

THE FAST GUIDE TO ACCESSIBILITY DESIGN



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THE FAST GUIDE TO ACCESSIBILITY DESIGN

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Translated by **Silvia Antonini**

BIS PUBLISHERS

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INTRODUCTION

This is not a novel nor a bathtub. It is just a reminder in the shape of a book. This reminder will serve as a simple checklist to those who design the everyday spaces we live in, convinced that the City is a shared asset. It is a random collection (but not too random) of indications to make our cities more accessible; to prevent the indoor and outdoor places we live in from being exclusive, instead of inclusive as they should be in any civilized Society. The Shared City is a city welcoming young

and old, tall and short, those who run and those who move on wobbly legs or on wheels, those who can't speak and those who can't hear, those who do not see the colours, those who see them their own way, mothers with strollers, grandmothers with walkers... all of us different as when we are born, or as time unpredictably shapes us. Because we are all different at the beginning, but our abilities also change through life.

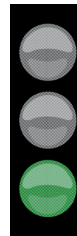
The duty of every designer is to take into account everyone's needs and make cities and bathtubs and all the rest work for everyone: the level of culture of a society is mostly shown when it puts all the citizens in the same conditions.

ALWAYS LOOK AHEAD



Necessities change with time. What works today might not work tomorrow. Some changes cannot be avoided and they also require adjustments to the spaces we live in. Always design ahead and keep in mind all the changes that could occur, to prevent the environment from becoming hostile as time goes by.

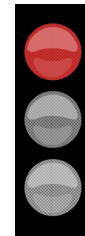
MIND THE LIGHT



**YOU
MUST**



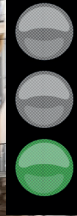
**YOU
SHOULD**



**YOU
CAN'T**

KEEP IN MIND

Follow the traffic light to choose the right direction.



DESIGN PATHS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TOGETHER WITH EVERYONE ELSE'S

If there is a smooth flooring path, it must be placed where others walk too, not on the side where those who need it are inevitably isolated from the rest of the users and, more importantly, forced to move to let vehicles pass or avoid other obstacles.

KEEP IN MIND

Include, within every kind of flooring, a smooth-surfaced and obstacle-free belt at least 90 cm wide.



DO NOT USE STEPS TO SEPARATE THE VEHICLE LANE FROM THE PEDESTRIAN LANE

You can use urban furniture to separate vehicle lanes from pedestrian lanes: benches, trees, water collection elements, balustrades, flower boxes etc

KEEP IN MIND

Use urban furniture, architectural or natural elements to separate roads from sidewalks.



ENTRANCE

DO NOT INSTALL STAIRS AT THE ENTRANCE

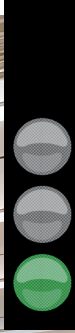
Design the entrance so that no steps are necessary to enter the building; if there is more than one entrance, make sure that at least one (possibly the main access) has no steps.

Think of a covered entrance to allow opening the door and entering the building easily also in case of rain, if necessary add a projecting roof (come to think of it, a covered entrance is useful for everyone).

KEEP IN MIND

Entrance must be at street level.

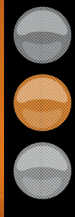
YOU CAN



USE CEILING HEIGHTS DIFFERENCES TO DEFINE SPACES

You can use punctures, chromatic differences and ceiling height to define the space, so that there are no differences in height, that would make the spaces inaccessible.

For example, you can use a false ceiling and change of flooring to identify spaces in the room.

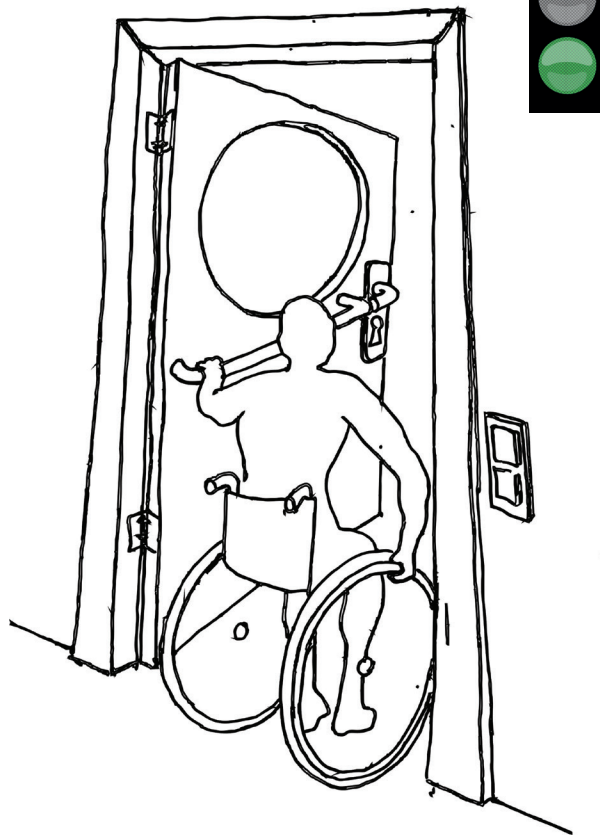


MECHANICAL AIDS MUST BE PLANNED AND INTEGRATED WITH THE REST OF THE DESIGN...

Mechanical aids must be planned in advance together with wiring and plumbing systems. Or at least foresee a possible future instalment.

KEEP IN MIND

Mecanical aids must be integrated with the project.

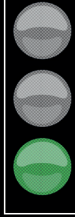


BIG HANDLES MAKE CLOSING DOORS EASIER

Big handles are helpful in public places because they simplify the closing of doors: with their help those on wheelchair can close a door without having to turn. As an alternative, you can install a ring in the centre of the bottom half of the door, serving the same purpose. Be careful with glass doors: foot protection at 40 cm height is a safety element in case of wheelchair impact.

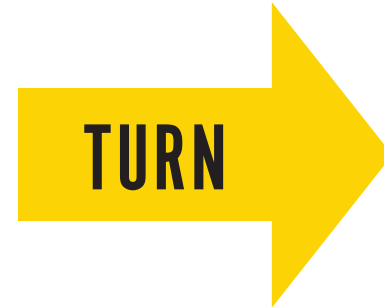
KEEP IN MIND

Place a big handle at between 85 cm and 95 cm from the floor.



WHEN GIVING DIRECTIONS, USE BIG FONTS AND COLOUR CONTRAST

In reference to mobility of visually impaired people, all the necessary precautions must be taken regarding colours and surfaces, so as to signal directions, turns, intersections or simply where the restroom is.



KEEP IN MIND

Use big fonts and colour contrast in directions so that they are clearly visible.



Drawing by Giorgio Raffaelli

ENVISION THE POSSIBILITY OF INSTALLING LIGHT SIGNALS

Light signals must be designed from the start of the project, just like any other acoustic signal or alarm.

Elderly people often lose their hearing, so it's important to install light signals to indicate when telephones or buzzers are ringing.

KEEP IN MIND

Always include acoustic and visual signals in the project.

This book contains a number of indications to achieve the accessible design. You can read it as a summary, as a checklist of choices to make and to avoid, or - even better - to find accessible architectural solutions. Because accessibility and inclusion concern any architectural project just like walls, foundations, power lines and windows.

Accessibility is not an issue to be addressed once the project is finished just placing a “disabled” sign to the ladies’ restroom and installing a very tall toilet; it must be considered from the start in order to make sensible and functional choices that are consistent with the general architectural and aesthetic choices.

This book is divided in areas/phases (public spaces, buildings, furniture and indications): you can refer to the chapters you need depending on what you are designing and its actual design stage to make your own inclusive and accessible choices.



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