

# *Disability Campaign.org*

## Tips for Accessible Shopping



If you have a disability, you've probably asked yourself how you can make your shopping experience more enjoyable—and practical! Well, there are ways in which you can shop more efficiently and safely. Remember, your disability should not hamper your shopping experience. Below are a few shopping tips for you.

Furthermore, if you or someone you know owns a store, share this tip sheet with him/her. Included are some tips for business owners on how to provide accessible options for customers with a variety of disabilities.

### *Accessible Shopping tips for the customer*

1. **Avoid shopping on weekends or around holidays** because of the overcrowded malls. Not only are the stores more crowded, accessible parking may also be difficult to find due to more people shopping.
2. **Try to shop at department stores**, as they tend to have more room rather than smaller boutiques. Larger stores have more clerks to assist, accessible dressing rooms, and a larger selection of items.

3. **Do not hesitate to ask for assistance.** Store clerks are there to serve you. If you do not receive the assistance you need, ask to speak to the store manager or someone else who may be able to help you.
4. **View products online before shopping** so you have a better idea of what items are available for purchase. If you find something that interests you, make note of the store item number, color, size, and price. Then, once you arrive at the store, provide the item details to a store clerk so that they can search the item for you. You can even call ahead to ask if your item of interest is available at the store.
5. **Purchase via phone or the internet.** Many stores now have options for you to shop from a distance. Your items of purchase can be delivered to you or to someone else, in the case of gift shopping.
6. **Make a shopping/grocery list.** By having what you need in mind or written/typed in front of you, you can go in and out of the store more quickly without forgetting something you need. You can also hand your shopping/grocery list to a store clerk and kindly ask them to help you find the items in the store and/or reach for them.
7. **Ask a friend to join you.** If you can, ask a friend to join you while you shop. Your friend may be more patient than a store clerk, as he/she has a better understanding of your needs, and can give you his/her opinion if you need to choose between two items.



### ***Accessible Shopping tips for the business owner and/or store clerk***

1. **When speaking to a person with a disability, don't yell.** Just because a person is older or has a disability, doesn't mean he/she can't hear you or understand you. Speak clearly, but not loudly or slowly, unless asked. If the customer is in a wheelchair, and you are able, get at his/her eye level when speaking to him/her.
2. **Make sure there is an accessible restroom** at the store if you make such facilities available to your customers. Provide signs large enough to read and in Braille.
3. **Be sure that portable racks don't crowd the aisles.** Customers who use wheelchairs or use blind canes need sufficient space to make their way through the aisles.

4. **Provide a clipboard at counters** for signing credit card receipts. For quadriplegics, you might even offer to hold it while they sign.

5. **Lower the volume of your store music.** Customers with invisible disabilities may have sensitivities to loud music, bright lights, fragrances, etc.



6. **Don't rush to help.** Upon the customer's entrance, say, "If you need any assistance, just let me know. I'm here to help." If the person asks for assistance or if it looks like they need it, ask them if you can do something to help. People with disabilities are just like people without a disability: they appreciate you respecting their privacy and independence, while offering a helping hand when needed.

7. **Provide an accessible entrance.** Make sure there is a ramp or curb cut between the store and the parking lot. Offer help if the customer is having difficulty opening doors. Make sure your door is wide enough or consider installing an electronic door that will open for customers with disabilities.

8. **Provide accessible fitting rooms.** Make sure there an accessible changing booth with a mirror. Take into consideration that a person with a disability may need their friend or assistance dog to help them while they are in the fitting room.



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