

Visual Communication Strategies: For travel, tourism, arts and culture.





These strategies will help you serve travelers who are 55+ with changes in vision, and, in fact, help make everyone's experience better.

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1. Location and events:

- Provide disability-specific training. Augment by learning directly from people with “lived experience” in disability and travel.
- Learn from people with different kinds of vision loss. Different types of low vision are helped by different strategies.
- Put signs at eye level where possible. Ensure signs are consistent. Think along the lines of ‘same look and feel’. Sign-placement should also be consistent. E.g., always put room number at eye level on the right side. Instead of putting some room numbers on the right, the left, or above the door.
- Ensure signs meet accessibility standards. E.g., use tactile and braille signs, placed at person height, that can be “read” by touch. Get people who are blind/low vision to try them out, too!
- Make information available in visual, tactile and audio formats.
- Meet all accessibility standards, in general, for your location type.
- Establish ways to gather feedback from all visitors to improve the experience. Use online surveys, phone call surveys, email, etc.
- Ensure visitors have clear opportunities to ask for the specific help they want and need. Use different ways to let people know that information is available to them. Clearly state accessibility information on the homepage of your website. Have large signage at customer service kiosks that indicate help is available.
- When staff offer assistance to visitors, ensure they introduce themselves with their name and their role.



- Let visitors know, in advance, what specific accessibility changes your organization has made. Tell people what to expect. Let them know what help and services are available onsite.

2. Digital and print communication:

- Text and background should always meet contrast ratios. E.g., dark text on a very light background. Light text on a very dark background.
- Provide multiple means of communication with your venue for visitors. Include email, phone, chat, messaging.
- Of particular importance, always provide a phone number. Train staff answering the phone to be knowledgeable about the positive accessibility changes available at your venue. Many visitor need to speak to someone to gather information.
- CAPTCHA on a website contact form is often not accessible. Choose accessible website options.
- Avoid moving banners, slideshows, and busy backgrounds on your website and social media or signs in general.
- Place the most important information on the left side (for left to right written languages).

3. Performances:

- Hold relaxed performances. These are a special type of performance that is sensory-friendly and accommodates people with different abilities.



- Provide designated seating for people with low vision or other disability needs.
- Provide audio-described performances.
- Provide easy online access for buying tickets and include an online or virtual performance option.

4. On-site tours:

- Offer regular, scheduled or on-demand guided or tactile tours.
- Provide visitors with an opportunity to ask for specific accommodations or changes.

5. Restaurants:

- Have Braille and large text menus available or an easy-to-access website so that all customers can look at the menu before they come to the restaurant. Servers should be trained to explain the “wall” or “onsite only” menus if they are used.
- Make sure that servers are trained to assist customers who are blind/have low vision.

6. Museums:

- Have Braille books describing exhibits that cannot be touched.
- Provide audio-descriptions.
- Provide an immersive experience by enabling interactions through sound, vision, and touch.



7. Hotels:

- Add tactile and Braille numbers on the latch side of the door no lower than 48 inches from the floor, and no higher than 60 inches from the floor.
- Offer guests individual orientation to their room by staff.
- Ensure hotel phones make a sound, in addition to having a flashing light, to indicate there is a message waiting.
- Choose toiletries that are in different shapes/sizes to help guest avoid confusion between shampoo and lotion, for example.

8. Transportation (trains, bus, airplanes):

- Provide safety cards in Braille. Offer travelers the option of having safety cards read to them or provide an audio version.
- Add tactile signage and markers on seats.
- Provide tactile maps of the train, airplane, railway station and/or airport.
- Travel assistance and accommodations should be provided on a case-by-case, trip-by-trip basis. Sometimes, a blind person is able to travel on their own, while on other occasions, they may require a sighted guide.

This tip sheet was co-constructed by Sensory Friendly Solutions and 55+ Travelers: Arriving and Thriving audio conference guest Shelley Ann Morris.