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The Universal Designer's Workbook

THIS BELONGS TO



Greetings, designer!

With this little book, you'll learn how to design spaces, features, and appliances that are **accessible** for all people—of all sizes, ages, abilities, and levels of mobility. Things that are designed so that all people can easily and fully use them are called **universal designs**.

This is a big job but someone's got to do it! Let's get started.

1. **Explore** your home or school. **Look and think.** Study the doors, staircases, sinks, refrigerators—any features or appliances—closely. Do you think *everyone* can use them fully and easily? Look at Universal Design Principles and Thinking About Accessibility on pages 3 and 4 for hints and ideas.
2. **Take a photo or make a sketch** of features or appliances that may not be fully accessible to everyone.
3. **Write a brief description** of each feature.
4. **Empathize and describe** some challenges that people with different abilities or disabilities might have when using the feature or appliance you're looking at.
5. The fun part: **redesign a feature** you've recorded so that it's more accessible. Make your own universal design.



Definitions

Universal designs—features, appliances, or other things that anyone can access, understand, and use to the greatest extent possible

Accessibility—how easily something can be fully reached and used by everyone

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UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1. **Fair use:** the design is useful to all people—of all sizes, ages, abilities, and levels of mobility
2. **Easy to change:** the design can be used differently by different people
3. **Simple:** the design works the way you would expect and is easy to understand
4. **Easily noticed:** the design stands out from its surroundings and clearly communicates necessary information
5. **Safe:** the design is forgiving and safe even when it's not used properly
6. **Easy to use:** using the design doesn't require a great amount of effort
7. **Right amount of space:** the design is the right size, and provides the right amount of space for people—of all sizes, ages, abilities, and levels of mobility—to use it



THINKING ABOUT ACCESSIBILITY



Entrances & exits

How do people open the door?
What is around the door?



Floor Plan

How are rooms and floors separated and connected?



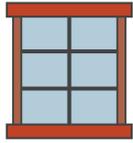
Bathrooms

What do the toilet and sink areas look like?



Kitchens

Can all people access and use counters and appliances?



Windows

How high are the windows?
How do they open and close?



Garages & parking lots

How much space is there surrounding parked cars?



Hardware

What types of hardware (e.g. faucets, levers, etc.) are there?



Building Automation

How do lights and appliances turn on and off?



Light & Color

Are spaces well lit?
Is there color contrast in stairs?

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FIND A FEATURE OR APPLIANCE THAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Think about how a person with a wheelchair or a stroller, a person with limited mobility or motor control, a person with limited vision, a person with limited hearing, a small person, a child, or an elderly person would be able or unable to fully use the feature or appliance.

PASTE A PHOTO OR DRAW A SKETCH

WRITE A DESCRIPTION

WHY ISN'T THIS DESIGN UNIVERSAL?

