

HOW TO PICK A SWITCH

It is important to consider the following questions when choosing a switch.

1. What actions can the person who will use the switch reliably perform? Activation of the switch should not cause a person undue fatigue or pain, or compromise good muscle tone.
2. Which part of the body will give the person the best control over switch activation?
3. How much force can the person consistently exert when hitting a switch? (See the "Switch Specifications" page for information on the pressure required for various switches.)
4. Does the person have good targeting ability? If not, you must choose a switch with a larger surface area. (See the "Switch Specifications" page for information on the size of various switches.)
5. What is the person's range of motion? People with a limited range of motion must choose a switch with a short "travel". Travel is the distance which the mechanical part of the switch must move before it is activated.
6. Will the person use a lot of force when hitting the switch? If so, the switch will need to be very durable. Most desirable is a switch that will soften the impact between the switch and the body part.
7. Does the person have perceptual difficulties? If so, feedback from the switch that has been activated will be beneficial. Some switches provide auditory feedback such as a click or a beep. Others some form of tactile feedback such as vibration.
8. Finally, where will the person be using the switch? This will determine how the switch should be mounted in order to facilitate it's use. The user should not be positioned too far away so that it is inconvenient to reach, nor should it be so close that it interferes with other activities or is unintentionally activated.

Thanks to TASH for most of this information