

ASSISTING THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

1. Meeting and Greeting

Always treat a blind or visually impaired person normally. Introduce yourself first before offering help.



2. Guiding

Walk side by side, with the blind person setting the pace, and holding the arm of the helper (hand to arm).



3. Narrow Spaces



Tell your partner of the change in surroundings and then move your own guiding arm towards the middle of your back. Your partner should automatically step in behind you.

4. Steps, Stairs and Slopes



Tell your partner whether you are going up or down and allow time for him/her to hold the handrail. Go one step ahead and take a slightly longer stride on the last step to allow your partner space.

5. Doorways



Tell your partner if the door opens towards or away from you. Go through the door with your partner on the hinge side. Open the door with your guiding hand and allow your partner to feel the handle, follow you through the door and close the door behind both of you.

6. Kerbs and Roads



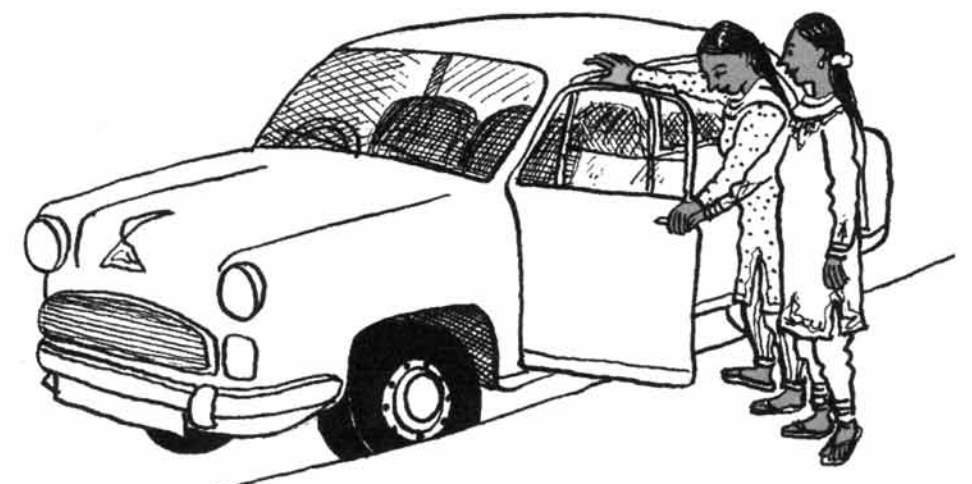
Tell your partner if you are approaching 'kerb up' or 'kerb down' (the step onto or off a pavement or sidewalk), and pause slightly before taking the step. Cross the road using the shortest distance and go straight across.

7. Seating



Guide your partner to the seat and explain what type it is, e.g. upright chair, low sofa, armchair, stool. Ask them to let go of your arm and place their hand on the back or on the seat itself. He/she will now be able to judge its height and sit down safely.

8. Travelling



Tell your partner if he/she is getting into the back or the front seat of the car and whether it is facing left or right. Place your guiding hand on the door handle and allow him/her to slide his/her grip hand down your arm to the door handle. With the other hand he/she will be able to note the car roof and lower his/her head appropriately. At the end of the journey, get out first and help your partner out.

Remember!

9. "Don't pull me!"



10. "Walk with me!"

