



Products to make getting dressed easier



Being able to get dressed on your own is a common goal for most older people.

- Sore shoulders could make pulling on tops and jumpers harder than it used to be.
- Arthritis can make it a challenge to do fiddly tasks like doing up buttons and zips.
- Difficulty bending forward to reach your feet could make it harder to put on shoes or tie shoelaces.

Common aids to assist with dressing

There are so many ways to make dressing easier! Some people change their clothing, like wearing pull-on trousers instead of zipped ones. Another trick is to wear clothing that doesn't have buttons.

Others use clever 'hacks' to make dressing easier. This is because there's a huge range of easy-to-use assistive products available at well-known retailers.



Dressing stick

A dressing stick is useful if you have difficulty bending and reaching.



- Dressing sticks can help you to reach, pull or push clothing that's out of your reach. For example, pulling up trousers, or pushing clothing over your shoulders.
- A dressing stick is a lightweight stick with a hook at one end. It has a rubber thimble or two-prong hook at the other end.

Long-handed shoehorn

A long-handed shoehorn is a helpful product if you have difficulty bending forward or reaching your feet.



- The extra length of the shoehorn means that you don't have to bend to reach your feet or shoes.
- The shape of the shoehorn protects the back of your shoes while you slip your feet in.

Reacher or pick-up stick

A reacher is useful if you can't bend or reach far enough for something.



- A reacher extends the length of your arm. It allows you to pick up items that would otherwise be out of reach.
- The grab-and-release action works by squeezing or letting go of the handle.

Button hook and zip puller

A button hook and zip puller is useful if you have limited dexterity. Fastening and unfastening buttons is a common dressing difficulty because buttons are small. You need to use two hands for buttoning.



- A button hook and zip puller has a long narrow loop of wire which slides through the buttonholes in your shirt.
- You then slide the wire loop over each button to pull it back through its buttonhole.
- At the other end of the aid, a small hook is used to catch the zipper and pull it up or down.

Sock and stocking aid

Being able to put on socks or stockings yourself is another common goal. A sock aid is a lightweight aid used to pull socks or stockings onto your foot.



- A sock and stocking aid usually has side notches to hold the sock in place.
- The sock fits onto the foot sleeve and is pulled into position using long rope handles.
- Double-sided sock aids are also available to assist with putting on tights and pantyhose.

Putting on and taking off pressure stockings

If your doctor has advised you to wear pressure stockings then it's important to follow those instructions.

Most people struggle to put on and take off pressure stockings because they are very tight. An ordinary sock or stocking aid is not strong enough to hold a pressure stocking open.

There are a few products that are strong enough to help with putting on and taking off pressure stockings.



1. **Compression Hosiery Applicator** for putting on pressure stockings.



2. **Compression Stocking and Sock Aid Kit** for putting on pressure stockings.



3. **Medi Butler Off** for taking off pressure stockings yourself.

General advice for getting dressed yourself

- Get dressed and undressed in a warm room.
- Have everything you need organised and within easy reach.
- Sit to dress and undress yourself if you feel off balance.
- Take your time to get dressed.
- Avoid wearing tight fitting clothing and too many layers.
- Choose clothing made from natural fibres like wool.
- Stretchy fabrics are easier to put on than woven fabrics.

An occupational therapist can help

You may benefit from seeing an occupational therapist for some professional advice. An occupational therapist can:

- Help you with dressing techniques to keep you as independent as possible.
- Find the right assistive products and show you how to use them.

Find an OT in your local area with the search tool on the [Occupational Therapy Australia](https://www.occupationaltherapyaustralia.org.au) website.

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