

# Simple Tips to Improve the Environment for Visually Impaired People

## Clear Print

Use black type on white yellow or pastel coloured paper. Print, if not black, should be as dark as possible to provide a good contrast. Use matt rather than glossy paper.

Avoid running type across photographs, patterns or tinted backgrounds as this limits the contrast and confuses the eye.

Use easy to read fonts such as Arial, Univers, Helvetica or Verdana. Do not use Times Roman.

Always use at least 12 points font and preferably 14 points. This sheet is in 14 points Arial.

Avoid italics and block capitals. People read by recognising the shape of words and block capitals make this more difficult.

Underlining also makes words difficult to recognise to enlarge and embolden to emphasise headings.

Leave spaces between paragraphs and if possible between lines as this makes text easier to read.

Use unjustified right hand margins and avoid splitting words.

## Contrast

Always make good use of contrast for example a white cup on a dark kitchen surface or dark handrails against a pale coloured wall.

Patterns can confuse many people with a sight loss – they may try to pick the leaf pattern off a plate.

Contrasting door surrounds and handles can be helpful as are contrasting tiles around a hand basin.

## Lighting

Make good use of natural daylight by arranging a room so that light falls on the task to be undertaken.

When buying light bulbs, choose the ones that give off a white light for example Daylight Bulbs.

When using task lighting ensure that the light shines on the task not the persons face.

Good levels of lighting help the majority of people but bear in mind that for some people bright light can be uncomfortable. Dimmer switches can be helpful in adjusting lighting levels to the required strength.

Avoid reflective glare for example light reflecting off stainless steel. When laminating paper choose a matt laminate finish.

When moving people from a light to a dark or dark to light environment give them time to adjust to the new lighting level.

Some people find large blocks of white surface too bright; to overcome this use, for example, contrasting table mats.

For further information, please contact the:  
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