

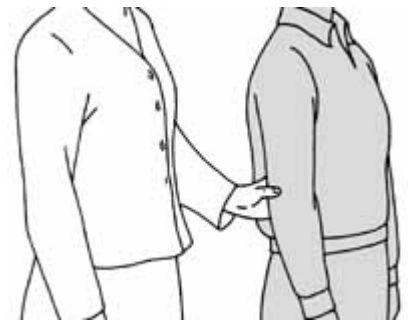
Sighted Guide Techniques for use by Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired

The use of sighted guide techniques can be used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired, to help them travel safely in any environment. Using a sighted guide allows individuals who are blind or visual impairment a comfortable way to travel safely in any environment. The sighted guide technique is felt to be the most efficient way for a person who is blind or visual impairment to travel with a sighted person.

Offer Your Services

To offer your services as a sighted guide, approach the person who is blind or visually impaired, introduce yourself and ask if they would like your help. Do not grab, push or pull a person with vision loss, regardless of their age. If they indicate they would like your assistance, verbally offer your arm and brush it against their hand or arm.

The person being guided should lightly grasp the guide's arm, thumb out, just above their elbow. Right elbow of the guide will be grasped by the left hand of the person being guided, and vice versa. The left elbow of the guide will be grasped by the right hand of the person being guided. For children, have them grasp your wrist or hold your hand.



When an individual acts as a human guide, they should walk a half step ahead of the person they are guiding.

Narrow Areas and Doorways

When approaching a narrow area or doorway, the sighted guide will move their forearm and hand to rest against the lower portion of their back, palm facing outward. The person being guiding should slide their hand down to their guide's wrist and move directly behind the guide, at arm's length.



Curbs and Stairs

The guide should approach curbs, stairs and doorways squarely, never at an angle. At doorways, the guide should tell the person being guided which way the door opens so the person being guided can hold the door as both pass through.

The guide should let the person know when they are approaching steps. At steps, the guide should inform the person they are guiding whether the steps go up or down and how many steps there are.



The guide should position the person so their free hand is closest to the rail. The guide should pause at the first step and at each landing.

Chairs and Seating

When approaching a seat, the guide should tell the person they are guiding that they are in front of or beside the seat. The guide will then place their guide arm hand on the chair back or chair arm and allow the guided person to follow the guide's arm down to the seat. The guide does not need to help the person they are guiding to sit down, unless the person being guided is frail or unsteady.



White Cane

A white cane can be a very helpful tool for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Often, a white cane is used as a mobility tool for independent travel purposes. However, the white cane can also be used as an identification tool for others who may not realize the individual has a visual impairment.

With this in mind, even if you, a family member or your friend is using sighted guide technique, a white cane can add another level of safety and security when moving in both familiar and unfamiliar setting.

It is important to know that when a white cane is used for independent travel purposes, proper training by a qualified orientation and mobility specialist is required.

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