

Assistive Technologies: Good for Everyone!

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BEFORE YOU READ:

1. What do you think *assistive technology* is? (Think about the verb *to assist* and the nouns, *assistance* and *assistant*. Try using them in sentences.)
2. Can you give an example of *assistive technology* in your life?

They Make Everyone’s Life Easier

Assistive technology is any tool that supports people with disabilities. It could be anything from a wheelchair to a piece of software or an app that takes verbal commands. *Assistive technologies* not only help people with disabilities. They make everyone’s life easier.

Smart Homes

For example, there are “smart home” applications that allow us to control lighting and other electrical appliances in our homes. This could help someone with a disability who could not reach

light switches. And it could be helpful for anyone.

We can also regulate our home security systems. My apartment building has a system for

unlocking doors from the phone, so I don’t need to carry my keys with me. This helps a lot when you run out to walk the dog and forget your keys. And this would be helpful to someone with a disability who could not use keys.

There is a saying that we are all just temporarily able-bodied.



Digital Wallets

Our phones can also be “digital wallets.” If you have a disability, and it is hard for you to pull a credit card out of your wallet, you can just use your phone instead. You can control your finances and pay for everything with the touch of a finger. I don’t have a disability, but I use this *assistive technology*. I don’t need to carry a wallet with cash and cards. I always pay for everything with my digital card from my digital wallet.

Translators

Another app that can help you in life is a translator. Not being able to speak a language is not a disability, but it is a disadvantage! And this technology can help you. Modern translators can translate text and speech. If you are visiting another country, and you do not know the language, then translators are a huge help. You

carry the device with you, and it will translate for you in any situation. (However, if you are going to live in a country where they speak a different language, I encourage you not to use this technology. Instead, you should try to learn the language.)

Be Technologically Literate – It Can Help You!

Some people may be afraid to use modern *assistive technology* because they think that their personal information can be stolen. They worry that if they lose their device all their information will be lost. However, I trust reputable companies such as Google or Apple. If someone steals my phone, they just steal the device. They can't get access to my information because the phones have good security systems, such as Face ID or two factor authentication. You can always restore your information on a new device using your ID.

Not everyone wants to learn how to use *assistive technologies*. But there is a saying that we are all just temporarily able-bodied. All of us will probably have some disability at some point. *Assistive technologies* will be helpful to us then. And they are helpful to us now, too. Being technologically literate can help us be safe and active in the world. Technology can assist us! It can improve our quality of life.

AFTER YOU READ:

1. What is the author's main point? Point to evidence from the text to back up your claim.
2. How well does she make her argument? Are you convinced? If there are ways she could make her argument stronger, say what they are.
3. Think about the terms *disabled* and *able-bodied*. What does the author mean when she says, "We are all temporarily able-bodied"?



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