2014 SWOMA Conference
Finding My Way

Apps for Independent Living

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iOS Devices (iPad, iPod touch, iPhone) – Apps for Independent Living Skills

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Apple apps

Apple apps are available "out of the box," and they are the most accessible with VoiceOver. In addition, most manuals and guides related to VoiceOver focus specifically on accessing these apps.

Calendar: Use to schedule appointments and set regular events (e.g. laundry, grocery, garbage collection day).

Clock: Set alarms for waking up or taking medication. Set timers for laundry, cooking, or other time management.

Notes: Write shopping lists, create simple budgets, and take notes.

Reminders: Set reminders for household maintenance tasks (e.g. spring air conditioning checkup, change AC or refrigerator filters).

Maps: Locate nearby and/or necessary businesses (e.g. dentist, doctor, salon, shopping mall).

Calculator: Useful for calculating time, distance, and budget.

Free apps

Around Me
- About: Gives location information about nearby banks, coffee shops, events, gas stations, hospitals, hotels, movie theaters, pharmacies, restaurants, supermarkets, and more.
- Pros: Ability to know what is around, so if the student is with a group of peers or adults, they can advocate for their preferences.
- Cons: VoiceOver does not read all buttons. Challenging navigation.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/aroundme/id290051590?mt=8

Brighter and Bigger
- Portable CCTV app for the iOS device.
- Pros: May help students with low vision read labels and access other near vision tasks. Offers brightness and contrast settings. Accessible with VoiceOver.
- Available from: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/brighter-and-bigger/id452483657?mt=8

Color ID Free
- About: Uses the device camera to identify colors.
- Pros: Completely accessible with VoiceOver. Relatively accurate.

- Cons: Best color identification in Simple Color mode. Some colors are not specific (e.g. yellowish gray). Clothing or other items with complex colors may be misrepresented.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/color-id-free/id402233600?mt=8

Cookulator Lite
- About: Provides simple cooking unit conversion. Enter units in one field, and all other fields are automatically populated with the conversion.
- Pros: Converts cups, fluid ounces, tablespoons, teaspoons, and milliliters. Provides measurements in US, UK, Canadian, and Australian measures.
- Cons: May require initial instruction and support for navigation. Not intuitive. Student may need to learn the location on the screen of the input fields.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/cookulator-cooking-unit-converter/id420840462?mt=8

EyeNote
- About: Identifies U.S. paper currency using the device camera.
- Pros: Very easy to use. Reads bill denomination. Has option for playing tones or vibrations to identify currency.
- Cons: User needs to access EyeNote settings (via iOS Settings) to allow settings to appear in the app or select the vibration setting.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/eyenote/id405336354?mt=8

TapTapSee
- About: Uses the device camera with VoiceOver to photograph any object, have it analyzed, and defined within seconds. The device's VoiceOver feature speaks the identification audibly to the user.
- Pros: Easy to use. Very quick response time with detailed descriptions (e.g. "grey Swingline stapler," "yellow bird calendar," "blue ceramic mug with black print on table top near pencil," or "potted yellow and green snake plant"). Works well with VoiceOver.
- Cons: User must align the camera properly, understand the autofocus feature, and ensure adequate lighting. The user must also be able to locate product information and/or a bar code when taking a picture using the app.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/taptapsee-blind-visually-impaired/id567635020?mt=8

White & Yellow Pages
- About: Gives location and contact information of businesses and individuals, as well as providing access to GPS voice navigation.
- Pros: Provides a broad variety of listings. Businesses organized by categories and can also be searched. Can look up phone numbers. GPS uses Apple Maps. Works well with VoiceOver.
- Cons: Not all buttons are labeled. Navigating the app can be confusing when VoiceOver reads street names in the map.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/white-yellow-pages/id349502924?mt=8

Whole Foods Market Recipes
- About: Offers a broad selection of recipes based on a variety of categories (e.g. course, cuisine, main ingredient).

- Pros: Versatile options – can search by ingredients on hand, by type of cuisine, and by other categories. Features healthy options. Offers ability to create shopping list.
- Cons: VoiceOver runs slowly. Touch and drag navigation is best. Some buttons are not labeled and challenging to access. Must set up an account to access shopping list feature.
- Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/whole-foods-market-recipes/id320029256?mt=8

Yocto Alarm Clock
- Full-feature alarm clock that offers wake-up alarms, sleep timers, and configurable font options.
- Pros: More features than the iOS clock. Offers ability to listen to audio for a set amount of time then switches to "sleepy-time" music. Gives weather forecast and current conditions. Can use gestures for quick adjustment (e.g. shake device to snooze). Fully accessible with VoiceOver.
- Cons: High complexity may be more than most people want in an alarm clock.
- Available at: http://www.applevis.com/apps/ios/utilities/yocto-alarm-clock

Notes:

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Figure 1 IDEAs that Work logo and disclaimer.