

Cognitive Impairment Intervention Protocol (CIIP) for the Environment of a Person with Cognitive Impairment:

II. PATTERNS

Look for ways to ensure there are no visual patterns that could:

- Be distracting
- Be misinterpreted
- Cause nausea or dizziness
- Camouflage an object

A. Are the floor and all other surfaces free of patterns that seem to “move” when this person looks at them or when this person moves, such as alternating squares or blocks on floors, plaid, geometric, or repetitive patterns on floors, chairs, and blouses?

1. Examine all surfaces with patterns on them, particularly geometric or intricate repeating patterns, to ensure they do not appear to this person to be moving, vibrating, or undulating.
2. Remove “moving” patterns from large surfaces, such as floors, tablecloths, and sofas. For example, avoid alternating linoleum blocks on floors and curtains and plaids on curtains, sofas, and tablecloths.
3. Remove or cover “moving” patterns from surfaces visible to this person when she/he is moving, such as seats of chairs when she is preparing to sit, towels when drying off, or clothing she/he is putting on.
4. Avoid wearing clothes, particularly shirts or blouses with “moving” patterns, such as zigzagging patterns, plaids, multiple squares or figures.

B. Are all surfaces (such as floors, walls, curtains, counter tops, clothing) free of patterns, stripes, borders, or figures that look like changes in height or depth, bugs, specks, or pieces of paper to pick up?

1. Avoid and remove patterns, stripes, borders and figures that could be misinterpreted from all surfaces, including floors, walls, curtains, counter tops, tablecloths, and clothing. For example, remove figures that look like bugs or dirt to prevent this person from being distracted or from using energy unnecessarily to try to figure out what the figures really are. Help this person save energy for more important tasks.
2. Particularly avoid borders and figures on carpets, counter tops, tables and chairs, since they can be especially confusing and dangerous, by causing a misinterpretation of a figure or of height and depth. For example, avoid using carpet with a border, since a border can cause this person to hesitate or to raise her/his foot to step over the border and thus increase the risk of falling. Remove figures on the seat of a chair to prevent this person from leaning down to brush the chair seat off before sitting. Remove figures on the carpet to prevent this person from leaning down to pick up the “paper” or speck off the floor and thus

increase the risk of falling. Help this person feel completely safe when walking and moving. Avoid using decoration or cues on the floor and on chair seats.

3. Avoid figures on surfaces that might appear to be objects that are frightening, distracting, annoying, or hard to precisely locate. For example, avoid large figures of stylized flowers on the wall that might be misinterpreted as frightening faces, and avoid many little figures that make it hard for this person to aim for and locate a specific figure to touch.
4. When patterns cannot be removed, cover the patterns. Closely observe this person at all times to avoid misinterpretation of patterns that become uncovered, as changes in height or depth, bugs, specks, or pieces of paper to pick up. For example, reassure, assist, or distract this person when she/he is hesitating or raising her/his foot to cross a border on the carpet, leaning over to pick a "bug" or "piece of dirt" off the floor or wall, or trying to brush the seat of a chair off before sitting on it.

C. Are all objects easy to see because they are not in front of or beside a patterned surface or object, such as a pill or comb held in front of a patterned blouse?

1. Ensure that all objects this person may need or want to use, are easily visible to this person.
2. Remove each object from surfaces that are patterned or that draw this person's attention to the background more than to the object. For example, put a white pill in a small dark dish rather than in a hand in front of a brightly patterned shirt or blouse.
3. Remove each object from surfaces that camouflage or hide the object. Avoid surfaces with repetitive figures that make objects on the surface difficult to locate against the busy background. For example, put a dinner plate on a plain rather than figured tablecloth, soap on a plain washcloth, a hairbrush on a plain countertop, a chair in front of a plain or subtly decorated wall paper.