



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Flare
Access

Retail Accessibility Checklist



Introduction

Welcome to the Accessibility Checklist and Solutions Guide for Retail, a valuable resource developed for the City of Melbourne by Flare Access. Our shared goal is to promote and enhance accessibility within the city, making it an inclusive, welcoming, and accommodating place for all residents, visitors, and patrons.

This toolkit serves as the starting point for achieving greater access, ensuring that everyone can fully participate in and enjoy the diverse offerings our vibrant city has to offer.

About the toolkit:

The toolkit consists of two components: the Accessibility Checklist and the Solutions Guide.

▶ Accessibility Checklist:

- The checklist is a practical, step-by-step tool that provides you with a systematic approach to assessing, improving, and maintaining accessibility within your spaces, services, and events. It covers a wide range of aspects, including physical access, sensory considerations, communication, and more. By using the checklist, you can identify areas that you are doing well, areas for improvement and a way to track your progress toward achieving accessibility goals.

▶ Solutions Guide:

- The Solutions Guide is your companion resource, offering actionable solutions and guidance for items marked with an asterisk on the Accessibility Checklist. It provides guiding information, insights, best practices, and practical tips to help you make informed decisions and take the necessary steps to enhance accessibility. Use the identifying number next to the asterisk to locate the corresponding solution.



Join the movement to greater inclusion

Whether you are a business owner, event organiser, or simply a concerned citizen, this toolkit empowers you to initiate positive change. As you navigate through the Accessibility Checklist and refer to the Solutions Guide, you'll find the guidance you need to address specific accessibility challenges. By taking action and making improvements in your own sphere of influence, you'll play a crucial role in shaping the future of Melbourne as a city where everyone is valued and welcomed.

Creating an accessible city is an ongoing journey and every small step matters. We encourage you to embrace the Checklist and the Solutions Guide as powerful tools to guide your commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in the City of Melbourne.

Retail Checklist



Entrance



- Provide accessible parking spaces close to the store entrance. * (1.0)
- Offer an accessible drop-off zone near the entrance. * (1.1)
- Maintain a clear pathway leading to the entrance. * (1.2)
- Ensure the entrance has a level threshold with no steps or barriers.
- Install ramps where necessary in accordance to the relevant standards. * (1.3)
- Ensure the pathway has a minimum width of 1000 mm.
- Install automatic or easy-to-open doors at the entrance. * (1.4)
- Ensure doors have a minimum clear opening width of 850 mm when open.
- If steps are present, provide handrails on both sides. * (1.5)
- Ensure steps have contrasting nosing to improve visibility.
- Install Tactile Ground Surface Indicators at the entrance to provide guidance to individuals.
- Install clear signage indicating the entrance. * (1.6)
- Use high-contrast text and pictograms for visibility. * (1.7)
- If the entrance has a locked or heavy door, provide an accessible bell or call button.
- Ensure that there is a continuous path of travel connecting all areas of the store. * (1.8)
- Ensure the pathways leading to and through the security checkpoint have a minimum width of 1000 mm.



Aisles and displays

- Maintain clear and unobstructed aisles with a minimum width of 1000 mm.
- Ensure that pathways are free of obstacles and clutter, allowing easy navigation for all customers. * (2.0)
- Position lower shelves between 450 mm and 1200 mm from the floor to ensure products are reachable.
- Arrange products systematically and logically to avoid overcrowding. * (2.1)
- Provide a minimum of 850 mm of clear space in front of displays.
- Minimise visual clutter and excessive signage to improve visibility for all customers. * (2.2)



Customer service area

- Ensure that the counter has an option with a height between 830 mm to 870 mm.
- Apply contrasting colours between the counter and its surroundings. * (3.0)
- Offer a clear and accessible transaction space with a minimum width of 900 mm.
- Offer a range of payment options. * (3.1)
- Position card readers and payment devices at a reachable height.
- Ensure that the Points Of Sale devices on the counter have contrasting displays and buttons.
- Use clear and easy-to-read signage at the service counter to indicate its purpose.



Additional features

- Train staff to interact effectively and respectfully with customers with Disability Inclusion Training.
- Offer accessible change rooms and keep them clear of clutter. * (4.0)
- Offer seating in change rooms and throughout the venue. * (4.1)
- Provide accessible seating with a clear line of sight to merchandise and checkout counters. * (4.2)
- Offer accessible restrooms or identify the nearest one that customers can access.
- Keep restrooms clear of clutter.
- Ensure staff are trained and aware of the rights and needs of customers with service animals. * (4.3)
- Locate the nearest relief area for service animals to inform staff.
- Offer loans of sensory bags. * (4.4)
- Ensure music volume can be adjusted on request.
- Identify and promote quiet periods and establish low sensory periods. * (4.5)
- Provide task lighting in functional areas.
- Ensure the space is evenly illuminated using lighting that accurately represents the colours of products.
- Maintain well-lit pathways and aisles and install adjustable or dimmable lighting.
- Implement strategies to control glare from natural light, such as window treatments.
- Offer a home delivery service, online shopping service and phone order service.



Wayfinding

- Use clear and easy-to-read signage throughout the store to indicate key areas. * (5.0)
- Ensure signage has high-contrast text and graphics for improved visibility.
- Position signage at a height between 1200 mm - 1600 mm to ensure visibility.
- Install aisle markers to help customers easily locate different sections and products.
- Provide an accessible store layout map to help customers plan their shopping routes.
- Apply floor graphics, including directional arrows, to indicate walking paths.



Communication

- Maintain an accessible website with information about your products, services, and store layout. * (6.0)
- Provide an Accessibility Statement on your website.
- Provide detailed product information and advertising materials in multiple formats. * (6.1)
- Make your email marketing campaigns accessible.
- Choose an e-commerce platform that is accessible and provides accessible product listings.
- Offer large print versions of printed materials, such as store catalogues or promotional materials.
- Use clear and easy-to-read signage at the service counter to indicate its purpose.
- Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps. * (6.2)
- Establish a feedback mechanism for customers to report any accessibility concerns or issues. * (6.3)



Emergency procedures

- Develop and communicate accessible emergency evacuation plans.
- Ensure visual and auditory fire alarms are in place and tested regularly.



1. Entrance

1.0 Provide accessible parking spaces close to the store entrance

- Designate accessible parking spaces as close to the entrance as possible. They should be the nearest parking spaces to the entrance, ensuring minimal travel distance for guests.
- Follow local accessibility regulations to determine the required number of accessible parking spaces based on the size of your parking lot.
- Clearly mark accessible parking spaces with prominent and universally recognised accessibility signs.

1.1 Offer an accessible drop-off zone near the entrance

- Designate an accessible drop-off zone near the entrance to your facility. This zone should be easily accessible without encountering stairs or other obstacles.
- Clearly mark the drop-off zone with signage indicating its purpose, and ensure it is visible from the road and accessible pathway.
- Implement safety measures, such as curb cuts or ramps, to provide a smooth transition between the drop-off zone and the building entrance.

1.2 Maintain a clear pathway leading to the entrance

- Designate specific areas for displays, racks, or promotional items to avoid cluttering the pathway. Ensure that these designated spaces do not encroach on the walkway.
- Ensure that the pathway is well-lit, both during the day and at night, to improve visibility and safety for all customers.
- If there are curbs or steps along the pathway, provide accessible ramps with the appropriate slope and handrails. Ensure that curb ramps are well-maintained and have proper tactile indicators.

1.3 Install ramps where necessary in accordance to the relevant standards

- If your entrance has steps, consider installing a ramp with the appropriate slope to provide access for customers using mobility devices.
- Ensure that the ramp has a minimum width of 1000 mm and has handrails for support if required.
- Use threshold ramps to create a smooth transition between the doorway and the exterior pathway. These ramps are especially helpful for eliminating small step barriers.



1.4 Install automatic or easy-to-open doors at the entrance

- Install automatic sliding or swinging doors at the entrance to allow customers to enter without the need to push or pull heavy doors.
- If you opt for swinging doors, choose models with low resistance, making it easier for customers, including those with limited mobility, to open the doors. Consider double-action or swing-free hinges.
- Install motion sensors or presence detectors to automate door opening when customers approach. These sensors make entry effortless and reduce the need for physical contact with the door.

1.5 If steps are present, provide handrails on both sides

- Ensure that the handrails are installed at the correct height, as per Australian standards. Typically, the height should be between 865 mm and 1000 mm above the stair nosing.
- Choose durable and slip-resistant materials for the handrails, such as metal, wood, or plastic. The handrails should provide a comfortable grip for all users.

1.6 Install clear signage indicating the entrance and any accessible features

- Use clear and prominent signage to indicate the accessible entrance. The sign should be placed at a height that is easily visible to all customers.

1.7 Use high-contrast text and pictograms for visibility

- Ensure that the text on signage has high contrast and is easy to read. The colour of the text and background should provide sufficient contrast.
- Use large fonts and clear, sans-serif typefaces.
- Pictograms should be universally recognised.

1.8 Ensure that there is a continuous path of travel connecting all areas of the store

- Maintain wide and unobstructed aisles and walkways with a minimum width of 1000 mm to allow for easy passage and manoeuvrability. Ensure that paths are free of clutter and obstacles.



2. Aisles and displays

2.0 Ensure pathways are free of obstacles and clutter for easy navigation and movement

- Maintain wide and unobstructed aisles and walkways to allow for easy passage and manoeuvrability. Ensure that aisles are free of clutter and obstacles.
- Design the store layout with accessible shelving and display units that don't impede the path of travel. Allow for sufficient space between shelving and displays to accommodate mobility devices.
- Ensure that displays, including tables and racks, are arranged in a manner that allows for easy circulation without causing congestion or obstacles.
- Consider using displays on wheels or mobile fixtures that can be repositioned to create clear pathways as needed. This can be particularly useful during peak shopping times.

2.1 Arrange products systematically and logically to avoid overcrowding

- Develop a strategic plan for product placement that ensures there's ample space between displays and products. Consider the overall layout and flow of the store to prevent overcrowding in high-traffic areas.
- Group products into logical categories and sections to make it easier for customers to find what they're looking for. Use clear signage and labels to identify different sections.

2.2 Minimise visual clutter and excessive signage to improve visibility for all customers

- Consider high-contrast colour schemes to aid readability.
- Avoid overcrowded product displays or excessive decorations that may distract or overwhelm customers.

3. Customer service area

3.0 Apply contrasting colours between the counter and its surroundings

- Choose contrasting colours for the counter and its surroundings. For example, if the counter is light in colour, consider using a darker colour for the surrounding area or vice versa.
- Create clear boundaries around the counter using contrasting materials, such as a different type of flooring or a low wall with contrasting colours.
- Apply contrasting edge markings to the counter's top surface to help customers identify its edges easily.
- Ensure that the counter area is well-lit. Adequate lighting not only enhances visibility but also emphasises the colour contrast.

3.1 Offer a range of payment options

- Accept cash payments at all Points of Sale.
- Accept major credit and debit cards, including Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and others. Ensure that card readers are accessible and easy to use.
- Enable payments through popular mobile wallet apps such as Apple Pay, Google Pay, and Samsung Pay. Ensure that these options are clearly advertised at checkout.
- Implement contactless payment methods, allowing customers to tap their cards or mobile devices for quick and secure transactions.
- Offer online payment options for customers who prefer to make purchases from your website. Ensure that your online payment system is accessible and user-friendly.

4. Additional features

4.0 Offer accessible change rooms and keep them clear of clutter

- Ensure that change rooms are designed to be accessible for customers with mobility aids, such as wheelchairs or walkers. This includes providing ample space for manoeuvrability.
- Use clear and visible signage to identify accessible change rooms.
- Install entryways with a minimum width of 850 mm.
- Install hooks and rails at lower heights so they are reachable from a seated position.
- Offer customer service at the change rooms.

4.1 Offer seating in change rooms and throughout the venue

- Provide a stable, accessible seating area within the changing room for customers who need to sit while changing. Ensure that this seating is clear of clutter and has a backrest and armrests.

4.2 Provide accessible seating with clear line of sight to merchandise and checkout counters

- Position accessible seating areas strategically throughout the store to provide clear lines of sight to key merchandise displays and checkout counters.
- Ensure that there is ample space around accessible seating to allow for easy manoeuvrability, particularly for customers using mobility aids.
- Use clear and visible signage to designate accessible seating areas. Include information about their location and accessibility features.
- Offer seating with backrests to provide comfort and support for customers. These seats should be easily accessible and provide armrests.
- Use high-contrast colours to make the accessible seating stand out and be easily identifiable.

4.3 Ensure staff are aware of the rights and needs of customers with service animals

- Clearly state your policy of welcoming service animals on your website, in promotional materials, and at the entrance of your establishment.
- Allow service animals to accompany their handlers to all areas of your establishment that are open to the public.

4.4 Offer loans of sensory bags

- Create sensory bags that include items such as noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, stress balls, sunglasses, earplugs, or sensory-friendly items like weighted lap pads or sensory brushes. The specific contents can vary based on the needs of your customer base.
- Establish a simple loan system for customers interested in using a sensory bag during their visit. This might involve customers leaving an ID or a small deposit in exchange for the bag.

4.5 Identify and promote quiet periods and establish low sensory periods

- Create designated low-sensory periods, where you actively work to reduce sensory stimuli. This might include dimming lights, reducing background music, and minimising announcements during these times.



5. Wayfinding

5.0 Use clear and easy-to-read signage throughout the store to indicate key areas

- Incorporate universally recognised symbols and icons to convey information quickly and effectively. Use symbols to represent restrooms, changing rooms, entrances, exits, elevators, and other key areas.
- Use directional signage to guide customers to essential areas, such as entrances, restrooms, fitting rooms, and checkout counters.
- Ensure directional signs are positioned at a height between 1200 mm - 1600 mm.

6. Communication

6.0 Maintain an accessible website with information about products, services, and store layout

- Ensure that your website complies with established accessibility standards, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). This includes providing accessible content, navigation, and user interface elements.
- Create a dedicated page or section on your website that offers detailed information about the accessibility features of your establishment. This page should cover accessible rooms, facilities, services, and amenities.

6.1 Provide product information and advertising materials in multiple formats

- Offer printed product catalogues, brochures, and promotional materials for customers who prefer physical copies. Ensure that text is clear and legible, and use high-quality images.
- Create large print versions of catalogues and promotional materials for customers with low vision. Make these available upon request.
- Provide digital copies of product catalogues and advertising materials on your website. Ensure that these digital documents are accessible and follow web accessibility guidelines.
- Provide audio descriptions for visual content.

6.2 Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps

- Procure communication boards or tablet devices equipped with communication apps that are user-friendly and accessible to a wide range of guests.
- Place the communication boards or tablets in strategic locations within your establishment, so they are readily available to guests.
- Train your staff to assist guests with the use of these devices. They should be able to provide guidance on selecting appropriate communication apps and operating the devices.
- Choose a range of symbols, images, or words that are commonly associated with retail-related requests, such as "price," "change room," and "refund policy,"

6.3 Establish a feedback mechanism for customers to report accessibility concerns or issues

- Provide multiple ways for customers to submit feedback, including phone, email, or in-person communication at your establishment. Ensure that staff is trained to accept and handle feedback in person.
- Develop a clear and prompt response protocol. Acknowledge all feedback within a reasonable timeframe (e.g. within 48 hours) and provide an estimated timeline for resolving the issue.
- Keep a record of all reported concerns, including the date, details, and status of each issue. This helps track progress and ensures accountability.
- Develop a systematic process for resolving issues. Prioritise concerns based on their impact and urgency. Work to find solutions promptly and communicate the outcomes to the customer.
- After resolving an issue, follow up with the customer to ensure their satisfaction and gather feedback on the effectiveness of the solution.
- Use the feedback received to identify recurring issues and implement improvements to prevent future occurrences.



Thank you for your dedication to accessibility and for being a part of our mission to make Melbourne more accessible, vibrant, and diverse for all of its residents and visitors.

Disclaimer:

Although we have done our best to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the information provided, we cannot guarantee that it is suitable for every individual's situation.

This advice is provided for general informational purposes only. Any reliance you place on such information is strictly at your own risk. In no event will the City of Melbourne or Flare Access be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage, or any loss or damage whatsoever arising from loss of data or profits arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this document.

Accessibility requirements and regulations may vary by location and may change over time. To ensure that your chosen solution meets all necessary standards and regulations, we strongly recommend consulting with accessibility experts or professionals who specialise in accessibility modifications. Their expertise can help tailor solutions to your specific needs and ensure full compliance with current accessibility standards.

This document was proudly developed by Flare Access. The following documents were referenced in the development of this Checklist:

- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- AS 1428.1:2001, Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access — New building work
- AS 1428.1:2009, Design for access and mobility, Part 1: General requirements for access — New building work
- AS 1428.2:1992, Design for access and mobility, Part 2: Enhanced and additional requirements — Buildings and facilities
- AS/NZS 1428.4.1:2010, Design for access and mobility, Part 4.1: Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment — Tactile ground surface indicators
- AS 1428.4.2:2018, Design for access and mobility, Part 4.1: Means to assist the orientation of people with vision impairment — Wayfinding signs
- AS 1428.5:2010, Design for access and mobility, Part 5: Communication for people who are deaf or hearing impaired.
- AS 1735.12-1999, Lifts, escalators and moving walks, Part 12: Facilities for persons with disabilities
- AS/NZS 2890.6:2009: Parking facilities, Part 6: Off-street parking for people with disabilities

