

How to tell people what you want

People want to help. But they can't read your mind.

When people aren't sure what's helpful, they often play it safe. They check in less, hold back, or avoid offering help altogether because they're worried about getting it wrong.

A few simple conversations in the early days about how you'd like to be supported can give people the confidence to show up instead of leaning out. Without that guidance, even the most well-intentioned people can lose confidence and step back.



Instead of expecting people to know



How much you'd like shared



Whether you'd like to talk about what's happening



What kind of support feels most helpful



How often you'd like people to check in



What kind of visits you'd like



How you'd like people to offer help



How you'd like specific tasks to work



Whether you'd like advice



Let them know



"I'd like to keep this fairly private for now."
"I'm happy for you to let people know what's going on."



"I'd rather not talk about it today."
"I'd really like to talk about what's going on."



"I'd love positivity or a distraction today."
"I don't need you to fix it. I just need you to listen."



"A quick text every few days would mean a lot."
"I'll reach out when I'm up to chatting."



"Could you check with me before coming over?"
"You're always welcome to drop in if you're nearby."



"Please ask before jumping in."
"If you notice something that needs doing, I'd really appreciate you just getting on with it."



"Could you check with me before bringing food?"
"A meal dropped at the door anytime would be amazing."



"Please don't offer me advice. I just need someone to listen."
"I'd love to hear any advice you have."

Remember, your preferences might change over time, or even from day to day. That's okay. Keep the conversation going so your crew always knows how to best support you.