

Strategies for Making Heritage Sites Accessible

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Fours Rivers Heritage Area
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Some Basic Accessibility Guidelines:

Above all else, focus on creating a positive and welcoming experience.

Bear in mind that an important part of being welcoming is NOT being overwhelming or made to feel different.

While you might be able to deduce when a person is blind or has a significant mobility issue, most disabilities are invisible.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) is a law that was enacted by the United States Congress in 1990, and later amended with changes effective January 1, 2009.

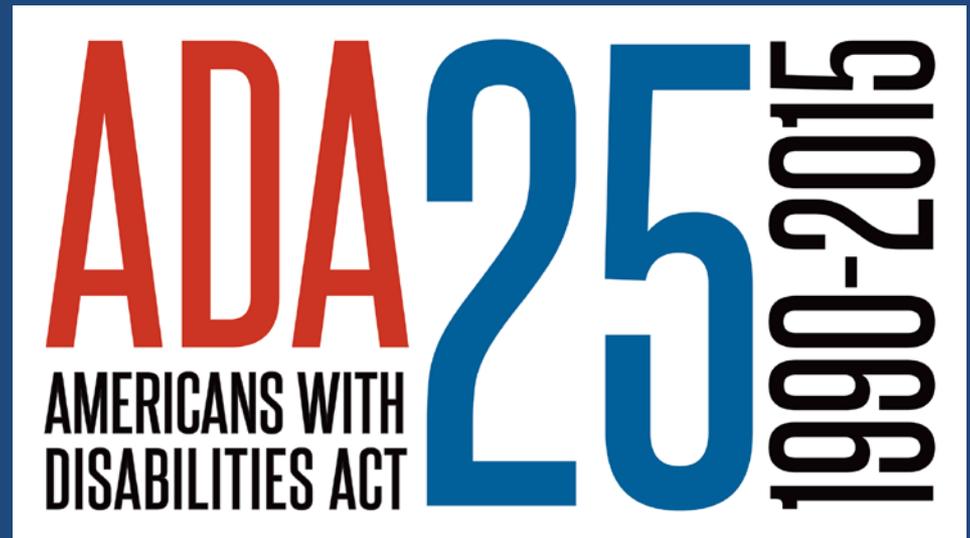
The ADA is a wide-ranging civil rights law that prohibits, under certain circumstances, discrimination based on disability. It affords similar protections against discrimination to Americans as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which made discrimination based on race, religion, sex, national origin, and other characteristics illegal.

<https://www.ada.gov>

Goals and Outcomes of ADA

Improved Access to:

- Employment
- Education
- Facilities
- Services



Impact on both public and private organizations

Federal Definition of a Disability

The ADA defines a covered disability as
"a physical or mental impairment that
substantially limits a major life activity"

Determination of whether any particular condition is considered a disability is made on a case by case basis. Certain conditions are excluded as disabilities, such as substance abuse and visual impairment that is correctable by prescription lenses.

2010 U.S. Census

56.7 million people in the U. S. (age 5 and over) have a disability - nearly 1 in 5 U.S. residents, or 19%

**29.4 million were between the ages of 21 and 64.
- 41% of these were employed.**

**19.2 million were 65 and over.
- Those with disabilities comprised 50% of this age group**

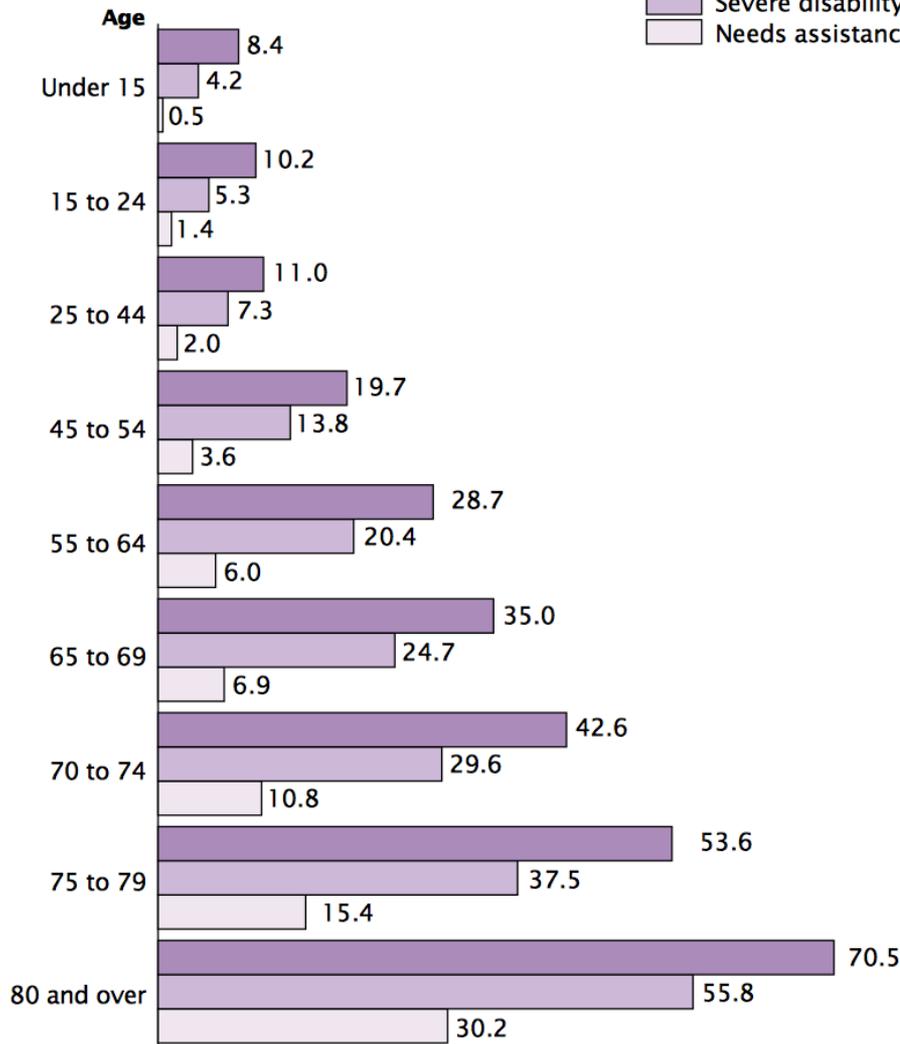
Number closer to 60 million in that many do not self-identify as having a disability and mental differences were not included.

By the year 2030, the Census Bureau estimates that 1 out of 4 people in the US will be over the age of 65. The profile of these individuals is changing in that they are healthier, work longer and are more interested in volunteer, recreational and cultural opportunities than in previous generations.

Figure 2.
**Disability Prevalence and the Need for Assistance
 by Age: 2010**

(In percent)

Any disability
 Severe disability
 Needs assistance



Note: The need for assistance with activities of daily living was not asked of children under 6 years.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Survey of Income and Program Participation, May–August 2010.

DISABILITY PREVALENCE

Approximately 56.7 million people living in US had some kind of disability in 2010. This accounted for 18.7 % of the 303.9 million people in the non-institutionalized population.

About 12.6 percent or 38.3 million people had a severe disability. The total number of people with a disability increased by 2.2 million from 2005.

Of people aged 6 years and older, 12.3 million or 4.4 % needed assistance with one or more ADLs or IADLs, an increase from both the number and percentage that needed assistance in 2005.

Types of Issues:

The probability of having a severe disability is only 1 in 20 for those 15 - 24 while it is 1 in 4 for those 65 - 69.

About 8.1 million people had difficulty seeing, including 2.0 million who were blind or unable to see.

About 7.6 million people experienced difficulty hearing, including 1.1 million whose difficulty was severe. About 5.6 million used a hearing aid.

Roughly 30.6 million had difficulty walking or climbing stairs, or used a wheelchair, cane, crutches or walker.

About 15.5 million adults had difficulties with one or more instrumental activities of daily living. These activities included doing housework, using the phone and preparing meals. Of these, nearly 12 million required assistance.

Approximately 2.4 million had Alzheimer's disease, senility or dementia.

Past Experiences

Developing and implementing programs

Docent and staff training

Professional development workshops

Collaborative planning

Both fine art and history focused

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

Museum of the City of New York

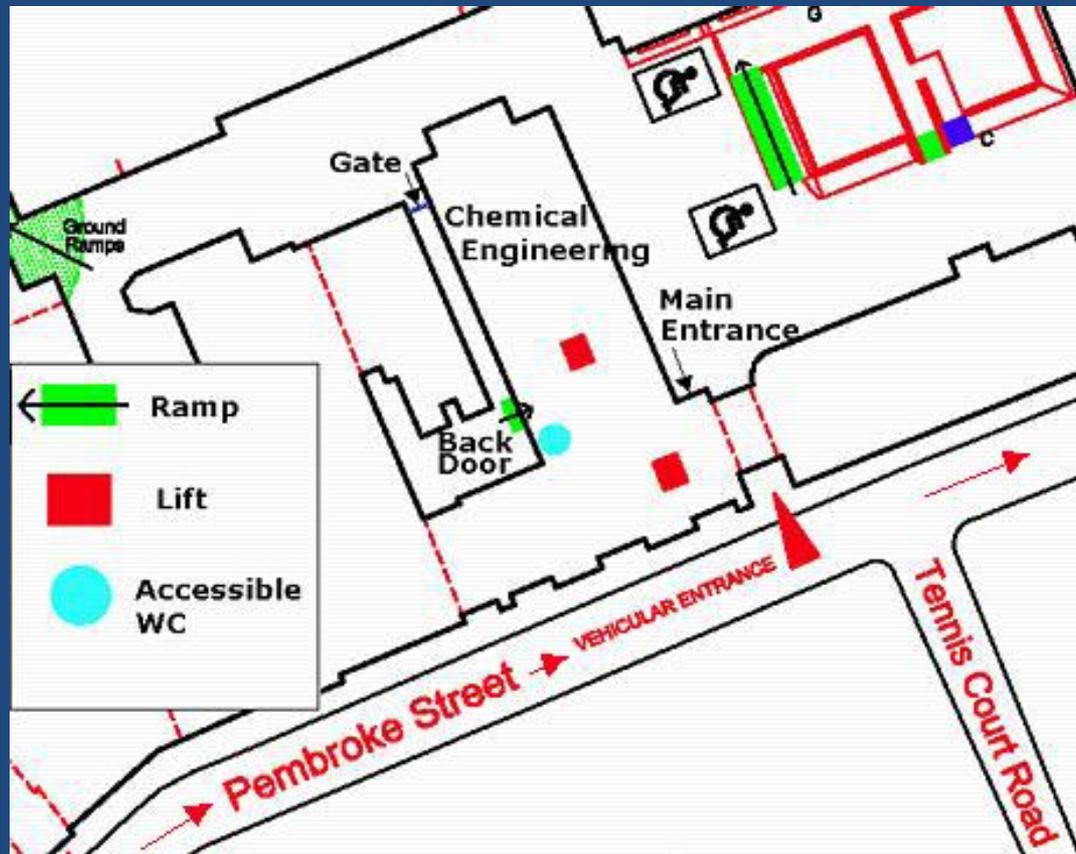
Museum of Modern Art

South Street Seaport Museum

Brooklyn Museum of Art

Museum Access Consortium

THE PHYSICAL PLANT



“The major issue is accessibility with dignity. It is not enough to get into a building just any old way. I like to get into a building at the front with everyone else, where the rest of society gets in.”

Itzhak Perlman, violinist

Historic properties are irreplaceable and require special care to ensure their preservation for future generations. Access to these sites are a civil right and organizations must assess ways to make them accessible & consistent with historic preservation standards.



Possible Solutions:

Accessible Entrances: ramps, elevators

New Additions: adjacent access

Modifications: widened openings, retrofitting doors

Programming: identify alternative methods of providing access such as virtual tours, audio-visual opportunities, interpretive panels in an alternative location, tactile models, distance learning

EXHIBITIONS & SIGNAGE



Exhibition area fully accessible

Threshold max. 2,5 cm, gently pitched ramp, the width of the doors and passages at least 85 cm, wheelchair lift



Accessible toilet

The width of the door at least 80 cm, free space for turning 1,5 m, next to the toilet seat at least 80 cm space



Disabled parking

Close to the stepless entrance a parking space that is at least 3,6 m wide and 5 m long, indicated by a disabled sign



Induction loop

A system that helps deaf people who use a hearing aid



Guided tours for special groups by request

Plain language, sign language, audio description

Smithsonian Guidelines for
Accessible Exhibition Design

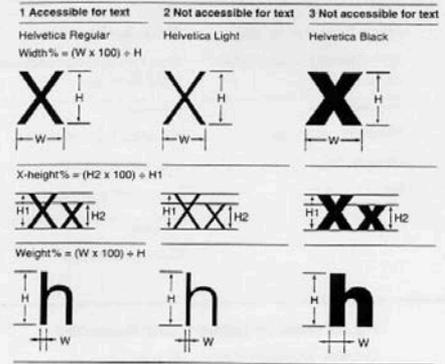


Smithsonian Accessibility Program

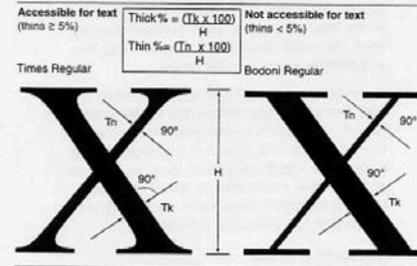
Design for Accessibility
 A Cultural Administrator's Handbook

Fig. 13 Font Proportions (continued)
 Courtesy Parks Canada
 Design Guidelines for Media Accessibility

Font Proportions



Thick and Thin Stroke Weights



The following characteristics of type make reading difficult for this audience see Fig 14):

- condensed, extended, or relatively light typefaces
- a wide variation in stroke width
- thin strokes that fade, break, or disappear
- letter and numbers that closely resemble each other (e.g. the shapes of "d" and "a" or "6" and "8").

Books on Exhibit Design

Universal Design for Learning Guidelines



© 2011 by CAST. All rights reserved. www.cast.org, www.udlcenter.org
 APA Citation: CAST (2011). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.0*. Wakefield, MA: Author.

Universal Design Strategies

**STYLE MANUAL FOR CAMPUS AND EXHIBITS SIGNAGE AND LABELS
CHESAPEAKE BAY MARITIME MUSEUM
March 14, 2007**

Definition of Signage

For the purposes of CBMM, signage is any information, images, or graphics posted on CBMM grounds, or taken on the road to represent the Museum, that is to be read or viewed by visitors and/or the public. This includes pricing information, directional signs, admissions information, sale items, hours of operation, events, and interpretive signs for boats, outdoor objects, and buildings.

General Design Guidelines-

Provide a strong contrast between type and background

Set body copy in type according to specifications below

Use both uppercase and lower case letters in body copy

Use no hyphenation

Limit use of italics

Use line lengths of 50-60 characters

Limit labels to a maximum of 50 words (if longer break into multiple labels)

In general, do not use more than one type font in a single label

A lead question or statement should appear at the top of the label in larger font

The text body should generally appear just below the lead, or out of the way of the focal point of the image

The focal point of the image should generally appear below the text body

PROGRAMMING



“Accessibility does not have to be expensive. Experience has repeatedly shown that accommodations designed to serve people with disabilities generally improve the quality of programs for the broader public. In short, museums cannot afford to make their programs accessible to all visitors”

Janice Majewski, Smithsonian Institution

Approach to program development has three components:

- 1.) Assessment of the group
- 2.) Coaching the staff based on the nature of the group—not a one size fits all approach
- 3.) Transformation: Asking the question-
How do we help invite guests with physical and developmental differences?

General recommendations:

Use language that puts people first. [L
SEP]

Rather than defining people by their disabilities, it's best to use language that acknowledges the person first, then the disability.

Always ask, never assume. [L
SEP]

It's welcoming and always appropriate to make eye contact with visitors when they enter your site and offer assistance. Be prepared for some people to say they do not want assistance.

Accessibility Plan

- Statement of Commitment/Values
- Community Engagement
- Physical Plant
- Exhibitions
- Programming- assistive devices
- Visitor Experience- signage, services
- Staff/Board/Volunteer Policy
- Training
- Communications- website, social media, collateral material
- Service Animals
- Facility Rentals

Statement of Commitment

The Manitoba Museum is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We believe in inclusion. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in ways that allow them to maintain their dignity and independence. We are committed to meeting the needs of people who face accessibility barriers. We will do this by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers, and by meeting the requirements of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA).



Improving accessibility at New York's
museums for visitors of all abilities

MAC consists of representatives from various museum departments throughout the New York City Metropolitan area and members and representatives of the disability community. Members of MAC exchange information, ideas and resources and provide a network of mutual support.

Museum Access Consortium members include about 100 cultural institutions from the metropolitan NYC area that are diverse in size and type of institution as well as service organizations, educational institutions, design firms and consultants. The Museum Access Consortium includes among its members persons with personal and professional experience with disabilities and accessibility. Participants in MAC represent institutions, organizations, consultants, and disability advocates.

The Museum Access Consortium (MAC) strives to enable people with disabilities to access cultural facilities of all types. We define accessibility broadly, to include architectural, physical, programmatic, communication, attitudinal and other forms of access. We take as a basic tenet that increasing accessibility for people with disabilities increases accessibility for everyone.

Regular meetings addressing topics in accessibility

Opportunities to network, share ideas and build support in your efforts to make your institution accessible

Outings to metropolitan area cultural institutions and service organizations to view accessibility components

MAC membership is free.



Resources

Guidelines and resources for cultural professionals to use to provide more accessible facilities and programs for people with disabilities.

Types

Best Practices

Submit

Artists, Disability & Our Cultural Institutions

Artists, Disability & Our Cultural Institutions Thursday, May 23, 2019 "This transcription provides a meaning-for-meaning summary to facilitate communication access. This language has not been reviewed or approved by the speakers and should not be used for direct quotation." Nia I'man Smith: Greetings, everyone...

Mindful Communication: Language and Disability Discussion and Best Practices

Mindful Communication: Language and Disability Discussion and Best Practices Thursday, February 7th, 2019 "This transcript provides a meaning-for-meaning summary to facilitate communication access. TypeWell speech-to-text service may not be a fully verbatim record of the proceedings. This language has not been reviewed or approved.

MAC Resources Page

MAC welcomes your participation at meetings, sharing information, or hosting workshops.

To become a member email :
membership@macaccess.org

Website:

<http://museumaccessconsortium.org>





Thank You