



CITY OF MELBOURNE

**Flare**  
**Access**

# Restaurants and Cafes Accessibility Checklist



# Introduction

Welcome to the Accessibility Checklist and Solutions Guide for Restaurants and Cafes, 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.

# Restaurants and Cafes Checklist



## Parking and drop-off

- Offer accessible parking spaces close to the entrance. \* (1.0)
- Designate an accessible drop-off area with curb cuts. \* (1.1)



## Entrance

- Provide at least one step-free entrance. \* (2.0)
- Automatic or easy-to-open doors. \* (2.1)
- Doors with a minimum width of 850 mm when fully open.



## Throughout the venue

- Maintain clear and unobstructed pathways with a minimum width of 1000 mm. \* (3.0)
- Ensure that tables, chairs, and other furniture are arranged to allow for easy navigation. \* (3.1)
- A continuous path of travel connecting all areas of the venue. \* (3.2)
- Colour-contrasting door frames and doors against the walls. \* (3.3)
- Slip-resistant flooring. \* (3.4)
- Tactile tiles prior to steps, ramps and directional changes.
- Accessible fixtures such as lever-style door handles and lever-style taps.



## Restrooms

- Provide accessible restrooms or identify the nearest to your venue.
- Ensure restrooms are clearly marked and accessible without steps.
- Ensure restrooms are clear and free of clutter.



## Seating and dining area

- Offer accessible tables with foot and knee clearance under the table. \* (4.0)
- Provide tables with unobstructed foot and knee clearance under the table.
- Offer seating with a backrest and armrests and a seat height of 440 mm - 460 mm.
- Provide seating options with contrasting colours from the surroundings.
- Offer a charging point that is available to the public.



## Service counters

- Maintain accessible, clutter-free service counters with a height between 830 mm to 870 mm.
- Place a chair nearby for customers who require seating during transactions.



## Menu and ordering

- Offer menus in multiple formats, e.g. printed, large print, and electronic versions. \* (5.0)
- Provide menus in plain language and with clear descriptions and photos.
- Train staff to assist customers with disabilities in placing orders.
- Offer alternative methods of ordering e.g. QR Code and table service.



## Communication and assistance

- Provide disability awareness training to all staff.
- Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps. \* (6.0)
- Offer assisted listening systems e.g. hearing loops at functional areas.
- Provide information on the accessibility of your venue and experience on your website. \* (6.1)
- Use QR Codes to provide alternative formats of the menus and specials of the day.
- Ensure digital communication such as the website and social media content is accessible. \* (6.2)
- Provide alternative booking and contact methods e.g. phone, email, or online.
- Offer an accessible feedback mechanism to report any issues or suggestions. \* (6.3)



## Wayfinding

- Wayfinding to key areas to aid in the direction and movement of customers. \* (7.0)
- Signage should be easy to read and positioned at a height between 1200 mm to 1600 mm.
- Include words and graphics with high contrast. \* (7.1)



## Sensory considerations

- Maintain consistent and even lighting throughout the dining area. \* (8.0)
- Consider adjustable task lighting for functional areas.
- Implement noise-reducing measures to create a comfortable dining environment. \* (8.1)
- Ensure music volume can be adjusted on request.
- Offer designated quiet zones or seating areas for patrons.
- Identify and communicate off-peak periods.
- Offer sensory bags. \* (8.2)
- Clearly label menu items with allergen information.
- Train staff to provide accurate allergen information to customers.



## Service animals

- Ensure that service animals are welcomed and accommodated.
- Educate staff about the legal rights of customers with service animals.
- Locate the nearest relief areas for the animals.



## Responsive evacuation procedures

- Visible and audible fire alarms.
- Accessible emergency exits.



Consult with accessibility experts or professionals who specialise in accessibility modifications to ensure that your chosen solution meets all necessary standards and regulations.

## 1. Parking and drop-off

### 1.0 Offer accessible parking spaces close to the entrance

- Ensure that accessible parking spaces are located as close as possible to the main entrance.
- Install clearly visible and well-maintained accessible parking signs.
- Make it clear that these spaces are reserved for individuals with disabilities. Enforce regulations to prevent unauthorised parking in accessible spaces.
- If you cannot offer an accessible parking space, locate the nearest to the venue and communicate to your customers.

### 1.1 Designate an accessible drop-off area with curb cuts

- Position an accessible drop-off zone as close as possible to the main entrance of the building or facility. This minimises the distance individuals need to travel from the drop-off point to the entrance.
- The drop-off zone should have a level and flat surface to facilitate easy movement for people using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids.
- A curb cut or ramp should be present to allow wheelchair users to transition smoothly between the drop-off area and the sidewalk or entrance area.
- There should be a clear and accessible path from the drop-off zone to the building's entrance, which may include accessible sidewalks and crosswalks.



## 2. Entrance

### 2.0 Provide at least one step-free entrance

- Consider installing a ramp that complies with accessibility standards. The ramp should have handrails and meet slope specifications.
- If permanent ramp installation is not feasible, you can use portable or temporary ramps. These can be set up and removed as needed, making the entrance accessible when required.
- If it is not feasible to provide step-free access at the main entrance, consider creating an alternative accessible entrance that is well-marked and provides equal access to the building.

### 2.1 Automatic or easy-to-open doors

- Install automatic or power-assisted doors at entrances to ensure ease of access. These doors can be activated by a push button, sensor, or remote control.
- If automatic or easy-access doors cannot be installed, consider installing a doorbell to allow customers to request assistance or position staff nearby to assist as required.

## 3. Throughout the venue

### 3.0 Maintain clear and unobstructed pathways with a minimum width of 1000 mm

- Remove any obstructions, such as tables, chairs, or display stands, that block or narrow the pathway. Make it a priority to keep pathways clear at all times.
- Inform staff of the minimum width so that they can continuously monitor furniture layout and setup.

### 3.1 Ensure that tables, chairs, and other furniture are arranged to allow for easy navigation

- Ensure that tables, chairs, and other furnishings within your establishment are arranged to provide a clear and unobstructed pathway.
- Maintain a sufficient gap of 1000 mm between furniture pieces.
- Consider using visual floor markings or tape to delineate the pathway and make it clear to both staff and patrons that the area must remain unobstructed.

### 3.2 A continuous path of travel connecting all areas of the venue

- Eliminate or minimise level changes or abrupt thresholds along the pathway. Use transition ramps or bevelled thresholds to ensure smooth and accessible transitions.
- Ensure that the pathway connects to all amenities and service areas, such as dining areas, restrooms, seating, and service counters.

### 3.3 Colour-contrasting door frames and doors against the walls

- Choose a contrasting colour for the door frames and doors that is noticeably different from the colour of the surrounding walls. High-contrast combinations are more effective, such as light doors against dark walls or vice versa.
- Maintain colour consistency throughout the venue to create a coherent and easily recognisable visual language for all doors.

### 3.4 Slip-resistant flooring

- Apply non-slip coatings or treatments to the flooring surface if needed, especially in areas prone to spills or moisture.
- Use slip-resistant floor mats in areas where moisture or spills are common, like entrances, kitchens, and restrooms.
- If you have an open kitchen, regularly clean the flooring to prevent oil build up on the floors surface.

## 4. Seating and dining area

### 4.0 Offer accessible tables with foot and knee clearance under the table

- In the case where only a single height table is available the recommended specifications are:  
Height of table 850 +/- 20 mm; Height of clearance beneath unit 820 +/- 20 mm.
- In the instance where two table heights can be provided the recommended specifications are:  
Height of table: 1st table: 750 +/- 20 mm; 2nd table 850 +/- 20 mm.  
Height of clearance beneath the table: 1st table 730 +/- 20 mm; 2nd table 820 +/- 20 mm.



## 5. Menu and ordering

### 5.0 Offer menus in multiple formats, e.g. printed, large print, and electronic versions

- Standard printed menus should be available at all times, even when alternative formats are offered.
- Create large print menus with larger text and high-contrast colours. Place them in a dedicated area, easily accessible upon request.
- Ensure that your online menus are accessible, with options for text resizing, high-contrast themes, and compatibility with screen readers.
- Place QR Codes on printed menus that link to an accessible online menu. This enables customers to access digital menu formats using their smartphones.
- Train staff to assist customers in accessing the menus in their preferred format. They should be aware of the availability of large print, Braille, electronic menus, and other options.

## 6. Communication and assistance

### 6.0 Offer communication boards or tablet devices with communication apps

- Offer a variety of communication boards with symbols or pictures for customers who may prefer non-digital communication tools.
- Include requests for assistance or specific needs, such as "I need a menu," "Can you help me reach this?" or "I need to use the restroom."
- Symbols or words representing dietary preferences or restrictions, such as "vegetarian," "gluten-free," "water," or "coffee."
- Options for simple yes/no answers, either with words or symbols.
- Include visual supports or icons that represent common restaurant items, such as utensils and dishes.

### 6.1 Provide information on the accessibility of your venue and experience on your website

- Create a dedicated web page specifically for accessibility information. Make it easily accessible from your main website navigation.
- Provide an overview of the accessibility features your venue offers.
- Include contact information for individuals with accessibility questions or requests.

### 6.2 Ensure digital communication such as the website and social media content is accessible

- This includes using alt text for images, providing keyboard navigation options, and adhering to web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG).



### 6.3 Offer an accessible feedback mechanism to report any issues or suggestions

- Create a dedicated web page or section on your website for submitting feedback or suggestions. Make it easily accessible from your website's main navigation.
- Provide multiple ways for users to submit feedback, including email, a contact form, a dedicated phone line, and a mailing address.
- Ensure that any online forms used for feedback submissions are accessible. This includes providing labels for form fields, ensuring compatibility with screen readers, and enabling keyboard navigation.
- Offer alternative ways to submit feedback for those who may struggle with traditional text-based methods. This could include accepting feedback in audio or video formats
- Send an acknowledgment email or message upon receipt of feedback, and provide information on how users can expect to be updated on the status of their submission.

## 7. Wayfinding

### 7.0 Wayfinding to key areas to aid in the direction and movement of customers

- Install clear, well-lit signage throughout your venue to guide customers. Ensure that the signs use easily readable fonts, high-contrast colours, and simple, universally recognised symbols.
- Install signs at entrances and exits to provide clear direction for customers entering or leaving the venue.
- Position signs along corridors and hallways to indicate the direction to key areas within the venue, such as restrooms, dining areas, and event spaces.
- Use signs to lead customers to dining areas and restaurants, including specific dining sections if applicable.
- Place signs near customer service points to direct customers to these areas, where they can seek guidance and assistance.

### 7.1 Include words and graphics with high contrast

- Use universally understood symbols for restrooms, exits, elevators, information desks, and other key areas.
- Incorporate directional arrows on signs to indicate the correct path to reach a destination.

## 8. Sensory considerations

### 8.0 Maintain consistent and even lighting throughout the dining area

- Ensure that lighting fixtures provide uniform illumination across the dining area, avoiding excessively bright or dim spots.
- Consider installing adjustable lighting fixtures, such as dimmer switches, to accommodate varying customer preferences.
- Maintain well-lit pathways, including accessible routes and entrances. Ensure that the lighting meets the needs of customers with visual impairments.

### 8.1 Implement noise-reducing measures to create a comfortable dining environment

- Install acoustic ceiling panels to absorb sound and reduce the overall noise level in the dining area.
- Use acoustic wall panels or treatments to dampen sound reflections and echoes.
- Consider using carpeting, area rugs, or sound-absorbing flooring materials to minimise noise from foot traffic and chair movement.
- Maintain background music at a volume that enhances the dining atmosphere without being intrusive.

### 8.2 Offer sensory bags

- Select sensory items and tools that cater to different sensory needs, including tactile, visual, auditory, and proprioceptive stimuli. Common items may include stress balls, fidget toys, textured objects, noise-cancelling headphones, visual stim toys, and scented items.



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.

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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

