

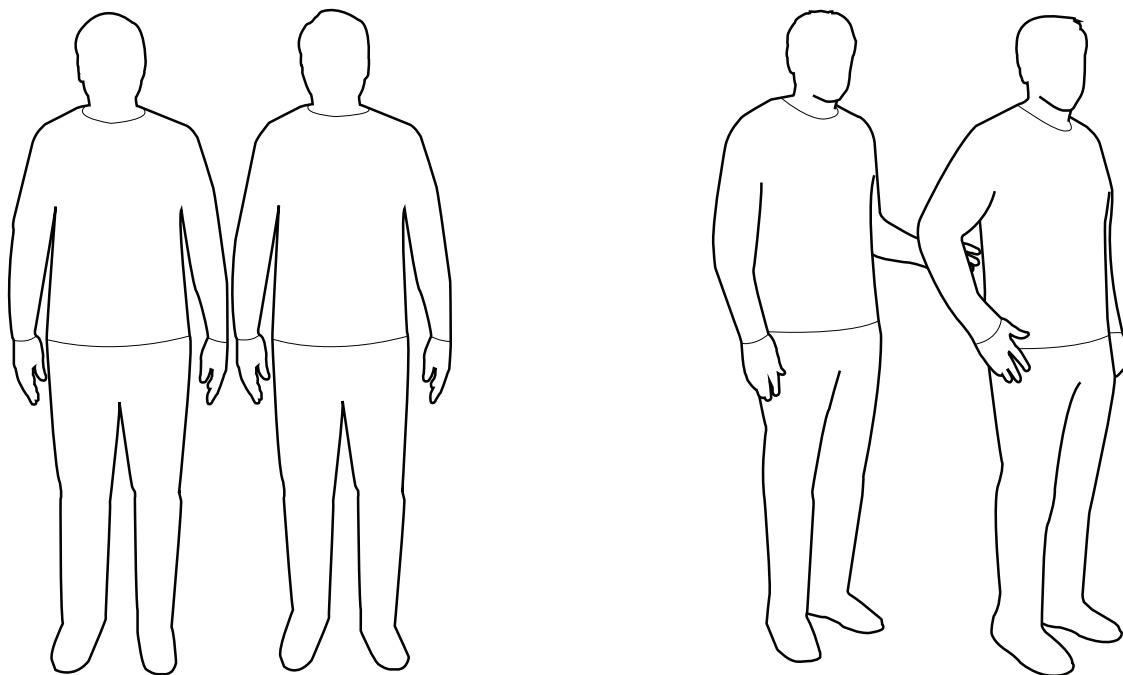
Sighted Guide Technique

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.

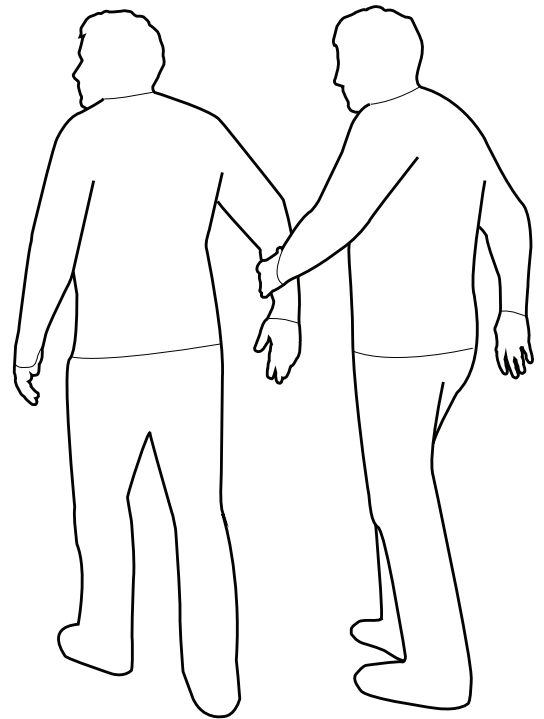
To begin sighted guide, the guider should touch the arm of the person being guided with the elbow preferable to use. He or she can then take the arm above the elbow. If someone needs extra support for walking, the guider should bend the supporting arm, parallel to the ground so he or she can apply weight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

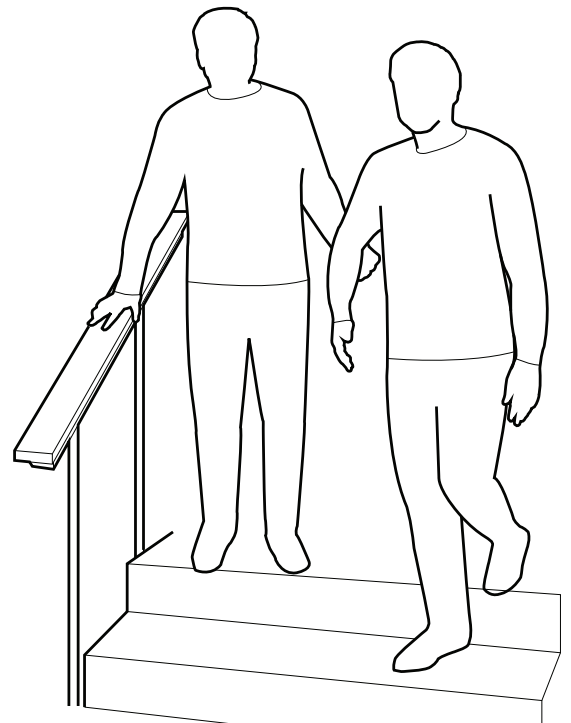
Narrow door or passage

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.

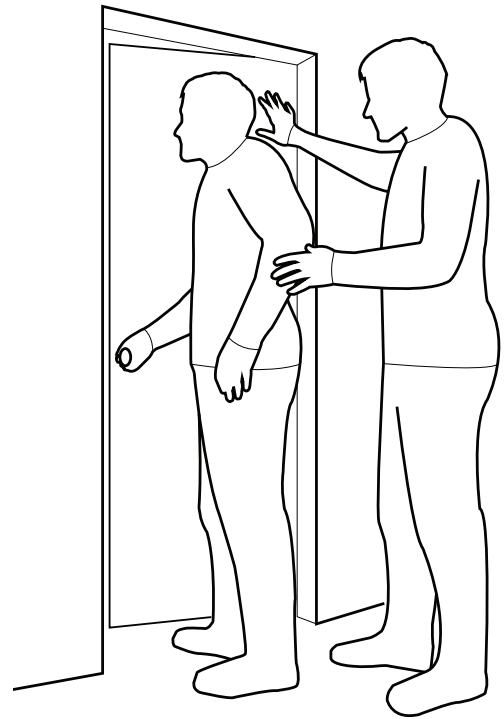


Curb

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.

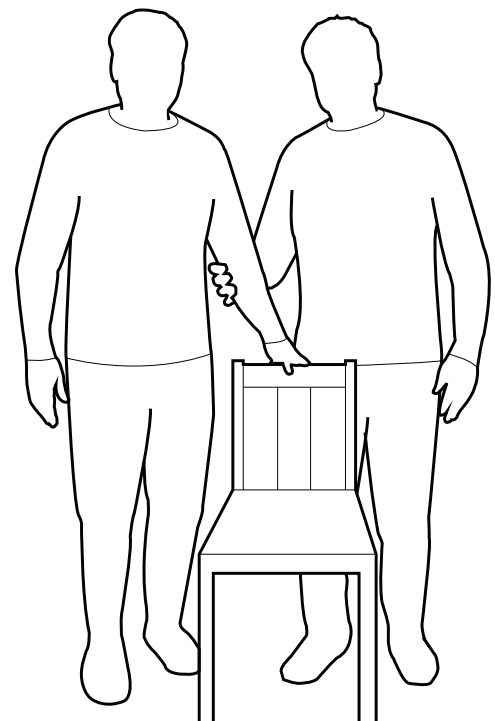


Escalators and revolving doors

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.

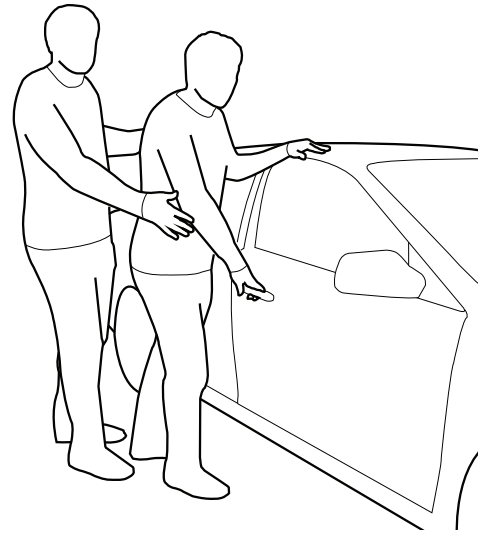
Chair

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.



Car

When helping a visually impaired person into a car, place one of their hands on the door handle and have them locate the edge of the car roof with their other hand. Thus allowing the guided person to seat themselves.



Final thoughts

These techniques are useful in numerous circumstances. Family and friends often use them in daily activities such as shopping, dining out, and much more. Coworkers of those with low vision may find these techniques useful when assisting their colleagues. Healthcare professionals and other caregivers also find these techniques beneficial.

If you or someone you know will benefit from additional information on the sighted guide technique please contact the SightConnection office.

Our mission

“Enhancing the ability of people with vision loss to lead active, independent lives.”

Programs and services

- Low vision rehabilitation
- Low vision clinic
- Instruction in independent living skills
- Professional counseling
- Safe travel and orientation training
- Education, information and referral services
- Assistive Technology resources
- Adaptive aids specialty store

Agency and store contact information

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Store website

www.SightConnection.com

Store hours

Monday-Friday
9:00 am-5:00 pm



Washington State Department
of Services for the Blind



Supported by United Way of King County