

Sighted/Human Guide Overview

Sighted Guide (also known as Human Guide) technique enables a person who is blind to use a person with sight as a guide. The technique follows a specific form and has specific applications.

Offer to guide a person who is blind or visually impaired by asking if he or she would like assistance. Be aware that the person may not need or want guided help: in some instances, it can be disorienting and disruptive. Respect the wishes of the person you are with.

If your help is accepted, offer the person your arm. To do so, tap the back of your hand against his or her hand. The person will then grasp your arm directly above the elbow. Never grab the person's arm or try to direct him or her by pushing or pulling.

Relax and walk at a comfortable normal pace. Stay one step ahead of the person you are guiding, except at the top and bottom of stairs and to cross streets. At these places, pause and stand alongside the person. Then resume travel, walking one step ahead. Always pause when you change directions, step up, or step down.

It is helpful, but not necessary, to tell the person you are guiding about changes in terrain, stairs, narrow spaces, elevators, and escalators.

SEE FOLLOWING PAGES

Sighted Guide Technique



**FUTURE
IN SIGHT**

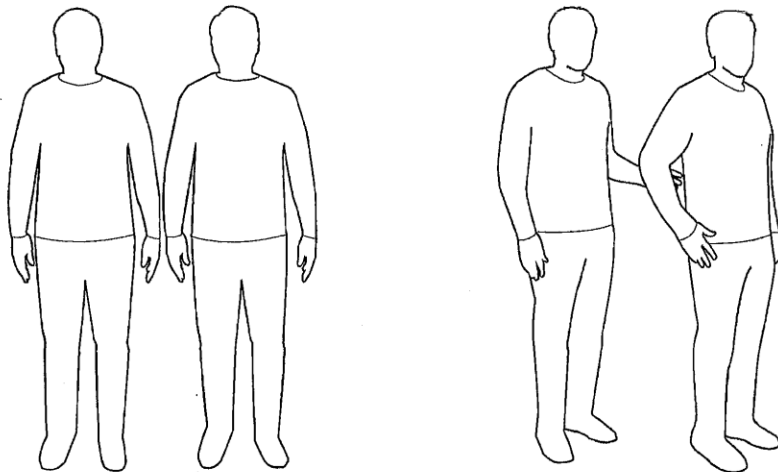
Future In Sight | NH Association for the Blind
25 Walker St Concord NH 03301

Sighted guide is a technique originally developed for people who are blind. It is also useful for those with low vision who are unsure of their bearings in an unfamiliar environment. **Remember, always ask if any help is needed;** not everyone needs or wants sighted guide assistance.

Technique

The basis of the sighted guide technique is the blind or low vision person holds the guide's arm lightly above the elbow and allows the guide to walk one-half step ahead. This allows him or her to feel and follow the guide's direction.

To begin sighted guide, the guider should touch the arm of the person being guided with the elbow preferable to use. He or she can then take the arm above the elbow. If someone needs extra support for walking, the guider should bend the supporting arm, parallel to the ground so he or she can apply weight to the arm.

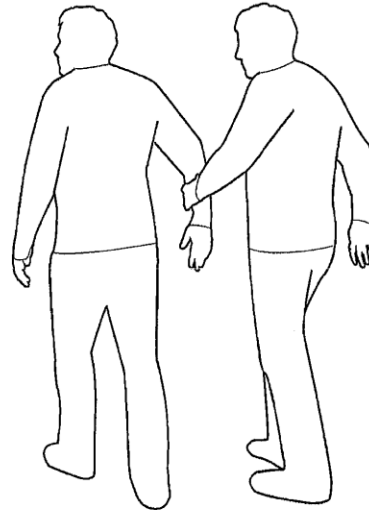


Guiding signals are helpful when a change in motion is needed, for example, a brief pause at the edge of a curb. Verbal clues are also helpful; "We are approaching a curb, the curb is slanted upward."

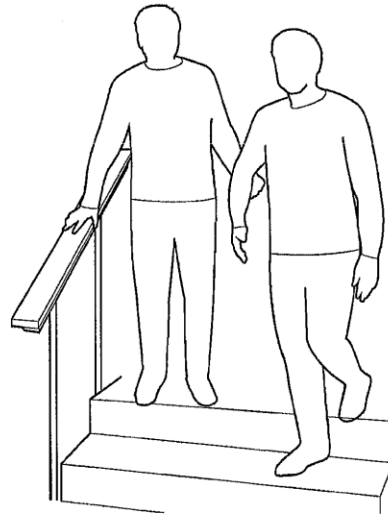
Techniques

Narrow door or passage

When going through a narrow door or passage, move your guiding arm backward toward the small of your back, so the person being guided can step in single file behind you.

**Stairs**

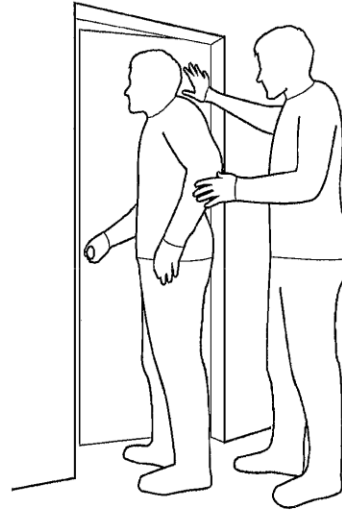
When approaching stairs, come to a stop at the edge of the first step and say whether the stairs go up or down and where the railing is located. The person being guided will follow one step behind, holding your arm with one hand and the handrail with the other. Pause after completing the stairs.

**Curb**

When approaching a curb, pause briefly at the very edge of the curb and say whether the curb goes up or down.

Door

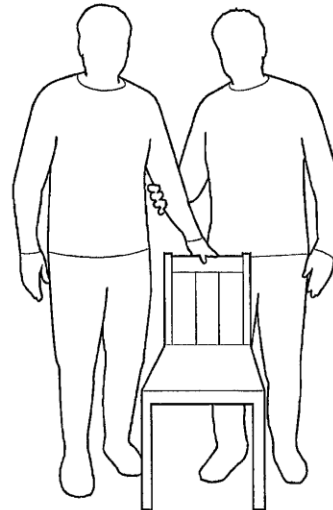
When coming to a door, stop first, then say whether the door opens toward or away from you, and whether it opens to the right or the left. The person being guided can then move to the appropriate side. Open the door and proceed.

**Escalators and revolving doors**

When approaching escalators and revolving doors, use techniques similar to those for stairs, curbs, and doors. If the person you are guiding is uncomfortable, use stairs or regular doors. Buildings with escalators or revolving doors are required to have stairs and regular doors.

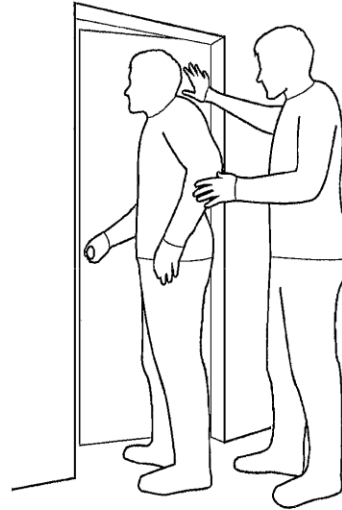
Chair

When approaching a chair, place the hand of the person being guided on the back or side of the chair if possible, so he or she knows where the chair is and which way it is facing. He or she can then decide where to sit.



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