Alphabet Charts
Frequency Scan Pack

This pack includes six alphabet chart options. They are all designed to support face-to-face communication for someone who can spell but finds it difficult to point to letters. More charts, including charts with symbols, can be found at acecentre.org.uk/resources.
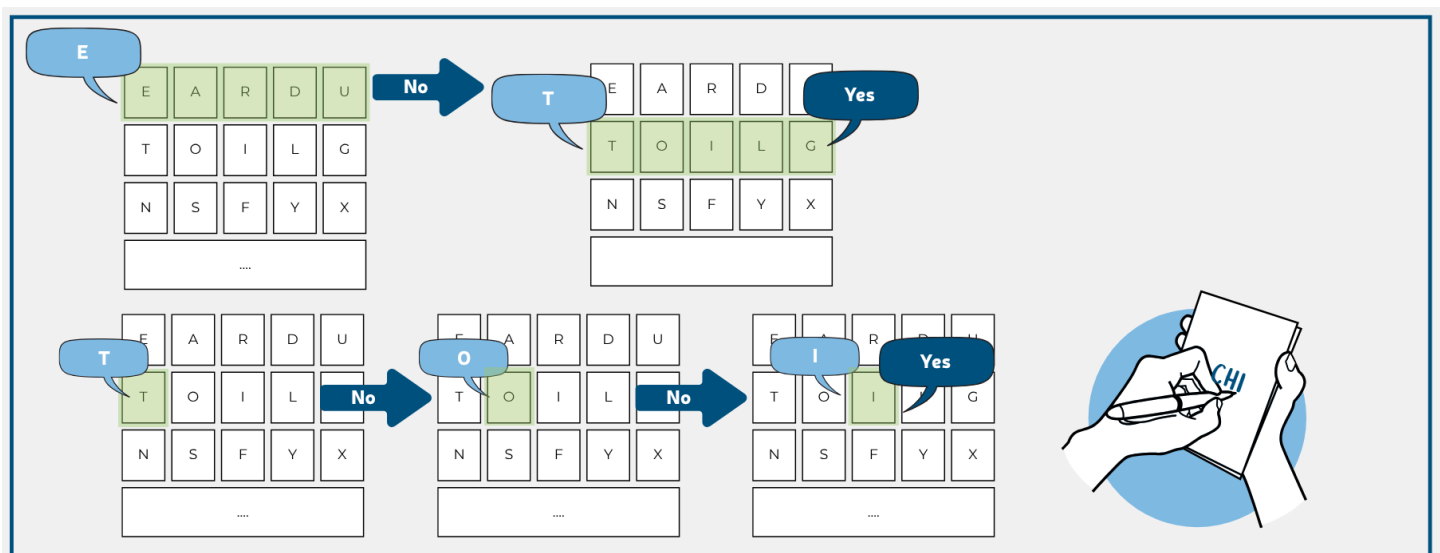
About the charts

The letters on these charts are arranged by their frequency of use in English words. This means that letters like *E* and *T* can be selected more quickly than letters like *Q* and *Z*.

The communication partner scans through the options on the chart. When the target is offered, the person communicating with the chart signals "yes". This is known as listener mediated scanning or partner assisted scanning.

Using the charts

- Make sure you know how the person will signal "yes" and ideally "no"".
- Hold the chart so it's easy to see for both people.
- Read aloud and or / point to the first item in each row.
- When the person indicates "yes", offer each letter, command or message along the selected row until they indicate "yes".
- Speak aloud the letter, command or message they have selected and then restart the process.
- If you speak aloud something that is incorrect, they can indicate "no" or select 'Delete letter' or 'Start again' on the chart.
- To help you follow the conversation, record each letter as it's selected. You could use pen and paper or the notes app on your phone.
- If the person is happy for you to predict their word or phrase, check that you have guessed correctly before moving on. If you are using the notes app on your phone to keep track, the phone's prediction may help with your guesses.
- Some people like to see their message as it's written down to help them keep track, so make sure it's visible to them if they prefer that.
- Before putting the chart down, always check if the person has more to say.

Alternative layouts

Alphabet charts for scanning with letters arranged in alphabetical order and charts made with high contrast colours are available from acecentre.org.uk/alphabet-charts.

Size

The charts will print at A4 size by default. Some may prefer a smaller, more discreet chart; others might benefit from A3. Try changing the settings on your PDF or printer to print to different scales or sizes.

Practicalities

Consider printing the chart on card. Alternatively, laminating the chart will help to protect it. Matte laminator pouches tend to work better as glossy ones can reflect overhead lighting.

Instructions are printed along the bottom of the charts. If these need to be personalised or changed (e.g. adding in how "yes" and "no" are communicated), you may find it easier to amend the Word version of the charts. Instructions could also be put on the back of the chart.

Videos showing similar charts being demonstrated and used are available to view on Ace Centre's YouTube channel.

Follow this QR code
or go to bit.ly/LMSAlpha

Guessing

A communication partner may be able to guess what is being communicated after just a few letters are selected. This can speed up communication. However, the communication partner should not assume it is acceptable to guess - always check.

Phrases

The charts contain space for some personalised phrases that can be delivered quickly. If more are required, consider developing an alphabet-based communication book. Templates are available from acecentre.org.uk/alphabet-charts.

Additional steps

This chart is likely to be one part of a communication system. Additional steps might include developing an alphabet-based communication book and / or exploring an electronic communication aid. See Ace Centre's website for more information acecentre.org.uk or call our free advice line 0800 080 3115 option 2.

We offer two free eBooks on supporting access to alphabet charts

Designing and using alphabet charts

Paper-based resources to support communication for adults with progressive conditions

Follow the QR code or go to acecentre.org.uk/ebooks