

# ACCESSIBILITY DESIGN FOR ALL



## Equality & universal design

Being aware of your social responsibilities is important. Equal, kind, and openhearted treatment of others is the foundation of social equality and inclusion, and an essence of wellbeing tourism. Personal engagement, communication, and accessibility are important topics. Treat everyone in the same way. Engage yourself in achieving positive interactions with your colleagues and guests. Be openminded and show understanding for differences in culture, personality, and for people's different needs.

### Designing and facilitating your venue equally and inclusively

When designing your venue or modifying your facilities and infrastructure it's important to work with an inclusive approach. Equal and accessible wellbeing offers should be produced with consideration of diverse needs and abilities of all people throughout your design or development process. Universal design is simply a well-designed product, service or environment that meet people's needs.

Rather than designing or modifying facilities and infrastructure to diversities, (causing the opposite to equality and inclusion) make it a norm to work with equal accessibility. This approach is called "Design for all" ([EN17161:2019](#)).





## The seven principles of Design for all

The primary approach is to design your offers and take measures so that they work for as many people as possible instead of creating specific solutions for a specific target group. There are seven principles that guide you in the initial designing process of an environment, a service, a product and communication to be as inclusive as possible. Following the guidelines, you can avoid accessibility adjustments later in your development process.

**1) Equitable usage:** Your design is useful to people with diverse abilities.

**Guideline:** Provide the same means of use for all: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing of guests or customers. Necessities for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all guests or customers. Make the design appealing to all users.

**2) Flexibility in usage:** The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

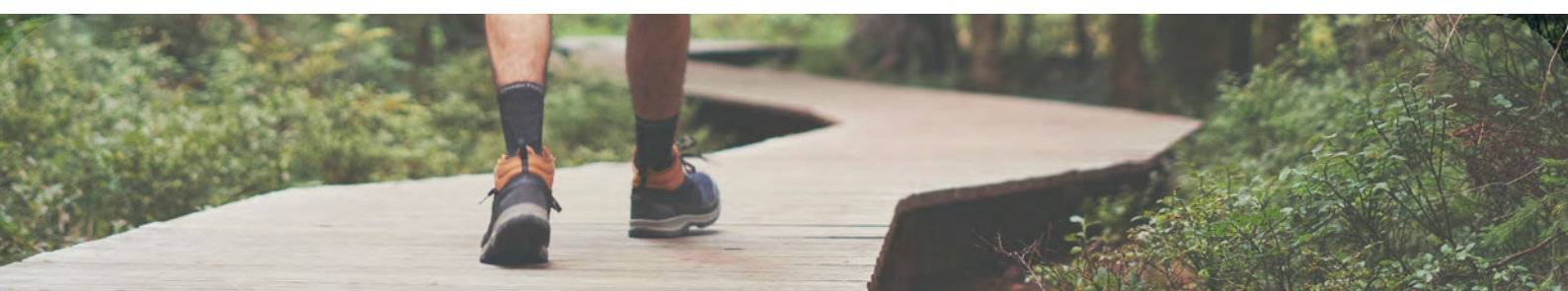
**Guideline:** Provide choices in the methods of usage. Accommodate right- or left-handed access and usage and facilitate the user's accuracy and precision. Provide adaptability to the guest's/user's pace.

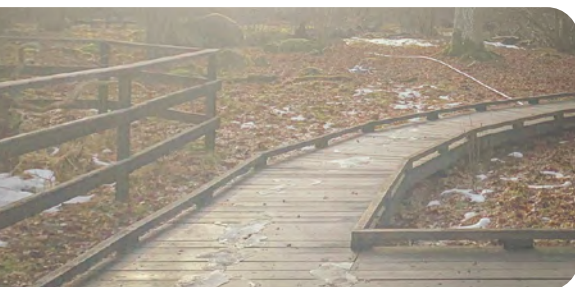
**3) Simple and intuitive usage:** Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills or current concentration level.

**Guideline:** Eliminate unnecessary complexity, be consistent with user expectations and intuition. Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills. Arrange information consistent with its importance and provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

**4) Perceptible information:** The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

**Guideline:** Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings. Maximize "legibility" of essential information. Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions). Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.





**5) Tolerance for error:** The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

**Guideline:** Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors. Eliminate, isolate, or shield most used, most accessible, and hazardous elements to avoid adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions. Provide warnings of hazards and errors and provide fail safe features in the design. Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

**6) Low physical effort:** The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue. **Guideline:** Allow your guest or customer to maintain a neutral body position. Use reasonable operating forces, minimize repetitive actions and sustained physical effort.

**7) Size and space for approach and use:** Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, handling, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

**Guideline:** Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user. Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user. Accommodate variations in hand and grip size. Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

## Examples of how to work with the principles

**Equitable usage:** Toilets are accessible to all. Ensure that your toilet/toilets are large enough to be used with a wheelchair and a baby stroller. Provide handles along the walls and doors as well as around the sink and WC to offer stability for those who need it. Make sure that the mirror is of adequate size and height. The faucet in the sink should be useable by all and be facilitated with one longer handle including the warm- and cold-water flow. Design the toilet without a doorstep. The signage on the door should be unspecified and universal and not depict an image of a man/woman or an impaired.

**Flexibility in usage:** Facilitate doors with a full format door handle and an automatic door opener with an adjustable time counter. Ensure that the opening direction is clearly perceptible.







**Perceptible information:** Facilitate your hiking trails, beaches or other nature areas with information boards. Create a natural entrance to your trail or destination, add information boards to make sure your visitors can orient themselves and make them aware of what they are about to experience.

Typography and texts should be large and clearly perceptible in all weather condition (bright light or dawn/dusk), readable from a certain distance and with an adequate amount of text – to keep the readers focused. Add pictograms, photos or images to enhance your information, add additional languages and offer your texts in braille (tactile writing system).

**Low physical effort:** Visitors can independently access facilities and infrastructure. Toilets, entrances and pathways should be designed to ensure guests to move around and access facilities independently (e.g. waste bins, showers and toilets on a camping site).

**Size and space for approach and use:** Allow free movement possibilities in your venue. If you have a café or restaurant where the guest should supply itself with e.g. cutlery or napkins, ensure the supplies are in reach from a sitting position (from a wheelchair), is reachable with only one hand and that there is enough space to move around. If you have a shop, ensure that products, signs, and other supplies or services offered are reachable and perceivable from a sitting position without having to move out of an aid. Ensure that there is enough space between shelves, tables, chairs and signs.

#### Four tips on how you can start engaging yourself in universal design

- Before designing your offer, or modifying your venue or activity, inform yourself and broaden your knowledge about accessibility.
- Read up on the European standards for universal design “Design for all” ([EN17161:2019](#)).
- Hire an accessibility consultant and make a SWOT analysis on universal design.
- Try doing empathy exercises, experience your business or venue from a different angle.

More information about universal design can be found here: <http://universaldesign.ie/>

