

Top 20 Tips for attractions

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Provide accessible ways for disabled customers to give feedback, acting and responding promptly to comments



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Provide an 'Access for All' section on your website



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Provide a detailed and accurate Accessibility Guide to promote your accessibility



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Ensure your website meets accessibility standards and all written communication with customers is available in accessible formats



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Provide sufficient accessible parking spaces and drop-off areas



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Provide a step-free entrance



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Always welcome assistance dogs



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Ask all your guests if they require any assistance with evacuation in an emergency. Record any specific arrangements



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Provide clear signage

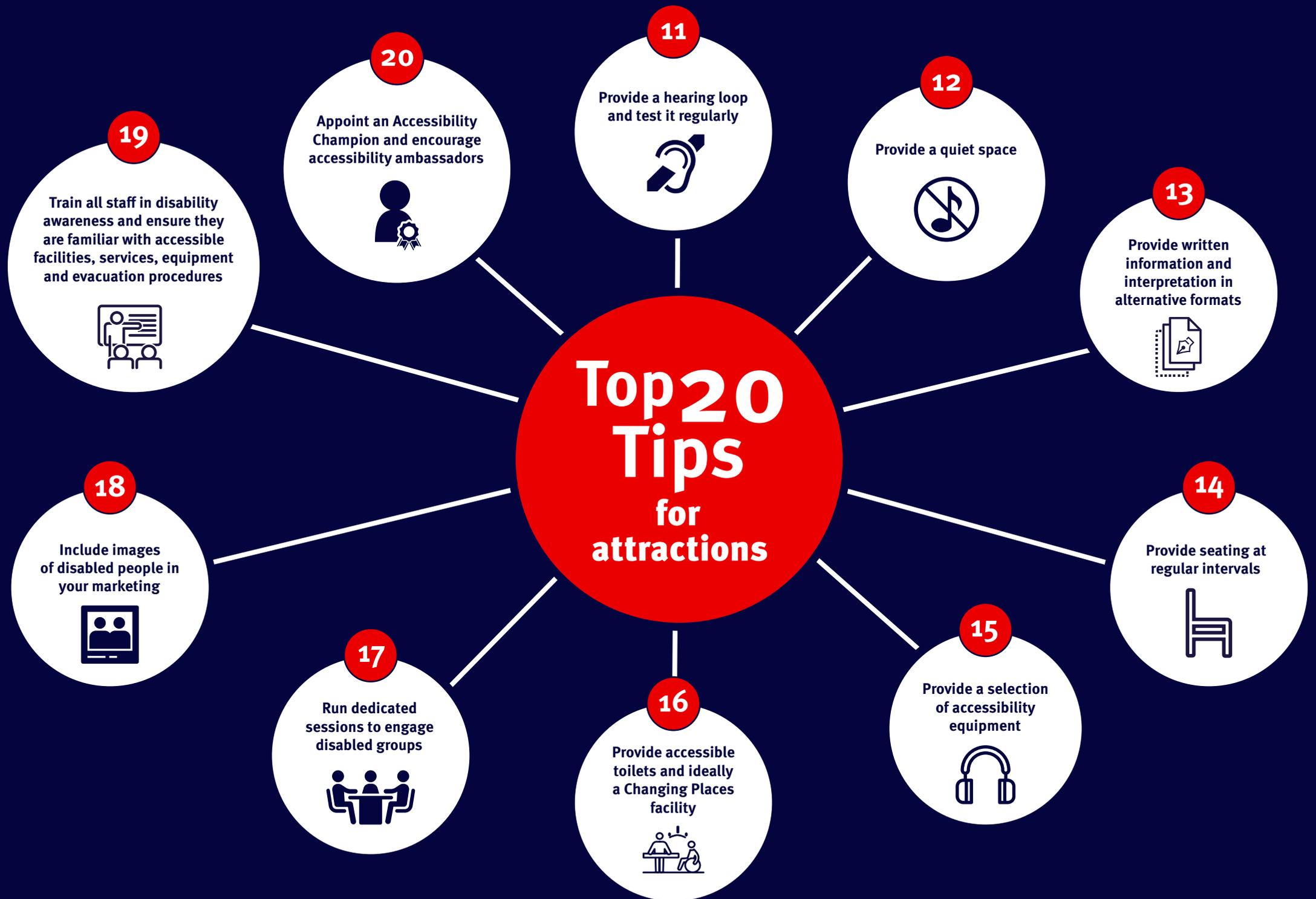


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Provide free essential companion entry and a concessionary rate for disabled visitors



Top 20 Tips for attractions





1 Provide accessible ways for disabled customers to give feedback, acting and responding promptly to comments

Gather the views of customers with accessibility requirements to help you provide inclusive tourism experiences, such as adding a question on accessibility to any customer surveys. You could also invite a [local access group](#) to visit or, for larger businesses, set up an Access Panel of people with different accessibility requirements. Pay them for their time and expertise.



5 Provide sufficient accessible parking spaces and drop-off areas

These spaces should be at least 2.4 metres wide with 1.2 metres hatching either side, level, marked out or effectively sign-posted and close to the entrance or in the best possible location. Ensure these spaces are not occupied by staff vehicles or vehicles that are not displaying a Blue Badge. Provide at least one designated parking bay for any staff member who may require it.



2 Provide an 'Access for All' section on your website

Accessibility information needs to be easy for people to find on websites. Clearly signpost to this section from the homepage; do not hide the link in footer. Remember not everyone with accessibility requirements identifies with the term 'disabled' so use terminology rooted in accessibility and inclusion and avoid disability-focused language e.g. use the term 'accessibility/customers with accessibility requirements' rather than 'disabled/disability/special needs'. Ensure a link to your Accessibility Guide is prominent in this section.



6 Provide a step-free entrance

Ensure the main entrance or an alternative signed entrance provides level access suitable for a wheelchair user (without steps or raised thresholds). Ramped access may be permanent or temporary. Where step-free access is provided by a temporary portable ramp, it is important to provide signage to inform customers that a ramp is available, with details of how to request deployment of the ramp e.g. a call bell. Ensure staff know how to use it safely and effectively.



3 Provide a detailed and accurate Accessibility Guide to promote your accessibility

People with accessibility requirements require information on a venue's accessibility to help understand if it will meet their individual requirements. Many are put off visiting a venue if there is no access information on their website. This information can be provided in the form of an Accessibility Guide, a customer-facing marketing document that contains written and visual details of a venue's accessibility, including measurements and photos. The link to your guide should be prominent and easy to find on your website.



7 Always welcome assistance dogs

Thousands of disabled people rely on an assistance dog for their independence and confidence. Promote the fact you welcome customers with assistance dogs and consider providing water bowls and a toilet area. It would be unlawful to refuse access to a disabled person accompanied by an assistance dog (even if you have a no dogs/pets policy) except in the most exceptional circumstances; find out more in the [Pink Book Online](#).



4 Ensure your website meets accessibility standards and all written communication with customers is available in accessible formats

All customers should be able to use your website, regardless of their level of experience in using the web or the device/operating system they use. Make sure your designer follows Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Offer written communication in alternative formats, such as large print (at least 16 point font, ideally 18), audio or 'easy read'.



8 Provide free essential companion entry and a concessionary rate for disabled visitors

Minimise queuing by allowing these tickets to be booked online and promote fast-track entry on your website. Many people with accessibility requirements physically require support from a friend, relative or support worker to be able to access tourist attractions. Providing free essential companion entry ensures that disabled people who require the support of someone else (sometimes two people) to visit the attraction are not put at a substantial disadvantage. Promote any concessions and [find out more about concessions](#).



9 Ask all your visitors if they require any assistance with evacuation in an emergency. Record any specific arrangements

One of the biggest concerns for disabled people, particularly people with hearing loss, is safe evacuation during an emergency. Develop a set of standard General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) for safe evacuation of D/deaf and disabled people. Make it part of your arrival process to ask every visitor “do you require any assistance in the event of evacuation?” Discuss the standard options available; agree and record any specific arrangements.



13 Provide written information and interpretation in alternative formats

Ensure videos and audio guides have subtitles and British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation available. Consider providing a separate BSL guide for Deaf visitors, along with D/deaf awareness and BSL training for staff. For blind and partially sighted visitors, provide audio-described information and possibly braille. Also look at how you can make your experience tactile, maybe offering a tactile tour where models, costumes and other items can be enjoyed by touch.



10 Provide clear signage

Signage should be provided inside and outside the attraction at key decision points to and from facilities, including main entrances, toilets, key areas of interest and customer service counters/ desks. Accessible facilities such as parking and toilets should be well-signed. Use large text, public information symbols where possible and ensure letters are tactile and contrast in colour with their background. Avoid fonts that are highly decorative, very bold, condensed or in italics.



14 Provide seating at regular intervals

Seats should be provided at regular intervals internally and externally along long routes or where waiting is likely. In commonly used pedestrian areas, seats should be provided at intervals of no more than 50 metres. Back rests should be provided on at least half of all seating and there should be a mix of seating with and without arm rests. If picnic benches are provided, ensure some of these are accessible to wheelchair users.



11 Provide a hearing loop and test it regularly

Customer-facing points such as information desks, ticket & retail counters and other service counters can be noisy environments, making verbal communication with customers who have hearing loss difficult. A hearing loop is a piece of equipment that allows people with hearing loss to hear more clearly over background noise. Ensure all staff are familiar with any loops provided, that they are regularly tested and signage is positioned where loops are effective.



15 Provide a selection of accessibility equipment

Provide equipment such as sensory packs containing items for neurodivergent children, including ear defenders and fidget spinners. Provide wheelchairs, mobility scooters and Trampers for loan, where appropriate.



12 Provide a quiet space

A quiet room will provide a calm and safe space for children and adults needing to decompress, should they require it. Create a low arousal environment, with adjustable lighting and comfortable seating, ideally situated away from the main bustle of the attraction but easily accessible from the public areas.



16 Provide accessible toilets and ideally a Changing Places facility

Accessible toilets should never be used as a storage space, the transfer space next to the toilet should be kept clear and the emergency pull-cord should hang to the floor. For people with sensory impairments, ensure the fire alarm has a strobe light and any support rails contrast in colour to the wall. Standard accessible toilets do not meet the needs of all people with impairments. Where feasible, provide a [Changing Places toilet](#), which has extra equipment and space. If you don't have a Changing Places facility, find out where your nearest one is and include this information in your Accessibility Guide.



17 Run dedicated sessions to engage disabled groups

Dedicated sessions and events with tailored support can help to engage disabled audiences. This could include quieter sessions outside of normal opening hours, Deaf-led British Sign Language events, sessions for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and dementia-friendly sessions.



18 Include images of disabled people in your marketing

Ensure your photography represents the diversity of your customers. Use images of disabled people in general marketing, not just alongside accessibility information. This will inspire and raise confidence to visit and can also help illustrate your facilities in use. You could approach a local disability group or a specialist modelling agency and undertake a photoshoot. Always use disabled people, not people pretending to be disabled, and pay them for their time.



19 Train all staff in disability awareness and ensure they are familiar with accessible facilities, services, equipment and evacuation procedures

To be able to confidently serve customers with accessibility requirements, you and your staff need to be disability aware. This training should be provided for all staff on induction and refreshed (for at least those in customer-facing positions) at regular intervals. There are several online and classroom-style courses available specifically for those working in the tourism industry. It is important that staff are familiar with the use and operation of all accessibility equipment such as hearing loops, emergency pull cords in toilets and hoists. Make sure your specialist equipment is regularly tested, always in working order and in sufficient supply.



20 Appoint an Accessibility Champion and encourage accessibility ambassadors

Name a champion to lead on developing access for all throughout your business. This may be part of one person's role or split between two or more people – for example, a senior manager or director might be responsible for strategic planning and oversight of day-to-day tasks might fall to another member of staff/volunteer. Incorporate the key areas of focus from the Accessibility Champion Brief into the champion's job description. Then engage accessibility ambassadors across your business to help embed inclusive practices.

These tips were produced by England's Inclusive Tourism Action Group, comprising a range of leading accessible tourism stakeholders who share the vision for England to provide world-class accessible tourism experiences that every person with accessibility requirements can enjoy.