

Printing Instructions

- Set printer settings:
 - A4 paper
 - Print on both side, flip on long edge.
- Once printed, discard this page (alternatively print page range 3 - 24 only)
- Bind toolkit with easily removable binding such as slide clips.



Disability Access and Inclusion Business Toolkit

Free resources for businesses to better support people with disability

In this toolkit

'Excellent Service for Everyone, Every Time' Signage

Display this sign where staff can read it and use it to strengthen their confidence in serving customers with disability.

Accessibility Quick Reference Card

Record the nearest accessible toilets and parking on this card so staff can share the information quickly when needed.

Signs of Inclusion Poster

A helpful guide for businesses to learn Auslan signs and better support communication with the Deaf community.

Physical Accessibility Self-Audit Checklist

A quick checklist to help businesses assess how accessible their space is for all customers.

Digital Accessibility Self-Audit Checklist

A quick checklist to help businesses assess how accessible their website, online content, and digital services are for people with disability.

Access and Inclusion Quick Wins

Information on free and low-cost support available to help businesses improve their access and inclusion.

About this toolkit

This Business Empowerment Toolkit has been created to support local businesses in building more inclusive, accessible, and sustainable practices. Every resource within this kit has been co-designed with people with disability from across several regions, ensuring the tools are practical, relevant, and grounded in lived experience.

By using this toolkit, businesses can strengthen their ability to welcome and engage customers with disability, an important and often overlooked market segment. Inclusive practices not only broaden your customer base but also build stronger community trust, improve service quality, and create environments where every customer feels valued. This kit offers practical steps to help businesses grow through accessibility, inclusion, and genuine connection.

Photo credit (front cover): Kelly Pilgrim-Byrne
Description: A young man wearing a sunflower lanyard sits at an outdoor table, assisting an adult and a young girl who have approached him.

Excellent service for everyone every time.



- 1 Treat everyone the same.**
Say Hi, introduce yourself and talk to the person with the disability, not just their support worker if they have one.
- 2 Ask them what they need.**
If someone looks like they could use some help, don't assume you know what they need - ask them.
- 3 Don't help right away.**
They may want to do it themselves, even if it takes a little longer.
- 4 No two people are the same.**
A disability doesn't define a person. We're all unique and different so treat everyone as an individual.
- 5 Empathy not sympathy.**
Show empathy and understanding with your actions and words, rather than sympathy.
- 6 It's more than a wheelchair.**
A wheelchair is an extension of a person. Don't lean on it or push it without asking.
- 7 Don't pat, feed or distract the dogs.**
Companion/assistance/guide dogs are working animals, so let them get on with their important job.
- 8 Know where all the accessible places are.**
Get to know the local accessible places like rest spots, toilets, easy access food places and, of course, the Sensory Space.
- 9 Use respectful language.**
Always use respectful, disability-friendly, person-first language, such as 'a person with disability', or 'a wheelchair user'.
- 10 Treat everyone the way you'd like to be treated.**
We're all individuals and we're only human, so always be caring, respectful and kind.

Accessibility quick reference card

Parking and toilets

Business information

Name:

Address:

Parking information

ACROD bays:

Toilet information

Public toilet:

Accessible toilet:

Changing places facility:



Cut along the dotted line. The above card can be used to quickly reference the nearest location of Accessible Parking and Toilets.

How to use this card

Fill in the information

Write down the locations of the nearest ACROD bays, toilets, and accessible toilets.

Keep it handy

Place this card by the phone or counter for quick reference when someone asks.

Helpful websites

Public toilet map
toiletmap.gov.au



Changing places facilities
changingplaces.org.au



Check your local council website to see if they have an Accessibility Map.

Signs of inclusion

Learn basic Auslan to support inclusive customer service

- Practise using these five Auslan signs to communicate more inclusively with the Deaf community.
- Use eye contact and friendly body language.
- If unsure, writing things down or using visual aids can help.



Hello



How much?



Help



Write

Toilet

To ask a question, raise your eyebrows and lean forward with any sign.



To learn more about Auslan
scan the QR code or visit
signplanet.net

Designed in
collaboration with
people with disabilities



Physical Accessibility

Self-Audit Checklist for businesses



This checklist helps businesses and community spaces assess how accessible their environments are for people with disability.

By completing this self-audit, you will:

- **Identify** areas for improvement to enhance access and inclusion.
- **Recognise** existing strengths that support accessibility.
- **Understand** limitations that may not be easily changed.

Even when changes aren't possible, knowing these limitations is still valuable. It allows you to provide clear, accurate information to customers who may need to plan ahead, supporting their independence and building trust in your business.

Entering the premise

- Parking spaces are close to the entrance to minimize travel distance.
- Accessible bays are clearly marked and have appropriate signage.
- Pathways have smooth, non-slip surfaces to prevent falls.
- Pathways are wide enough for mobility devices to pass without obstruction.
- Pathways are well-maintained and free of debris or hazards.
- Transitions from carpark to entrance are barrier-free (no steps, curbs, or uneven surfaces).
- Clear and visible signage guides users from parking to entrance.

External signage

- Signage is placed at a height visible to all, including wheelchair users and people of shorter stature.
- Entry and exit points are clearly marked and easy to identify.
- Signage uses high contrast colours for better visibility.
- Fonts are clear and legible, with appropriate size and spacing.

Access within the premises

- Premises are navigable by individual's using wheelchairs, prams, or walkers.
- Clear signage is provided throughout to guide customers and employees.
- Pathways and spaces are free of physical barriers and easy to move through.
- Lighting is adequate and consistent throughout the premises.
- Poorly lit areas are addressed to reduce risks of slips, trips, and falls.
- Signage is clear and accessible, including information on emergency exits and hazards.
- Safety information is clearly communicated and easy to understand.

Ramps, stairs and lifts

- Stairs are made with non-slip materials to prevent falls.
- Handrails are installed for support on both sides of stairs and ramps.
- Continuous handrails run from top to bottom for consistent support.
- Lifts are clearly signed and easy to locate.
- Lifts include audible announcements for floor levels and directions.
- Lift call buttons feature tactile elements or braille for accessibility.

Bathrooms and changerooms

- Sufficient space for a wheelchair to turn around comfortably.
- Grab rails are installed near toilets and changing areas for support.
- Emergency alarms are available and easy to activate.
- Seating includes space for a wheelchair alongside.
- Benches or seats are at an appropriate height for ease of use.
- Sink, mirror, and shelves are at a suitable height for wheelchair users.
- Doors and curtains are easy to open and close for people with limited strength or dexterity.
- Staff are aware of the location of accessible toilets and can assist when needed.

General accessibility considerations

- Service desks are at a suitable height for wheelchair users to interact comfortably.
- The premises welcome assistance animals and accommodate their presence .

Physical Accessibility Self-Audit Check list

Notes:

Digital Accessibility

Self-Audit Checklist for businesses



These checklist's provides **simple, practical steps** to make your:

- **Website** easier to navigate and understand.
- **Online store** more usable for all customers.
- **Social media** posts more inclusive and engaging.
- It also includes **quick tips, free tools, and support contacts** to help you get started.

Review your digital platforms and make small changes that have a big impact.

Website accessibility

- Use clear, simple language (avoid jargon).
- Use correct heading structure (Heading 1 for titles, Heading 2 for sections, etc.).
- Choose easy-to-read fonts (like Arial or Calibri, minimum size 12pt).
- Add alt text to every image (describe what the image shows).
- Make sure your website works without a mouse (use Tab and Enter keys).
- Use strong color contrast (e.g. dark text on a light background).
- Provide captions or transcripts for videos.
- Use descriptive links and buttons (e.g. "Book a Table" not "Click Here").
- Avoid flashing or fast-moving animations.
- Test your website with free accessibility checkers (like WAVE or Accessibility.org.au tools).

Online Shopping Sites (e.g. Shopify, Wix, Squarespace)

- Add alt text to all product images.
- Write clear product descriptions in plain English.
- Ensure navigation works with a keyboard.
- Make sure your checkout process is simple and screen reader friendly.
- Use good colour contrast on text, buttons, and backgrounds.
- Add clear focus indicators (e.g. outlines when tabbing through forms).
- Ensure payment buttons are clearly labelled (e.g. "Pay with Card").
- Avoid pop-ups that can't be easily closed with keyboard or screen reader.

Social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)

- Use alt text when uploading images. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn allow this.
- Describe images and posters in your captions.
- Use CamelCase for hashtags (e.g. #DigitalAccessibility not #digitalaccessbility).
- Add captions to all videos (use auto-captioning or apps).
- Limit emoji use (place them at the end of posts).
- Avoid all CAPS text (can be hard to read with screen readers).
- Keep text short, clear and easy to understand.
- Use plain backgrounds with strong contrast for quote cards or announcements.

Quick tips for improving digital access

- Test your website using only a keyboard.
- Ask a customer with a disability to give feedback.
- Review 3 recent posts and add image descriptions if missing.
- Use tools like <https://wave.webaim.org> or <https://www.accessibility.org.au/> for a quick accessibility scan.
- Review the checkout process on your online store – try it without a mouse.

Need some help?

Free online resources are available to help you along the way, such as::

- <https://www.w3.org/WAI/test-evaluate/>
- <https://wave.webaim.org>
- <https://www.accessibility.org.au>

For additional support, contact your local Community Capacity Building Officer or local council disability inclusion team for free support.

Digital accessibility checklist for businesses

Notes:

Access and Inclusion Quick Wins for Businesses



No Cost Options

Complete this free **Introduction to Disability Awareness eLearning** which takes about 90 to 120 minutes to complete.
disabilityawareness.com.au



Request a free **Guide Dog Friendly Business sticker** from Guide Dogs WA to display at your entrance.
www.guidedogswa.com.au

Watch this **1-minute video** and learn how to support clients with **non-visible disabilities**.
<https://youtu.be/xgfRQDD2q0w>



Low Cost Options



Learn about **Communication access** and purchase **chat boards** here.
shop.scopeaust.org.au/shop

Register for a Cérge **companion site** to easily share accessibility info with your customers before they visit.
<https://cerge.app/>



Acknowledgement

APM Communities acknowledges and thanks those whose lived experience and expertise have guided the creation of this Disability Access and Inclusion Business Toolkit. These resources were co-designed with the experts themselves—people with disability who generously shared their insights to help build tools that are practical, welcoming, and meaningful for businesses.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the Armadale Business Empowerment Working Group, including Matty, Elaine, and Nick, whose contributions shaped the direction, design, and tone of the toolkit.

- Matty championed the importance of creating a safe, supportive communication approach so businesses feel confident engaging without fear or pressure.
- Elaine brought forward creative and engaging ideas for capturing business attention and making information feel accessible and appealing.
- Nick advocated strongly for educating businesses and ensuring the resources maintain a professional and polished look that reflects the value of inclusion.

We also acknowledge the contributions of the Rockingham Access and Inclusion Working Group, including Yvette and Trent, who played a key role in shaping additional components of this toolkit.

- Yvette was instrumental in the development of the Signs of Inclusion poster, ensuring it reflects what genuine welcome and accessibility mean to people with disability.
- Trent's passion for inclusion inspired a collaboration between APM Communities and the Companion Card Program, resulting in an informational resource for businesses, available separately upon request.

APM Communities is grateful to all people with disability involved across the region. Your insights, creativity, and lived experience continue to guide the development of tools that empower businesses to be more inclusive, more accessible, and more confident in welcoming everyone.

This toolkit has been created to support businesses in strengthening their access and inclusion for people with disability. Our mission is to equip the wider community with practical, free resources that help build a more accessible and inclusive society for everyone.

We welcome organisations who share this purpose to use and share these tools broadly. If you wish to adapt or rebrand any part of these materials, we simply ask that you acknowledge that they were originally developed by **APM Communities, in collaboration with people with disability.**

If you have general questions about the NDIS, please contact 1800 276 522 or email APMNET@ndis.gov.au

apm.net.au/ndis

