

Guide Dogs.

Tips on safely guiding



Meeting a person with low vision or blindness

People with low vision or blindness sometimes require assistance to move safely through the community.

The aim of providing guidance is to assist a person when needed so they can travel confidently and efficiently in certain situations.

These can include general travel, and more specific instances like using escalators or getting into vehicles.

Remember, not every person with low vision or blindness will need this type of assistance.

You should always ask the person if they need help before providing them with any assistance.

How to safely guide a person who has low vision or blindness

Establish contact

Ask the person with low vision or blindness if they need assistance. They may not require a helping hand but if they let you know that they do, make contact by touching the back of your hand against the back of theirs. This is the signal for them to take your arm.

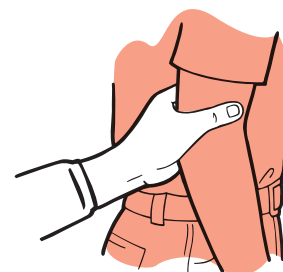


Grip

Let the person take hold of your arm just above the elbow – with their four fingers on the inside and thumb on the outside of your arm. Their grip should be firm but not tight enough to cause you discomfort.

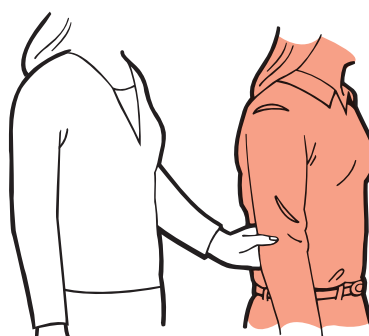
Alternative grip

Gripping your wrist may be more comfortable for a child or where there is a substantial height difference.



Stance

The person you are guiding should also keep their arm relaxed, bent at about 90 degrees and held close to their side.



Walking

As you walk together, it can be helpful to alert the person you're guiding of changes in the path ahead. This could include obstacles like overhanging branches, changes in direction, or differences in the flooring.

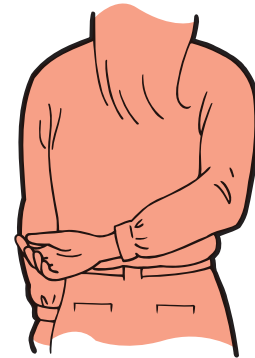
Changing positions

If you need to change sides, let the person you are guiding know. They will place their free hand on your guiding arm before releasing their grip and using this hand to locate your opposite arm. They will then move to the other side and assume the original grip on your other arm.



Narrow passages

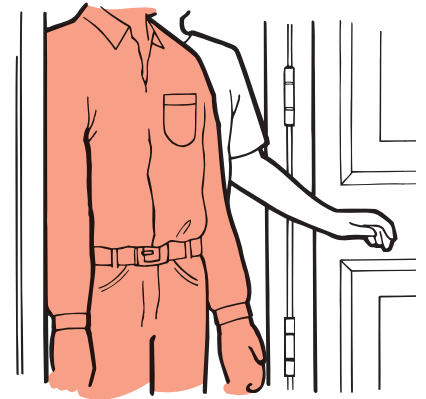
Inform the person when approaching narrow passages where it is difficult to walk side by side. Move your arm backwards and position it diagonally across your back. The person will straighten out their arm and step directly behind you. Their arm must remain extended to prevent either of you from tripping over the other's feet. When you have passed through the narrow place, inform the person so that they can assume the original position.



Doorways

The person you're guiding should be closest to the hinge side of the door. If they are not on the hinge side as you approach the door, ask them to change sides. Inform them whether it is a push or pull door. Place your hand on the handle and allow the person to move their hand down your arm towards the handle.

Open the door and go through first, allowing them to close the door behind you.



Stairs and escalators

Always approach stairs and escalators from directly in front and pause where they begin.

Inform the person if the stairs or escalators go up or down and let the person switch to the side of the handrail. You will need to be one step ahead of the person on stairs. Both of you will walk together in rhythm.

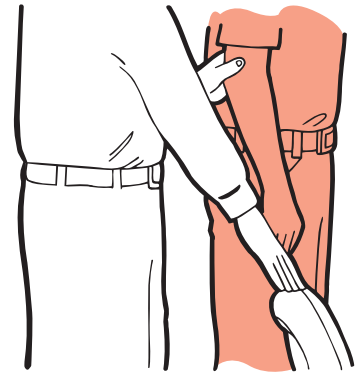
Let the person know when you have reached the end of the stairs or escalator. At the end of an escalator, tell the person when you are about to step off, for example in three seconds.



Getting into a chair

Place your guiding hand on the chair. You can put it anywhere, just simply let them know where. For example “I have my hand resting on the seat of the chair” or “I have my hand resting on the back of the chair.”

They will then follow your guiding arm down until they reach that spot. They will then use their hands to explore the chair and seat themselves. Remember to lead when you are entering or leaving a row of seats.



Getting into a car

Bring the person to the door and inform them about which way the car is facing and whether it is a front or rear door. Place one of their hands on the door handle to enable them to open the door. Place the other hand on the top corner of the door. They can then reach across and locate the roof and remain in contact with it until their head is inside the car. It is easier for the person to sit first and then swing their legs in.



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We are here to help please contact:

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