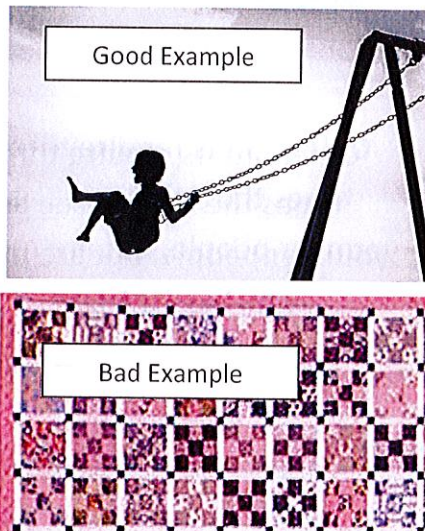


Creating Age-friendly Print and Web Materials for Your Business

In the U.S. 18% of people over age 70 have a vision impairment, and 92%, almost the entire population, use corrective lenses. Most blind older adults lose their sight from age-related eye diseases such as glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy. Partial, progressive vision loss, which affects far more people than blindness does, often also has a substantial impact on well-being and daily activities. You can better serve your aging customers and attract new ones by creating age-friendly brochures, advertisements, menus, labels, pricing, signage and web pages using the guidelines below.

Make information easy to see

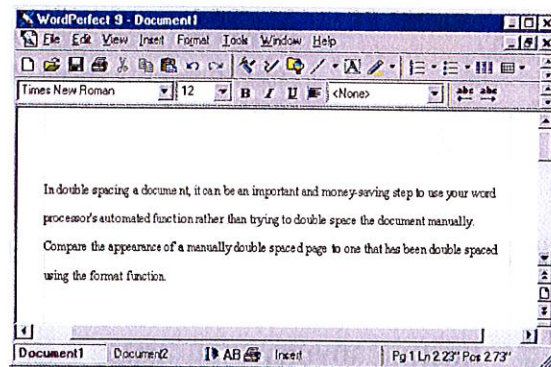
Use simple designs with sharp contrast and avoid patterned backgrounds:



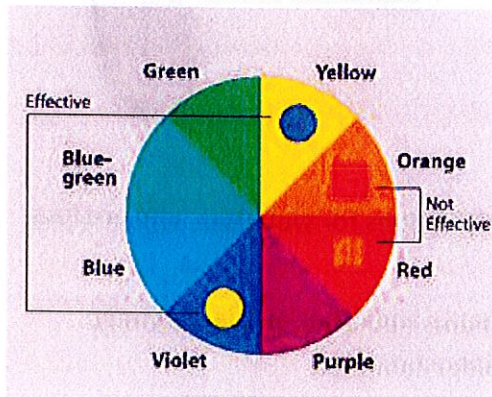
Use a large font size, preferably 16- or 18-point font:

An example of 18-point font

Leave 1-inch margins and space between lines of text:



Avoid using colors which are in close proximity on the color wheel. Design color materials with effective contrast:



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Print or use a sans serif typeface (sans serif is type that does not have small features at the end of strokes):

Sans Serif:	Helvetica Arial Univers News Gothic
Serif:	Times New Roman
Novelty:	Old English Text
Display:	Bodoni Poster

Ensure important information is available in different formats

Offer your materials and your website in other languages for non-native English speakers

Offer to read materials aloud or help an older adult who appears to be struggling

Offer audio recordings or Braille on offices, room numbers, departments, building directories, elevator call buttons, and elevator door jams, the panels by the door that indicate the floor number

Keep businesses well lit

An older adult is more likely to have trouble seeing in low lighting, and may not be able to fully see furniture or a step.

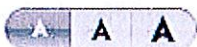


If an older adult does not have enough light, the eye must work harder to get a clear picture. Well lit environments allow older eyes to rest.

Older adults require three times the light to see as younger people, but are more sensitive to glare.

Design web sites that are easy to see, understand and use

Include an easy text resize option on web sites:



Include an easy-to-find phone number on the web site where a caller can talk to a person, not a machine.



Include easy-to-find instructions for web users who are less technologically savvy.

Use shorter video segments and other media so it may download quickly on older computer

Creating an Age-Friendly Sound Environment for Your Business

Bilateral hearing impairment affects 1 in 3 adults over 65 years. Problems associated with hearing loss include social isolation, anxiety, and diminished self-confidence. You can make your business a comfortable place for older adults, soon to be 20% of the population. Try to be sensitive to individual needs – degrees of impairment vary, as do the ways people overcome challenges. Not every adult will want assistance, and not every older adult will disclose their disabilities.

Clear Oral Communication

Don't be afraid to repeat yourself; in fact, an older adult may wish for you to repeat a question, but may be embarrassed to ask you to do so

Speak clearly, but “elder speak” (the tendency to talk more slowly, in exaggerated tones, and with simpler words) is not necessary

Male voices are actually heard more clearly by older adults because they are lower in pitch; female employees should concentrate on lowering the pitch of their voice when speaking to older adults



High-pitched sounds and words with

F S K sh

sounds are difficult for older adults to discriminate

Get the older adult's attention before speaking by making use of the older adult's unimpaired senses; for example, tap an older adult lightly on the shoulder and wait for him/her to see you before speaking to him/her



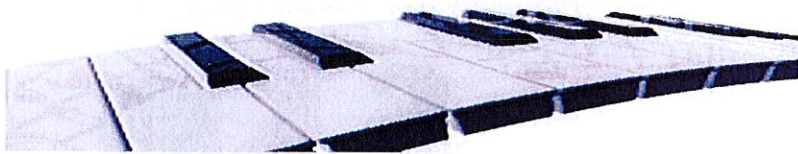
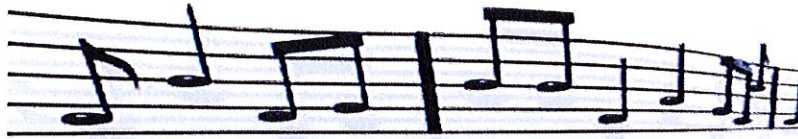
Remember, pitch is not the same as volume; use lower tones of your voice; yelling will not help an older adult hear you

Music

Loud music, harsh acoustics, and songs they cannot recognize will quickly turn off older adult customers

If you want to reach out to your older adult customers, play the music they know and love

Background music often turns out to be “background noise;” consider the impact your music will have on an older adult’s ability to carry on conversations in your business



Sound Reduction and Absorption



Background sounds are lower in pitch than speech and tend to overpower higher pitch conversations

Use mass and space to reduce noise: heavy walls and thick windows keep traffic noise out; turn off or replace buzzing fans and humming computers; the larger the space, the more noise will be reduced

If you are unable to quiet your entire business environment, consider locating quiet areas – such as specific tables in your restaurant – that can be reserved for older adult customers

Absorb noise within the space: install carpet or rugs, hang tapestries, upholster furniture, add acoustical ceiling tile, soundboard walls



If you undertake a construction project, include sound absorption and reduction measures

Multimedia

Offer large, clear subtitles for videos, music, and other multimedia that is important to your business

Provide written instructions in addition to verbal instructions



- Let me help you!
- Thank you.

Creating an Age-Friendly Physical Environment for Your Business

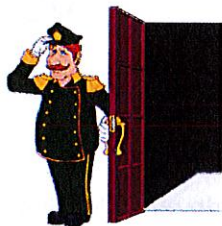
Obstacles, such as uneven walkways, stairs, poor lighting, and crowding, make it difficult for older adults with low vision, poor balance, and who use wheelchairs or walkers to get around. Even arthritis poses new challenges to older adults when buying groceries and taking care of other everyday errands. You can better serve older adult customers and attract new older adult customers by modifying business environments so they account for mobility challenges and physical handicaps, helping them maintain their independence.

Universal and ADA Design

Make sure your interior doors and floor are wide and spacious

Revolving doors or turnstiles should not be the only means of passage; an accessible gate or door should be placed nearby to facilitate use by an older adult with a wheelchair or walker

Consider installing automatic doors, or place a staff person in charge of opening doors for older adults that find it difficult to or are unable to open it themselves



Install lever handles for opening doors rather than twisting knobs

Basic Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Requirements:

The minimum clear width for single wheelchair passage is 32 inches at a point and 36 inches continuously; the space required for a wheelchair to make a 180-degree turn is a clear space of 60 in diameter or a T-shaped space

If a ramp run has a rise greater than 6 inches or a horizontal projection greater than 72 inches, then it must have handrails on both sides; build continuous, easy to reach handrails on either side of staircases

Build at least one check-out counter not higher than 36 inches off the floor

Since stairs create a barrier to access, build a ramp (the minimum clear width of a ramp is 36 in) or consider the expense of an elevator



Build a bench or two outside your business to give older adults a place to rest and a support to grab onto – this gesture may win you a faithful customer!

Include extra seating (i.e. a chair at a grocery store made available to older customers that need to rest, or a comfortable waiting area at a restaurant that cannot seat their older customer right away)

If your business involves seating, such as a restaurant, make sure that several tables can make room for a wheelchair: the minimum clear floor required to accommodate a single, stationary wheelchair and occupant is 30 inches by 48 inches



Prevent Falls

1 in 3 older Americans fall each year, leading to injury or even death, costing billions of dollars in healthcare. Many of these costs could have been prevented, since environmental factors are implicated in 30-40% of all falls. Take an active role in fall prevention by eliminating the environmental factors that could cause falls in your business.

Install bright lights in your business, especially in darker hallways or on staircases

Remove throw rugs that could catch feet and cause someone to trip; if you must use rugs, secure them to the floor with strong tape or glue

If you sell wares on shelves, do not place items any higher than arm's length, or ensure that staff is available to assist older adult customers in reaching shelved items

See that the floor of your business is free of obstructions, smooth and even, and do your best to clear puddles, snow, and ice from outside your business



Increase Business by Creating Alternatives



Delivery options are highly desirable to older adults who are homebound or find it difficult to get around

If you do not offer delivery services, consider beginning to do so for older customers or working with a courier service

Restrooms



Ensure that puddles are wiped up to prevent slips

Install bright lighting in the restroom

When designing a new restroom:

Try to install automatic flush controls or mount manual controls on the wide side of toilet areas no more than 44 inches above the floor

Ideally, one sink and hand dryer should be low enough that an older adult in a wheelchair could easily wash and dry their hands, and one stall should be large enough to accommodate a wheelchair

Install toilet paper dispensers within easy reach