

Think You Might Be Neurodivergent? Here's Where to Start

Sensible first steps for exploring this at your own pace, with nothing you have to do and no one you have to tell.

TL;DR · QUICK SUMMARY

- Noticing that you might be neurodivergent is a valid, common starting point, not something you need to justify.
- There's no rush: you can take as long as you need to explore this at your own pace.
- You don't need a diagnosis to start understanding yourself better or to ask for support.
- This guide walks through sensible first steps, without pushing you toward any particular path.

A Note Before You Read On

This resource offers general guidance and reflects common experience, not professional, legal, medical or financial advice. It is not a substitute for employment law, HR policy, occupational health guidance, or individual professional assessment. Every person's experience of neurodivergence is different, so please adapt anything here to your own situation. The Uniquely Wired Network does not accept liability for decisions, actions or outcomes arising from the use of this material. If you need advice specific to your circumstances, please consult a qualified professional (e.g. HR, legal, medical, or financial advisor).

Why This Matters

Realising you might be neurodivergent (often after seeing a video, reading about someone else's experience, or a difficult period at work) can bring a mix of relief, doubt and overwhelm.

Knowing what steps are actually available (and that none of them are compulsory) can make the process feel far less daunting.

What This Might Look Like

- Recognising yourself in descriptions of autism, ADHD or another type of neurodivergence for the first time.
- Looking back at childhood or past jobs and suddenly seeing patterns differently.
- Feeling both relieved (“that explains a lot”) and unsure (“what if I’m wrong?”) at the same time.
- Wondering whether to say anything to your manager, friends or family, or nothing at all.

Sensible First Steps

1. Give yourself time.

- This isn't something to rush or resolve in one weekend.
- There's no deadline; explore at whatever pace feels comfortable.

2. Learn a bit more about the types.

- See our guide “Types of Neurodivergence: A Quick Guide” for an overview.
- Notice what resonates, and what doesn't: both are useful information.

3. Try some self-reflection.

- See our guide “Self-Reflection Tools & Screening Questionnaires” for suggestions.
- These aren't diagnostic, but they can help you put language to your experience.

4. Talk to someone you trust, if you want to.

- This could be a friend, partner, GP, or a manager: entirely your choice.
- You never have to disclose anything at work unless and until you want to.

5. Decide if you want a formal diagnosis.

- Some people want one; others are comfortable self-identifying. Both are valid.
- See our guide “How to Seek a Diagnosis in the UK” if you'd like to explore this route.

Helpful Phrases You Can Borrow

You don't have to use these exact words. Take what fits and leave the rest.

"I've been reading about neurodivergence and some of it really resonates with me. I wanted to talk it through with someone."

"I'm not sure yet whether I want a formal diagnosis, but I wanted to flag that I think I might be neurodivergent, in case it's useful context."

Quick Tips

- You don't owe anyone an explanation for exploring this.
- Self-identification is valid, with or without a formal diagnosis.
- It's okay to feel unsure: clarity often comes gradually, not all at once.
- You can pause, revisit, or change your mind at any point.
- Talking to a GP is a good early step if you're considering assessment, but it's not compulsory.
- You are allowed to explore this privately, without telling anyone at all.

Want to Know More?

- See our companion guides: "Signs of Neurodivergence in Adults," "Self-Reflection Tools & Screening Questionnaires," and "How to Seek a Diagnosis in the UK."
- Online communities (e.g. r/AutisticAdults, r/ADHD, and UK-specific charities) can offer peer perspective; take individual opinions with a pinch of salt.
- Your GP can be a helpful first point of contact if and when you're ready.

Before You Go

However this journey unfolds for you, there's no wrong way to explore it. You've already taken a meaningful first step just by being curious about yourself.