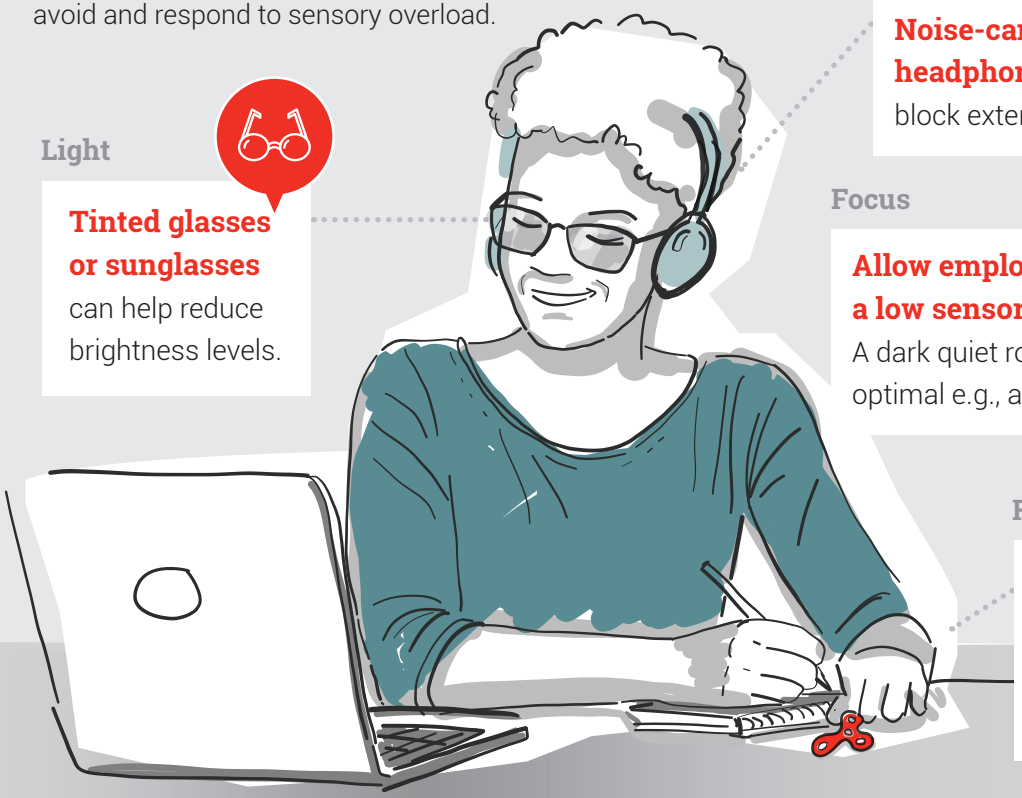
Allow employees to retreat to a low sensory area for breaks. A dark quiet room with comfortable seating is optimal e.g., a bean bag or comfortable chair.

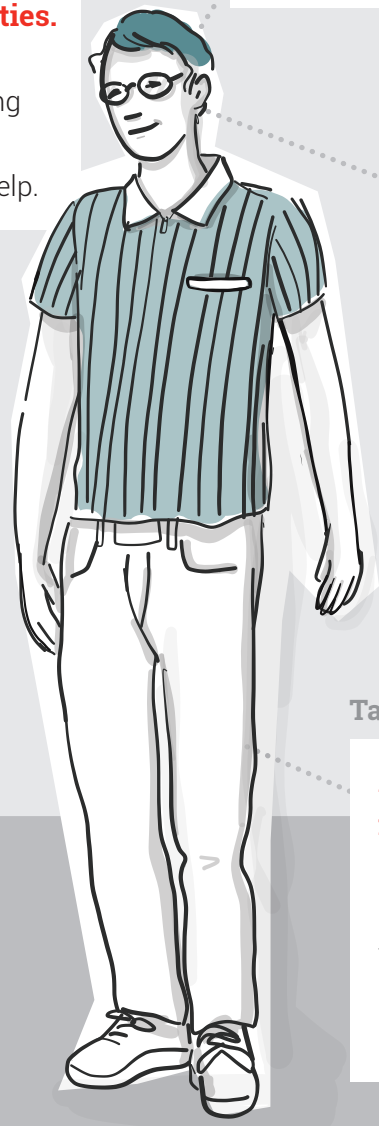
Focus

Sensory stimulating objects, such as fidget toys, provide sensory input that can help the person focus.

Tactile

Allow uniform modifications such as different fabrics or additional lining, as texture of material, fit of clothing, and tags/labels may cause discomfort.





PEAS Partnership for Employment outcomes for Autistic people in Society

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Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre

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