



*An orientation and
mobility challenge*

Treasure Quest Skills Sheet

The goal of Treasure Quest is to help children who are visually impaired and their sighted parents work as a team to share an educational and fun orientation and mobility experience.

The Contest: The team will earn points based on how well students demonstrate the following orientation and mobility skills, and how well adults employ the included sighted guide techniques. At times, adults will be asked to wear a blindfold while the student serves as the guide.

The Treasure Quest route is divided into 14 short stages with “checkpoints” in between. At each checkpoint, a volunteer will rank the team’s proper use of skills, then give specific verbal directions to the next checkpoint.

There are just two simple rules.

-No Passing: If your team is coming close and about to pass another pair in front of you, stop and wait until they’ve passed the next checkpoint to avoid crowding. Please do not “pass” another team.

-No Talking or “coaching”: Adults will be asked not to give verbal cues when the child is leading, and visa versa!



*Empowering visually impaired
people to live fulfilling lives*

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Grasp: This technique allows you flexibility and freedom of motion with both of your hands and gives the blind person a sense of your body motion.

Essential Techniques

Making contact

When approaching someone who is blind, introduce yourself and ask whether he would like your help. Do not grab or pull at him. If he indicates that he would like assistance, verbally offer your arm and brush it against his.

Grasp

The person who is blind should grasp your arm just above the elbow with her fingers on the inside near your waist and her thumb on the outside. The grasp must be firm to be maintained while walking, yet not so tight as to cause discomfort. If the grip is too tight, say so.

Children's grasp

The standard grasp often is too high for children, so it may be best to have them grasp your wrist or hold your hand. This gives you and the child greater comfort and sense of control.

Stance

Hold your arm relaxed and steady at your side. The blind person's arm is at a 90-degree angle and held close to her side. She should proceed by being one half-step behind you. She will follow your movements. Do not steer her.

Narrow-area stance

When approaching an area that is crowded or narrow, such as a doorway, move your forearm and hand so that they rest against the lower portion of your back, with your elbow at a 90-degree angle and your palm facing outward. The blind person will take this cue, slide her hand down to your wrist and move directly behind you at arm's length while still maintaining a firm grip. Take smaller steps and slow down as you move through the narrow area. For comfort, have the blind person move her grasp from above your elbow to your wrist. After walking through the narrow area, return your arm to the guide position and walk normally.



Narrow-area Stance

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

About Face

To turnaround in a small space when guiding a person who is visually impaired, the guide should first say they are turning around. The guide then asks the person being guided to let go of their grasp. Both people then turn toward each other and rotate 180 degrees. The guide is to re-establish contact and go forward.

Sound Localization

Listening for the source of a familiar sound can sometimes help someone who is blind to determine where they are. To locate a sound, stop and listen, then turn toward the sound and walk in that direction.

Dropped Object

To search for something you've dropped on the floor, first listen to see if you can hear the direction of its fall. Face in that direction and stoop down to make a circular or back and forth sweeping pattern on the ground to locate the object.

Doors

When approaching a door, assume the narrow-area stance and tell the blind person in which direction the door opens. This allows him to help you by holding the door with his free hand while passing through it. Do not try to turn around to hold the door open. This is awkward and diverts your attention.

Stairs

Six feet before reaching the first step, tell the person you are guiding that you are approaching stairs. Approach her directly and in such a way that her free hand is closest to the rail. Mention whether the stairs go up or down and how many steps there are. Pause to allow her to locate the first step and the railing. Always remain a step ahead and proceed as you normally would. Remain to the right-hand side of stairs to avoid colliding with others. Pause at each landing to allow the blind person to stand beside you and to cue her that there are no more steps until you begin to move again. Tell her when you have reached the top or bottom of the stairs.



Stairs Technique

Upper Body Protective Technique

To protect your upper body from low hanging objects, raise your free arm to shoulder level in front of you to shield your face until you have passed.

Taking a seat

When possible, approach a chair from the front or side. Tell the blind person he is at the front or side, and slowly bring him up to it until his knees or shins touch the seat. Say whether the chair has arms. Place your hand on the chair back and let him follow your arm down to locate it with the hand he has been grasping your arm with. Allow him to seat himself. Do not help him physically or move the chair or other furniture unless he asks you to. Let him know if there is a table. Unless they are frail or otherwise disabled, blind people are capable of getting up from a chair without help. Once they are standing, use the correct stance and grasp techniques described above.

Braille Institute is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to eliminate barriers to a fulfilling life caused by blindness and severe sight loss.



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