

Building Skills for Independence & the Future

A Caregiver Guide to Prevocational Skills



What are prevocational skills?

Prevocational skills are foundational skills that help children participate successfully in daily activities, school, community experiences, and future work or volunteer roles.

Skills to Practice at Home



Responsibility

Learning to take care of tasks and belongings.

- Putting toys and belongings away
- Helping with simple chores
- Taking care of school supplies
- Completing daily routines with less help



Communication

Learning to communicate needs and ask for help.

- Practicing greetings
- Asking for help when needed
- Asking someone to repeat directions
- Telling you what they need



Following Directions

Learning to listen, understand steps, and finish a task.

- Complete one task before starting another
- Follow two- and three-step directions
- Use visual checklists and picture cues
- Check work when finished



Planning & Time Management

Learning to plan and use time wisely.

- Using a visual schedule
- Using a timer
- Making a simple checklist
- Getting ready on time
- Discussing how long tasks take



Organization

Learning to keep materials and spaces in order.

- Packing/unpacking a backpack
- Organizing school supplies
- Gathering items before getting started
- Cleaning up after finishing



Social Skills

Learning to work and communicate with others.

- Taking turns
- Sharing responsibilities
- Working together on tasks
- Accepting feedback
- Solving disagreements



Skills to Practice at Home (continued)

Daily Living Skills

Learning skills that support everyday independence.

- Preparing a simple snack
- Sorting laundry
- Putting groceries away
- Practicing money skills
- Keyboarding or writing

Self-Regulation

Learning what helps them stay calm and focused.

- Finding what helps stay calm
- Practicing coping strategies
- Taking breaks when needed
- Using routines to stay engaged

Everyday Activities = Skill-Building Opportunities!

You don't need extra activities or expensive materials. Use the things your family already does every day.

Grocery Shopping

Make a list → Find items → Practice waiting → Put groceries away

Cooking

Gather supplies → Follow the steps → Use a timer → Clean up

Laundry

Sort clothes → Help with washing → Fold clothes → Put them away

Cleaning

Gather supplies → Follow a checklist → Finish the task → Put supplies away

Getting Ready for School

Check the schedule → Gather materials → Pack the backpack → Get ready on time

Household Chores

Choose a task → Gather supplies → Complete the task → Clean up

Help Your Child Become More Independent

When your child learns a new skill, try to slowly reduce the amount of help you give.

Think:

Do it for them → Do it together → Give reminders → Let them try

Your child may need help at first. That's okay! With practice, they can learn to do more on their own.