

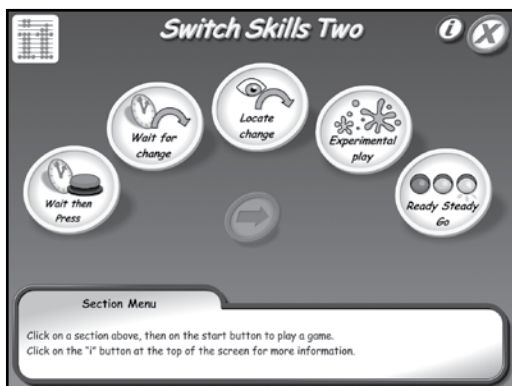
Switch Skills

2



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Introduction



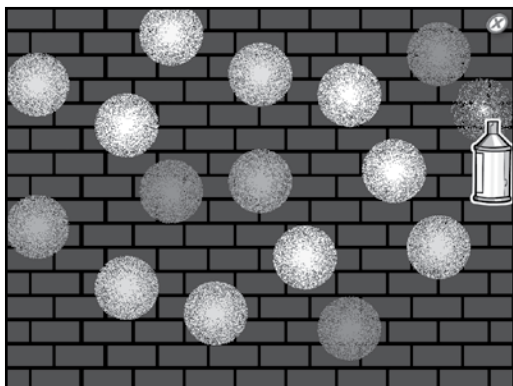
Switch Skills 2 has 20 very simple activities for use with a single switch. They are designed for a broad range of students with learning difficulties who are learning to operate a switch at the right time. It is ideal for those who have already gained an understanding of cause and effect, and are ready for a new challenge. These activities are also excellent for promoting attention and concentration in those with severe learning difficulties.

The 20 activities are split into 5 sections according to the skills they develop. There is some overlap between sections and you will find that many learners will not follow the inferred sequence.

In the easiest activities, the opening screen is blank and the learner must wait for something to appear (e.g. a large bright shape), then press a switch or touch the screen to get an animated reward. In the higher level activities more problem solving and visual discrimination skills are required, although most can still be played successfully by those with severe visual impairment.

Important: each activity has options to adapt it to individual needs or allow you to develop each learner's skills in small steps.

Four activities provide opportunities for creative and experimental play by early switch users . For example , the Spray Can zigzags over a brick wall and sprays paint whenever the learner presses their switch.



Topics range widely and should appeal to a wide range of ages. Exciting music is used extensively to promote interest.

Connecting switches

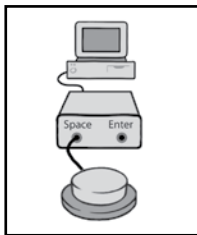


Switches come in all shapes and sizes. One popular type is the Jelly Bean switch. This is a simple round plastic button that can be pushed down. It springs up again when you take your hand off. This means it is a 'non-latching' or 'momentary' switch, like a doorbell. Most switches available for special needs use are of this type.



To use a switch with **Switch Skills 2**, you will need to attach it to the computer using an interface box. There are a number of interface boxes available. The **Inclusive Simple Switch Box** is inexpensive and easy to use.

Just plug your switch into the interface box, then plug that into one of computer's rectangular USB sockets.



After installing the program, you will find pictures you can print out and stick on your switches in the 'Inclusive Resources' folder on your computer or on the CD. They can also be printed out and made into flash cards for choice making, or used with communication aids.

For further information about using switches,
see www.inclusive.co.uk/infosite

Installation

Please note: an active internet connection is required

To install **Switch Skills 2**, simply run the following file:

switch_skills_2.exe

The installer will prompt you to enter your name, email address and activation key (sent to you at the time of purchase). All fields are required.

The image shows a dark-themed installer window titled "Accessible Software" by Inclusive Technology Ltd. It features a logo with a grid of dots and arrows. The window prompts the user to enter their customer information, including a User Name, Email, and Activation key. There are "Back" and "Install" buttons at the bottom. The text "Please enter your customer information below. Hyphens will automatically be added to your activation key." is displayed above the input fields.

Inclusive Technology Ltd
Accessible Software

Please enter your customer information below.
Hyphens will automatically be added to your
activation key.

User Name:

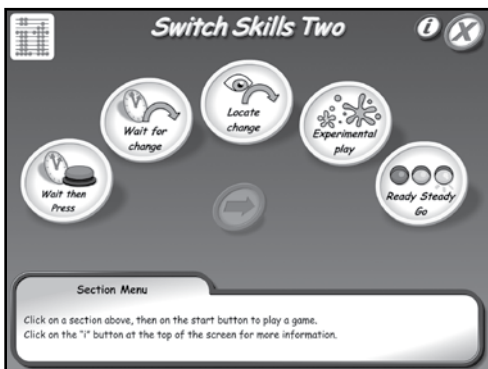
Email:

Activation key:

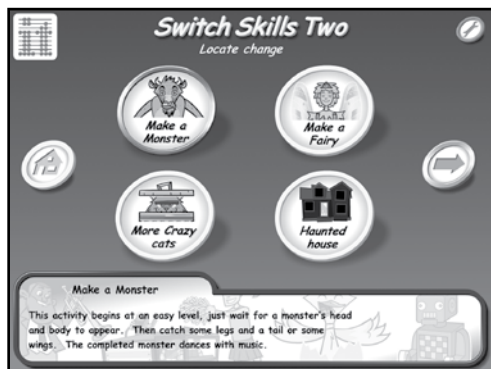
When the activation key has been successfully validated, the installation will begin.

Running Switch Skills 2

If a **Switch Skills 2** icon is visible on the desktop, you can double-click to launch directly into the program. If there isn't a desktop shortcut, you can find the software in the **Programs** list of your **Start menu / screen**.



On starting, the title screen shows five groups of activities you can choose from. Click on a group button, then on the green arrow button to see the activities in it.



You can now click on an activity and read more about it at the bottom of the screen. Click the green arrow to play that activity.



Click on the **information** button for information about the program.



The **home** button will take you back to the title screen with the activity groups.

Stopping Switch Skills 2

Whilst playing an activity, press the **Esc** key on the computer's keyboard or click the **X** button at the top of the screen. This will take you to the activity choice screen where you were before.



You can now choose another activity or click the **home** button to go back to the title page with the five groups.



To exit the program completely, click on the **home** button, then the **exit** button on the title screen.

Switch Skills 2 Options



Click the **options** buttons to see the options for these activities.

These options are **very important** for your learners. They enable you to adjust the activities so they are just at the right level, depending on a learner's ability to:

- Physically operate a switch.
- Use a switch appropriately (e.g. not randomly press it).
- Respond to visual cues.
- Respond to auditory cues.
- Maintain attention on a task.

Wait then press

Cue sounds

Penalty

Reveal time

Position

The cue sound is the sound that plays to signal that you should press your switch. Choose a cue sound:

- ☒ Ping
- ☐ Boing
- ☐ Pop
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Raspberry
- ☐ None

Some learners may have an involuntary response to a loud cue sound. Alternatively you may want to see if a learner can respond to a visual-only cue.

Go Back

The different groups of activities have slightly different options. To see the different options, click on the 'tabs' on the left side ('Penalty', 'Reveal time', etc.). You can then click on the buttons to change how the activities behave.

When you have finished, click on the **Go Back** button to return to where you were before.

Common options

Cue sounds: in most activities, you wait for something to happen as a cue to press your switch. This option allows you to choose different sounds (ping, pop, boing, etc.). Some learners may over-react to a loud sound, whilst others may not hear a quiet sound. You can also turn the cue sound off if you want to see if a learner will react to a visual-only cue.

Penalty: the penalty system is designed to discourage inattentive switch bashing. If the switch is pressed at the wrong time, a yellow border appears on the screen with a buzz, and the activity stops for 3 seconds. This may be unsuitable for some learners, so you can turn it off.

Reveal time: in the majority of activities, an object appears for a number of seconds and the switch should be pressed before it disappears again, to get a reward. This option controls the number of seconds.

Importantly, you can use this option to **turn off the timing:** once an object appears, it stays there and just waits for the switch to be pressed. This feature can be used as a training option, to teach learners how to play the activity. You can then introduce the timing element and steadily reduce the reveal time as the learner's reaction skill improves.

'Wait Then Press' activities

In these 6 activities, the opening screen is blank and the learner must simply wait for something to appear (e.g. a large bright shape), then press a switch or touch the screen to get an animated reward. Use the **Reveal time** option to control how long the object remains on the screen.

You can also use the **Position** option for training or assessing early visual perception. With the Position option set to **At random positions**, the objects will appear smaller than normal and in different places on the screen.

Use for choice making: in all of these activities, different characters and objects will appear if you don't press this switch. The object that is on the screen when the switch is pressed is the one that will perform. More advanced learners can therefore wait for their favourite to appear before pressing the switch.

Basketball Players and Cheerleaders

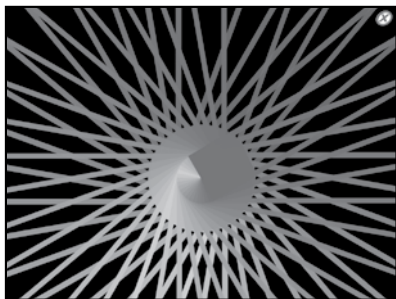


This activity features animated characters with moving stars and catchy music.

This may appeal to *High School Musical* fans!

Remember to use language that gives meaning to the operation of the switch, such as "Make him play" or "Make her dance", rather than saying "Press the switch".

Noisy Shapes



The abstract shapes in this activity may be more suitable for some learners, with animations that radiate across the screen. Again, it features motivating music.

Big Trucks



This subject is a great hit with some learners.

Musicians



More music and animation, with plenty to talk about. Early learners can watch the movement and enjoy the music.

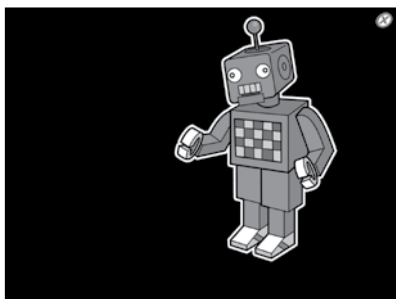
More advanced learners may enjoy remembering the musicians and talking about their characteristics.

Mystery Egg



Press the switch when an egg appears to make it hatch. Who will come out?

Make it Work



A variety of animated objects to talk about. Remember to tell the user to “Turn the disco ball on”, or “Make the robot dance!” rather than just saying “Press the switch”.

'Wait for Change' activities

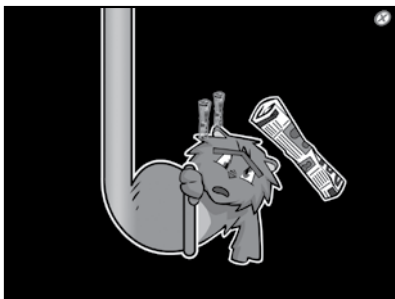
These four activities are very similar to the previous ones, except the screen does not begin completely blank. The learner must watch and wait for something on the screen to change. **The new 'cue' object will always appear in the same place.** Use the **Reveal time** option to control how long the object remains on the screen.

Crazy Cats



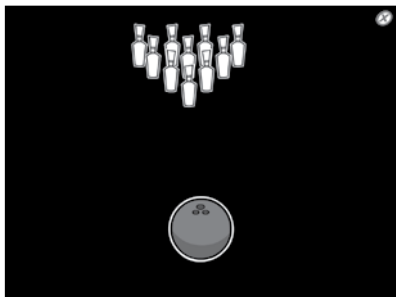
Wait for a cat to come out of the dustbin. Can you catch it? The cat then plays a crazy tune.

Gopher in a Drainpipe



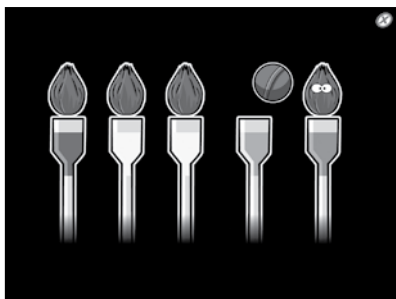
Wait for a gopher to pop out of the drainpipe then whack it with the newspaper. This activity exercises anticipation skills, as you can see a bulge coming down the pipe. When you have whacked three gophers they will do a dance routine.

Ten Pin Bowling



This activity may be more suitable for older learners. There is no aiming involved; just wait for a big ball to appear at the bottom of the screen then press to bowl. The rest is down to luck - sometimes you will get a strike (knock down all the skittles), sometimes you will only get one!

Coconut Shy

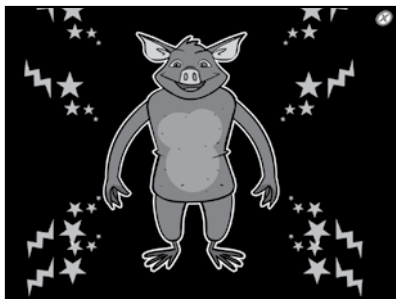


This game works the same as Ten Pin Bowling. The coconuts do a dance routine when you have hit them all.

'Locate Change' activities

In this group of four activities, you must wait for something to appear at a random place in the scene. Use the **Reveal time** option to control how long the object remains on the screen.

Make a Monster



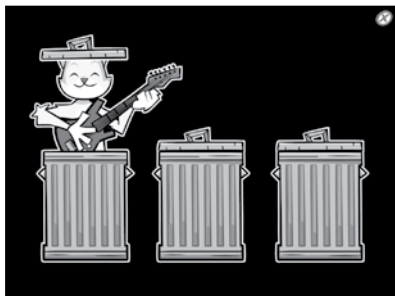
This activity begins at an easy level, just wait for a magic wand to appear somewhere on the screen then press your switch. The wand will wave a shower of stars and make the head and body of a monster appear. Once you have caught this, wait for the wand to appear again and press your switch to get the monster's legs. Finally you make a tail or some wings for your monster and it is complete.

Make a Fairy



This activity works like Make a Monster.

More Crazy Cats



This activity is similar to Crazy Cats in the previous section, but now there are 3 dustbins to watch. Press your switch when a cat appears from any one of them.

Haunted House

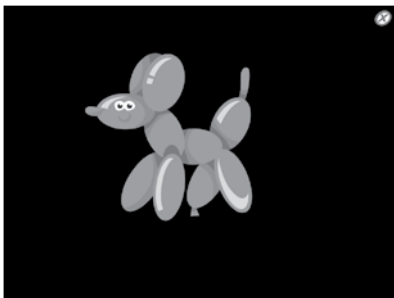


Watch and wait for a light to turn on in any of the windows then press your switch.

‘Experimental Play’ activities

This group is different from the others, as there is no element of right and wrong. You may find it useful to try some learners with these activities first.

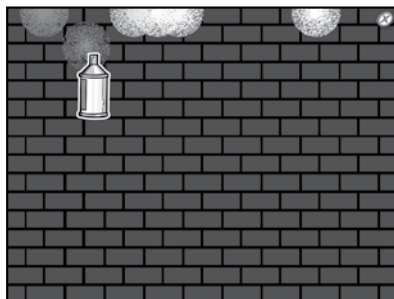
Balloon



A balloon blows up, then deflates again, then inflates again and so on.

You can press your switch at any time to pop the balloon, but a bigger balloon gives a bigger bang. The options allow you to control the speed at which the balloon inflates and deflates.

Spray Art

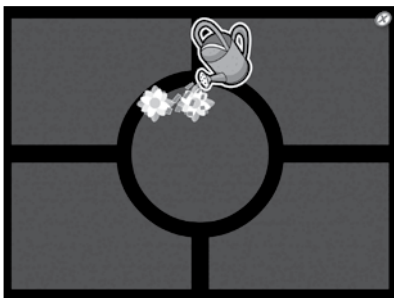


A spray can floats from left to right across the screen. Press your switch to stop and spray.

This activity can give an introduction to scanning communication systems in a relaxed, creative play environment.

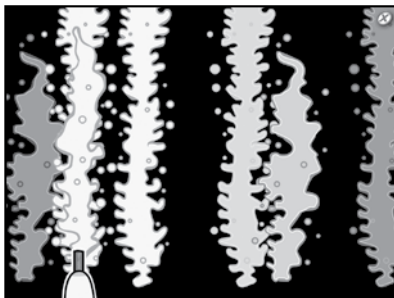
The options allow you to control the speed and direction of the spray can.

Watering Can



This is a simple gardening activity without any element of right or wrong. A watering can moves along one of 3 planting beds. Press your switch to water a patch of soil and see what grows there. There are flowers and vegetables to grow. The activity has no end, so to start afresh, just click the close icon to go back to the activity menu and choose Watering Can again.

Custard Skooshers



Let's get messy. Press your switch to 'skoosh' school custard all over the computer screen.

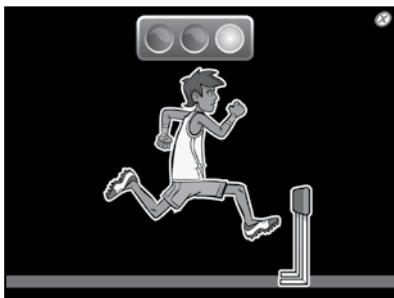
This activity has an interesting problem-solving element, where players will learn to wait to allow the custard skooshers to fill up and give a really good skoosh.

The options allow you to control the speed of the skooshers, and whether it moves across the bottom of the screen or down the left-hand side.

'Ready Steady Go' activities

The two activities in this group have a more controlled cue and give learners the opportunity to anticipate the time when they should press. With some learners, you may find these activities more successful than any of the others.

Sprinters



The sprinter is keen to go, but must wait for the green light. Wait for the voiceover to say “go” and the green light to come on, then press your switch to start the ‘race’.

The options allow you to control how quickly you must press your switch once the green light comes on.

Rockets

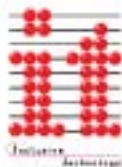
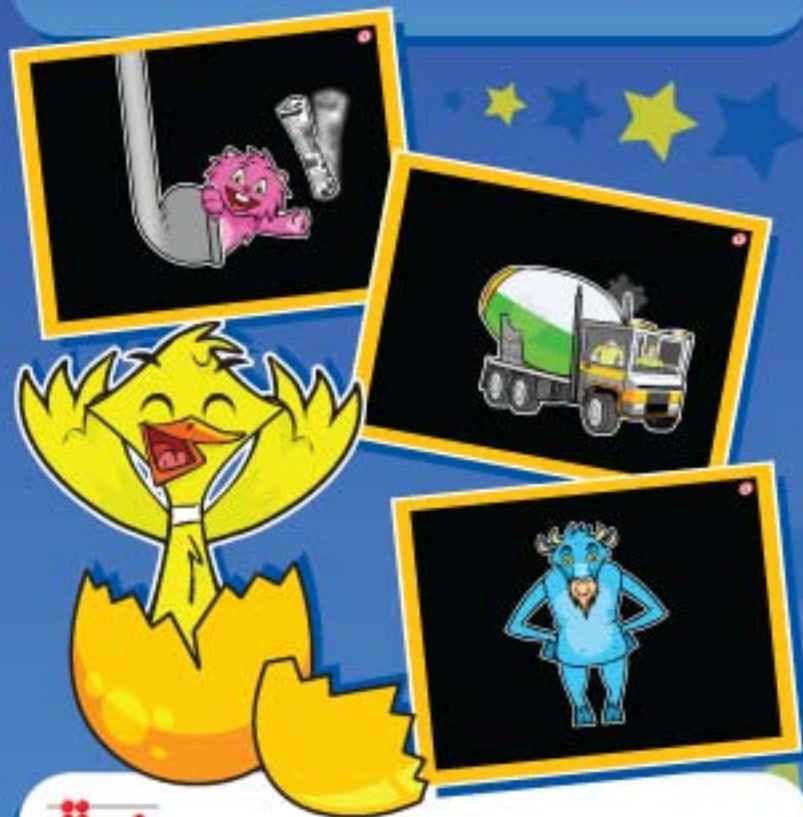


This activity uses the countdown before a rocket launch to cue the learner to press the switch. Wait for the voiceover and the screen to say “go!” then press your switch to launch the rocket.

The options allow you to control how quickly you must press your switch once the announcer has shouted “go!”

Switch Skills 2 has 20 very simple activities for use with a single switch. They are designed for students with learning difficulties who are learning to operate a switch at the right time.

It is ideal for those who have already gained an understanding of cause and effect, and are ready for a new challenge. These activities are also excellent for promoting attention and concentration in those with severe learning difficulties.



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