



Negotiating Doors

Approach the door with the person you are guiding on the hinge side. The guide opens the door using their free hand on the handle and then indicates the handle with their guiding arm. They can use their free hand to trail down your guiding arm to locate

the door handle and take it from you before following you through.



Steps and Stairs

When you approach a step or kerb, stop when you reach it and say "step down" or "step up". If the step is higher or lower than usual, warn (inform) the person you are guiding. Always approach the steps and stairs straight on and not diagonally. Indicate the

handrail (when available) to the person and confirm they are ready to ascend/descend before proceeding up or down. Keep a steady pace whilst staying one step ahead of them.

Always pause for a moment when you have reached the top or bottom of the stairs. Remember, you may need to change sides to ensure that the visually impaired person is closest to the handrail.

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How to act as a Sighted Guide





Making Contact

Begin by asking the person if they would like assistance. If they accept, offer a choice of side and move into their space and gently nudge their arm with your elbow to help them locate your arm.



Grip

They take hold of your arm just above the elbow, four fingers on the inside, thumb on the outside; their grip should be firm. You should keep your arm relaxed and close to the side of your body so the person can feel you turn.

When guiding a young child it is perfectly appropriate to hold their hand. Children aged 5/6+ can hold the guide's wrist as they get taller.



Correct guiding position

You should be half a pace ahead of the person you are guiding. In the picture, the guide's right shoulder is directly in front of the vision impaired person's left shoulder.



Narrow spaces

You may need to walk in single file when moving through crowds or narrow spaces i.e. doorways. Put your guiding arm diagonally behind your back, as shown. The visually impaired person straightens out his/her arm and walks directly behind you.

you, taking shorter steps so as to not walk on your heels. They can also hold the guide's wrist as opposed to elbow to allow for a bigger space between you.



Inward Turn

Should you reach a dead end and have little room to turn around, the easiest way to do so is by using the inward turn.

Ask the person you are guiding to turn to face you, and to take your free elbow with his/her free hand. They then release the elbow they were holding originally and you turn.



Changing Sides

At times it is necessary to change sides so the person you are guiding is

- on the side closest to a handrail
- or
- further away from traffic
- and
- on the hinge side when approaching a door



In order to change sides, bend your elbow and point it out behind your back making it easier for the visually impaired person to locate.



They will side step behind you, taking your other elbow with his or her hand.