

MEET THE GURUS

SMART HELP FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Got a question? There's a Guru in nearly every O₂ shop. We look at a groundbreaking scheme in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire helping partially sighted customers make the most of tech.

Gurus at O₂ shops in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire have been helping transform the lives of visually impaired people, thanks to an initiative called Project iCare.

The scheme helps blind and partially sighted people make the most of their smartphones and other tech, with specialist advice from O₂ Gurus.

"Many features we recommend, such as voiceover tools and screen enlargers, are already built into the phones," explains Project iCare

organiser Mark Skelton. "They're not always obvious – but once demonstrated, they can really help."

Mark was assistant manager at an O₂ shop for six years until he lost 80% of his vision three years ago.

SPECIALIST TRAINING

"It was a huge thing, losing my sight," explains Mark. "Over 60% of registered blind people are unemployed – I thought I'd lose my job."

Instead, Mark was soon launching

Project iCare, training O₂ Gurus to support visually impaired customers with the help and advice they need.

It's in-depth stuff – at one point, O₂ Gurus are led blindfolded around Leeds city centre, to help them understand the difficulties visually impaired people face.

"Everyone is different. There's no 'one size fits all' solution," adds Mark. "It's about finding out a person's level of sight, and listening to what works for them. We concentrate on a person's capabilities, not their disability."

O₂ GURU APP ADVICE

Our must-have apps for visually impaired users.

COLOUR ID

Free

Hold your phone's camera over an object, and in a second or two, Colour ID speaks its colour out loud. It's ideal for everything from making sure your socks match to checking you've picked up the right product in the supermarket.

AVAILABLE FOR iOS AND ANDROID.

MAGNIFY

Free

Handheld digital magnifiers can cost £400 or more. This app uses your phone's camera to do the same job for free. Pinch and zoom lets you take a more detailed look. An essential download.

AVAILABLE FOR iOS AND ANDROID.

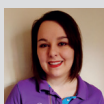
BIG LAUNCHER

Free

Simplifies your phone's homescreen with larger icons, and enables you to access apps and settings more easily. Provides voice-activated commands including a talking dialler – handy for visually impaired and older users alike.

AVAILABLE FOR ANDROID.

TIGHTEN UP YOUR ONLINE SECURITY



Leah Ferrini, an O₂ Guru from Edinburgh, shares her tips to keep you safe online.

MAKE IT TOUGH

Good passwords include upper and lower-case letters,

numbers and punctuation. Avoid anything obvious like family names or pets.

MIX IT UP

Use different passwords for shopping, banking and social

media. That way, if someone gets hold of one, they can't access all your accounts.

PLAY IT SAFE

Install security software on all your devices, and keep it

up to date. Only install apps from your app store.

BE WIFI SAVVY

If you use public wifi in a coffee shop or bar, make sure no one can see what

you're typing. Avoid using public wifi for online shopping or banking.

Need help with security? Chat to the Guru at your local O₂ shop.