# You've got a ProSlate™, congratulations!



## Where to start.

### The type of communication system

- Users who are not yet literate require a **symbol-based communication system** that provides access to **core vocabulary**, the words that make up approximately 80% of what we say every day. Many symbol-based communication systems are set up to allow the AAC user to quickly access this vocabulary while allowing the user to be able to navigate to other pages with personalized, fringe vocabulary.

- Users who are literate may prefer a keyboard, **text-based communication system** to quickly type out words that are then voiced.

### Why you should trial

- Trialing different communication systems allows the AAC user to **learn to navigate** through the system. Each user learns differently – it's important to find one that the user can easily navigate and learn it's organizational system to communicate. However, this takes **time and patience**! Success doesn't mean 100% proficient after a few attempts.

- Just as we learn a new language or a new skill, it takes lots of **modeling** by the AAC user's communication partners and it takes many attempts and opportunities for the AAC user.

- Additionally, it's important to know how the communication system will grow with the user from a language development standpoint. How does the system grow as the user's language grows? As their language evolves from simple to more complex, does the system grow with the user or do they have to learn a new way to navigate?

- What is the purpose of a trial? **The purpose of a trial** is to determine which is the best fit for an AAC user, not to become 100% efficient in that communication system. It's a time to **compare and contrast** features of different systems to find the right fit for a user, not to become a competent communicator in just a few weeks. That is for after the system is chosen!

### Motor needs

- Some communication systems are based on **motor learning principles** allowing the user to learn a word through consistent motor plans. Some AAC users benefit from this! It may allow them to learn where new words are through consistent motor plans more quickly than in other systems. Some users don't benefit from this! That's why we trial different systems.

- Some communication systems offer vocabulary sets that are specific to **alternate access methods** such as switch scanning.

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## Customization opportunities

• Personalizing AAC for each user is crucial for them to express a variety of communicative functions, across environments, with various communication partners.

• Many communication systems offer ways to **customize and personalize** buttons and pages to meet the user's needs. Depending on the user's needs, it may be important to find the system where things such as color, size, image, or voice can be edited.

• Often, the SLP, parent, or spouse is who is editing the system for the user. How does the AAC user's **support team** navigate the communication system for editing (deleting or modifying) and customizing to meet the needs of the AAC user?

## Patience is key

• Just like learning a second language, AAC doesn't happen overnight. It's important that those supporting the AAC user remember that! **Model model model** how to use the device to communicate which allows the AAC user time to learn.

**Check out our AAC App Feature Comparison spreadsheet on our Member Resources page at forbesaac.com!**

• We also have several cheat sheets for popular AAC apps on our Member Resources page.

• It's easy to become a member! Go to forbesaac.com, locate the support tab in the top right, then select Member Resources. There you can create an account to access our resources.

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