

# 10 Essential Life Skills Checklist for Autistic Young Adults

A Practical Assessment and Planning Tool

## About This Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you assess your young adult's current life skills and identify areas for growth. Use it as a baseline assessment and revisit it regularly to track progress over time.

**How to Use: -**

**Mastered (Check Box):** Can do independently without prompting

**In Progress (Circle Box):** Can do with reminders or partial support

**Not Yet Started (Leave Blank):** Has not yet learned or attempted this skill

**Assessment Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Young Adult's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed By:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Skill 1: Personal Hygiene and Self-Care Routines

### Daily Hygiene Routine

- Showers or bathes independently (including washing hair)
- Brushes teeth twice daily without reminders
- Uses deodorant daily
- Washes face morning and evening
- Maintains clean, trimmed fingernails

### Grooming

- Combs or styles hair appropriately
- Shaves (if applicable) safely and regularly
- Recognizes when clothing is dirty and needs changing
- Dresses appropriately for weather and occasion

### Menstrual Care (if applicable)

- Manages menstrual hygiene independently
- Tracks cycle and anticipates needs
- Disposes of products appropriately

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 12

## Skill 2: Meal Planning and Cooking

### Basic Cooking Skills

- Operates microwave safely

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- Uses toaster and toaster oven
- Boils water and cooks pasta
- Scrambles eggs or makes simple breakfast
- Uses stove and oven safely with proper temperature control
- Follows a simple recipe with 5-7 steps
- Uses kitchen timer to prevent burning

### Meal Planning

- Plans 3-5 simple meals for the week
- Creates a grocery list based on meal plan
- Understands basic nutrition (protein, vegetables, carbs)
- Recognizes when food has spoiled
- Stores leftovers safely

### Kitchen Safety and Cleanup

- Washes hands before cooking
- Uses knives safely
- Cleans up spills immediately
- Washes dishes or loads dishwasher
- Wipes down counters and stove after cooking

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 17

## Skill 3: Household Cleaning and Maintenance

### Daily Maintenance

- Makes bed every morning
- Puts away personal belongings
- Wipes down bathroom sink after use
- Takes out trash when full
- Sweeps or vacuums floors weekly

### Deep Cleaning

- Cleans toilet and bathroom thoroughly
- Mops floors
- Dusts surfaces
- Cleans kitchen appliances (microwave, stovetop, refrigerator)
- Changes bed linens weekly

### Organization

- Maintains an organized bedroom/living space
- Knows where important items are kept
- Declutters regularly
- Uses storage systems effectively

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 14

## Skill 4: Money Management and Budgeting

### Basic Money Skills

- Identifies coins and bills
- Counts money accurately
- Makes purchases with cash and receives correct change
- Uses a debit card for purchases
- Checks account balance regularly
- Understands the difference between debit and credit

### Budgeting

- Tracks income and expenses
- Creates a simple monthly budget
- Divides money into categories (needs, wants, savings)
- Sticks to budget and adjusts when needed
- Saves for specific goals

### Banking

- Has checking and savings accounts
- Makes deposits (in person or via app)
- Uses ATM safely
- Pays bills on time (online or by mail)
- Reviews bank statements for errors

## Financial Safety

- Recognizes common scams (phone, email, text)
- Protects personal information (SSN, passwords)
- Knows when to ask for help with financial decisions

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 18

## Skill 5: Using Public Transportation

### Route Planning

- Reads bus or train schedules
- Uses transit apps to plan routes
- Identifies correct bus/train number and direction
- Knows how to transfer between routes
- Plans for travel time and arrives on time

### Navigation

- Recognizes key landmarks and stops
- Knows when to get off
- Asks for help when confused
- Uses GPS or maps on phone for walking directions

## Safety and Social Skills

- Waits in safe, well-lit areas
- Maintains personal space and appropriate behavior
- Keeps belongings secure
- Knows what to do if they miss their stop or get lost
- Has emergency contact information accessible

## Payment

- Purchases transit passes or tickets
- Uses transit card or app for payment
- Understands fare zones and pricing

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 16

## Skill 6: Healthcare Self-Advocacy

### Appointments and Scheduling

- Calls to schedule doctor/dentist appointments
- Arrives on time for appointments
- Completes intake forms independently
- Brings insurance card and ID

## Communication with Providers

- Describes symptoms clearly
- Asks questions about diagnosis and treatment
- Advocates for accommodations when needed
- Follows up on test results

## Medication Management

- Takes medications as prescribed without reminders
- Knows medication names, dosages, and purposes
- Refills prescriptions before running out
- Recognizes and reports side effects

## Health Maintenance

- Understands basic health needs (sleep, nutrition, exercise)
- Recognizes when to seek medical care
- Maintains health records
- Understands insurance coverage and co-pays

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 16

## Skill 7: Time Management and Scheduling

### Daily Routines

- Wakes up on time without multiple reminders
- Follows a morning routine independently
- Arrives on time for work, appointments, or activities
- Manages evening routine and bedtime

## Planning and Organization

- Uses a calendar or planner (paper or digital)
- Plans ahead for upcoming events
- Breaks large tasks into smaller steps
- Prioritizes tasks by importance and deadline
- Estimates how long tasks will take

## Time Awareness

- Reads analog and digital clocks
- Understands concepts like "in 15 minutes" or "by 3:00 PM"
- Uses timers and alarms effectively
- Recognizes when they are running late and adjusts

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 13

## Skill 8: Grocery Shopping and Meal Prep

### Shopping Skills

- Creates a grocery list based on meal plan
- Navigates grocery store layout
- Compares prices and makes cost-effective

choices

- Reads labels for ingredients and nutrition
- Checks expiration dates
- Uses self-checkout or interacts appropriately with cashier

## Budgeting

- Estimates total cost before checkout
- Stays within grocery budget
- Uses coupons or store apps for savings
- Pays with debit card or cash

## Food Safety

- Refrigerates perishables promptly
- Stores food properly
- Recognizes when food has spoiled
- Understands "use by" and "best by" dates

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 14

## Skill 9: Laundry and Clothing Care

### Laundry Process

- Sorts clothes by color and fabric type
- Measures and adds detergent correctly
- Operates washer and dryer
- Selects appropriate settings for different fabrics
- Transfers clothes promptly to prevent mildew
- Folds or hangs clothes neatly

- Puts clothes away in proper places

## Clothing Care

- Recognizes when clothes need washing
- Treats stains promptly
- Hand-washes delicate items if needed
- Irons or steams wrinkled clothing
- Makes minor repairs (sewing on buttons, fixing hems)

## Wardrobe Management

- Chooses weather-appropriate clothing
- Dresses appropriately for different occasions
- Recognizes when clothes are worn out and need replacing
- Shops for clothing within budget

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 16

# Skill 10: Emergency Preparedness and Safety Awareness

## Emergency Response

- Knows when and how to call 911
- Can clearly state their name, address, and emergency
- Knows emergency contacts and how to reach them
- Understands basic first aid (cuts, burns, choking)
- Knows how to use a fire extinguisher
- Knows evacuation routes from home and workplace

## Personal Safety

- Recognizes unsafe situations and removes themselves
- Understands stranger danger and appropriate boundaries
- Locks doors and windows
- Doesn't share personal information with strangers
- Knows how to report feeling unsafe

## Home Safety

- Knows how to turn off utilities in emergency
- Checks smoke detector batteries
- Recognizes gas leaks and knows what to do
- Stores hazardous materials safely
- Knows what to do if locked out

## Community Safety

- Crosses streets safely
- Stays aware of surroundings
- Travels in well-lit, populated areas
- Knows safe places to go if feeling threatened
- Carries ID and emergency contact information

**Skills Mastered in This Category:** \_\_\_\_ / 20

## Overall Summary

Skill Category	Skills Mastered	Total Skills	Percentage
1. Personal Hygiene & Self-Care	___	12	___%
2. Meal Planning & Cooking	___	17	___%
3. Household Cleaning	___	14	___%
4. Money Management	___	18	___%
5. Public Transportation	___	16	___%
6. Healthcare Self-Advocacy	___	16	___%
7. Time Management	___	13	___%
8. Grocery Shopping	___	14	___%
9. Laundry & Clothing Care	___	16	___%
10. Emergency Preparedness	___	20	___%
<b>TOTAL</b>	___	<b>156</b>	<b>___%</b>

## Action Planning

Based on your assessment, identify your top 3 priority skill areas to focus on:

**Priority 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why this matters:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target completion date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Priority 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why this matters:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target completion date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Priority 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Why this matters:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Target completion date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Next Steps

**Schedule your next assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Resources needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Support needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Professional programs to explore:** -  Meristem Self-Leadership Program -  Life skills coaching -  Occupational therapy -  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## About Meristem

Meristem specializes in helping autistic young adults build the life skills needed for independence through experiential, nature-based learning. Our holistic programs integrate all ten of these essential skills into daily life on our 13-acre campus.

**75% of our graduates are employed or enrolled in higher education within one year.**

**Learn more:** [meristem.pro](https://meristem.pro)

**Contact us:** [info@meristem.pro](mailto:info@meristem.pro)

This checklist is adapted from "10 Essential Life Skills Every Autistic Young Adult Should Master" available at [meristem.pro](https://meristem.pro)

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