

RNIB PenFriend audio labeller: hints and tips guide

R N I B

See differently



This is an evolving document, if you have any useful hints and tips you would like to share with other RNIB PenFriend users, please email them to **Helpline@rnib.org.uk**

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■ Making the most of your labels

Reusable labels

For consumable items – food, toiletries, medicines, etc – it's worth making reusable labels for your RNIB PenFriend sticky labels.

Attach labels to cut-out squares of plastic or cardboard which can be affixed to boxes and bottles with Blu-Tack. Or punch a hole in the plastic or cardboard, loop an elastic band through and attach to containers using the band.

Make four small labels from one large label

If you have several items to label that are the same, such as four tins of baked beans, you can record the message on to one large label, then cut that label into four smaller labels and attach them to the four tins.

Colour them for contrast

If you would like some contrast between the label and the surface you are attaching it to, you can colour in the labels. Either give them an outline or colour them in completely.

Waterproof labels

You can waterproof your labels by laminating them, covering them in Sellotape or sealing them inside a waterproof wallet. They can be recorded on before or after you have made them waterproof.

■ In the kitchen

You don't have to stop at labelling the contents of a bottle, jar, packet or tin – you can also add sell-by dates, cooking instructions, dietary information, the date you placed something in the freezer or a "Hands off!" message to protect your chocolate stash from spouses, flatmates or children.

You can create your own recipe book or cards using the labels and either a notebook or filing cards.

Reusable labels

Attach labels to magnets so they can be easily placed on metal food containers and moved to another container when required.

Attach labels to jar lids, so when you finish one jar of jam and purchase your next jar, you can simply swap the lids over.

Magnetic labels

Use RNIB PenFriend magnetic labels on food tins, tea caddies or to leave notes and reminders on the fridge door.

Labelling freezer items

RNIB PenFriend audio labels are suitable for use in the freezer, without any additional waterproofing needed. Attach the labels to small bulldog clips with flat tabs or freezer bag clips which can be used to seal bags of food, or make a reusable label on card or plastic and stick it on, or put it inside, the packaging.

For pets

Your furry and feathered friends can benefit from your RNIB PenFriend too. Add sell-by dates and dietary information to your pet's food containers or put notes on any medication prescribed by the vet. You can include details about the date it was prescribed, the dosage and application instructions, along with details of what the medication is for and any special arrangements for taking it, such as "with dry food only" or "two drops daily in water bowl".

Film and music collections

Whether you want to binge-watch your favourite boxset or dance like no one's watching to that album you bought when you were 18, audio labels will make that quick and easy.

Go minimal and just record the title (and artist), or add the names of the main cast, the film's synopsis, genre and age classification (or track names and artist information on albums).

One small label can be folded around the edge of the storage case, so it sits on the spine, you can then scroll across your shelves of DVDs or CDs, with the spines facing outward, until you find the one you want.

Clothing

Add RNIB PenFriend washable laundry labels to items of clothing to record washing and care instructions and colour and pattern details. You can even remind yourself which other items of clothing and accessories go perfectly together.

To ensure the adhesive on the Penfriend label fully sets, stick it to the clothes label wherever possible. Each label will withstand 50-plus washes at 50 degrees, but should not be dry cleaned.

For dry-clean-only clothes, attach labels to clothes pegs and clip to items of clothing, add directly to coat hangers, thread a reusable label on card on to the hook of a coat hanger or attach it with a safety pin to the clothes label.

Medicines

Record a label to tell you when medication was prescribed or dispensed, storage instructions, expiry date, the dosage and application instructions, details of what the medication is for, and any special arrangements for taking it – such as with food or time of day. It's particularly useful to make reusable labels if you get repeat prescriptions for any medication.

Take your RNIB PenFriend to the doctors or pharmacy, so that a message about the medication and the instructions for taking it can be recorded at the time.

Beauty products

Add labels to your perfumes, moisturisers, shaving lotions and hair products, etc. Organise your make-up bag and add details about the colours, names and brands of your lipsticks, eyeshadows, mascara, foundation and nail polishes.

Paperwork

For documents that are not in your preferred reading format, add a label with information about the sender and the date received, details of the contents and any actions required by you or others.

Combine our range of Big Print and braille stationery with RNIB PenFriend labels to get super-organised. Use the labels to add appointments to a diary or contact details to an address book. If any paperwork needs to be taken to a meeting or appointment, you can add a reminder to pick up the documents – as well as recording where you filed them – alongside the appointment details in your diary.

Gardening

Keep your personal patch of heaven looking angelic, whether it's an allotment, a back garden or a balcony packed with pots.

Easily identify plants or vegetables by adding waterproofed, reusable labels with names and care instructions on. Loop the elastic band around the plant or a bamboo cane. If plants are under-cover, in a greenhouse for example, you can stick your label directly on to the pot, seedling tray or plant marker.

Label your seed packets, so you can tell your cornflower and marigold seeds from your lettuce and carrot seeds. Include instructions on planting times, planting depths, growing conditions and any best before or use-by dates, along with storage instructions.

Label containers in your shed, so you can identify weed killer, plant food or ant powder, along with application instructions, such as how much water to add, and use-by dates. Or, if your shed or greenhouse is well organised, you could place the labels on the shelf edge and ensure that the containers are put back in the same place each time. This will help save the number of labels you use.

Use as a portable notetaker

Record your message and keep track of it by placing the allocated label in a small notebook or in your diary. The keyring fob with four recording spots is also perfect for note-taking.

Shopping and money management

In the shop

The RNIB PenFriend can easily be taken with you when shopping. As you go around the shop, add reusable labels to the items as they are placed in your trolley or basket. When purchasing electrical goods, ask for assistance in store to label remote controls and plugs.

Your purse or wallet

Label the credit card pockets in your purse or wallet so you can easily find the card you want to pay with.

When paying for items over the phone using your credit or debit card, it is useful to have the card details close at hand. This can be done by attaching three stickers to your phone; the first sticker holds your card number, the second the expiry date and the third contains the three-digit security code from the back of your card. To anyone looking at your telephone they are just three stickers, however, for security please ensure that you don't leave your RNIB PenFriend next to your telephone.

Shopping lists

Either use the keyring fob or place a large label on the back of your mobile phone, so you can make a quick shopping list when you are out and about. Or you could attach labels to a magnetic sheet or index card and keep it on the fridge and add items to it until you are ready to go to the shops.

At school

Label equipment and resources such as skeleton models, art material storage drawers and field trip findings.

Use with children with complex needs who like to hear and discover lots of different sounds and hear their own voice. Make lots of recordings and place them in a book which the child can access either by themselves, if they are able to hold the pen over the labels, or with assistance.

Pupils can use their RNIB PenFriend to help organise their coursework, add entries to their homework diary and access class timetables.

Musical instruments

Some musical instruments, such as keyboards, have numerous keys and controls; these can all be labelled to identify notes and function details. This can be useful for beginners learning to play instruments.

Storage

Storage ideas

If you don't want to keep your RNIB Penfriend in its own box, you could use a large pencil case instead.

Further labelling ideas

Our Labelling guide provides details on a variety of labelling methods (tactile, audio, braille and clear print) as well as practical advice for labelling items around your home and garden to aid independence. It can be downloaded from [rnib.org.uk/labelling](https://www.rnib.org.uk/labelling)

RNIB Technology Grant Scheme

You can apply for an RNIB PenFriend through the RNIB Technology Grant Scheme. For information on the terms and conditions, and to download the Grant application form, please visit [rnib.org.uk/grants](https://www.rnib.org.uk/grants) or contact our Technology for Life team on **0303 123 9999**

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New Product Guide

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Contact information

RNIB Helpline

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Telephone: **0303 123 9999**



Email: **helpline@rnib.org.uk**



Website: **rnib.org.uk**

Technology for Life

Our Technology for Life team can help with both simple and complex technology queries and issues, offering information, advice and guidance over the phone, by email or through setting up a volunteer request.

Technology Support volunteers also provide one-to-one support to people with sight loss in their homes. Our volunteers help you to use computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones, eReaders and to get online.

For further information, contact the Technology for Life team by calling **0303 123 9999** or emailing **tfl@rnib.org.uk**

RNIB Connect

RNIB Connect brings people together (locally, regionally and nationally) with similar experiences, interests or identities to share information, knowledge and skills. You'll receive support and encouragement to both organise and access local activities and events. Connect strengthens the voices of blind and partially sighted people in campaigning for change. Being an RNIB Connect member enables a deeper relationship with RNIB to influence and support what we do and how we do it.

Call our Helpline on **0303 123 9999**
to become an RNIB Connect member
or visit **rnib.org.uk/rnibconnect**

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