

# Make moving less stressful for people who are blind or have low vision

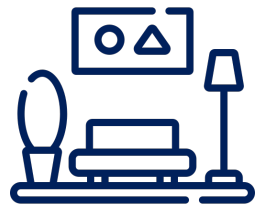
Customers who are blind or have low vision use their home organisation as a way to keep their independence.

The customer typically knows where everything is placed to make life easier for themselves. It avoids accidentally picking up a spoon instead of a fork because the cutlery has been put away wrong or pouring pepper on chips instead of salt. Therefore, you play a big role in keeping people independent and safe in their home.

1

## Pay attention to furniture placement and hazard reduction methods

Customers who are blind or have low vision orientate themselves a little differently than sighted people. They might have a mental map, count their steps, or move their coffee table to the side to avoid tripping. The customer might use their hand to follow the wall to the doorway, so hanging paintings at arm's length might be dangerous.



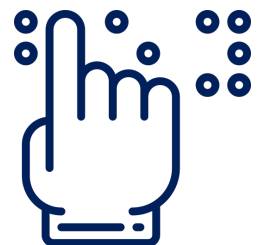
It's a good idea to take note of heights, distances and placement of furniture so you can replicate the same set up in the new space (as close as possible).

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## Be open to using your labels, as well as the customer's

If the customer is blind, they might use tactile stickers or a braille label maker to distinguish between boxes.

You don't need to learn how to read braille, but be open to using both your own methods and the customer's.



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### Pack by room, not by theme

It's easier to understand what item relates to a room rather than by theme.

For instance, the bedroom might include storage boxes and a cat bed. Pack them for the bedroom, not alongside similar items in other rooms.

It minimises confusion. The customer will know a missing item will be in one of seven boxes, rather than in every box in the house.



4

### It's useful to take photos of arrangements (cutlery, drawers contents)

Think about it - everyone places their cutlery differently. Take a photo or note how the customer arranges their drawers. This can help immensely when navigating a new space.

For example, they will know that the cupboard above the range hood is where the cooking oil should be, or find the cutting knives mounted to the left of the stove top near the sink.



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### Be patient and talk through what you're doing

Communication is key as the customer might not be able to see what you're doing. Let them know what you're packing or unpacking and where it is going.

Be descriptive. "I'm packing all the mugs into a cardboard box that I will put on the kitchen table."

While you're packing or unpacking, make sure to keep doorways and path clear. You might need to guide the customer through a room, so offer them your arm and they will grab your elbow and follow you. Identify obstacles as you walk.

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### Offer invoices, directions and itineraries in accessible formats

PDFs are sometimes difficult for screen reader software to read aloud.

Offer your invoices and directions in accessible formats (a simple Microsoft Word document or Google Docs is already a better option).

Best practice is to ask the customer what they prefer. Many use their device to vocalise emails or text messages to them.



# Communication Dos and Don'ts

## Do

- Identify yourself – don't assume the customer will recognise you by your voice. If you're in a group, do a roll call.
- Keep using body language; it affects the tone of your voice.
- Speak naturally and clearly.
- Use descriptive language. Avoid saying 'over there', say 'near the living room doorway' instead.

## Don'ts

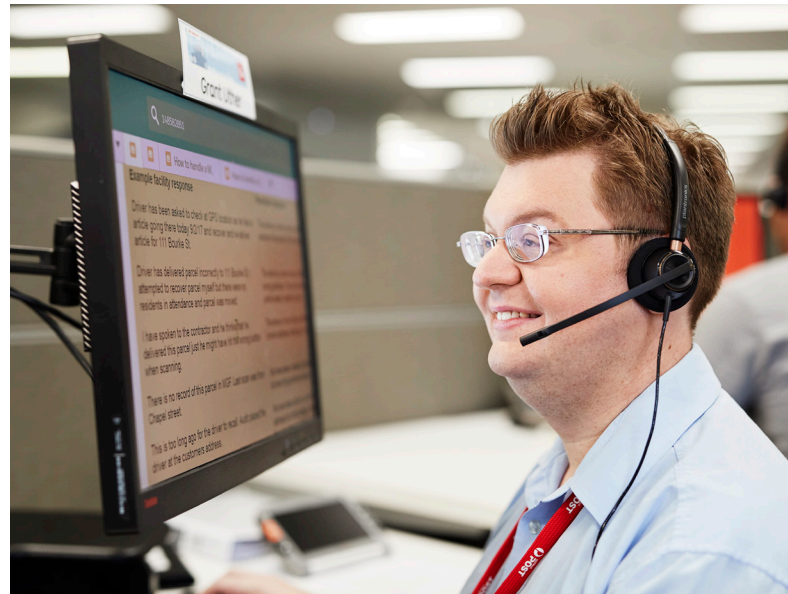
- Speak louder than normal.
- Assume someone needs help, ask first.

## Need more support?

### Speak to the experts

Vision Australia has a team of experts that can help you make your business more accessible to people with vision loss.

- Make your website and documents screen reader accessible with the Digital Access Consulting team.
- Understand the use of tactile markers by speaking to our occupational therapists.
- Learn how to guide a person who is blind or has low vision.



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