



DELIVERING BARRIER FREE BUSINESS

DID YOU KNOW?

The Nelson / Tasman region has an ageing population. Age carries with it a variety of accessibility issues. People aged 65 years and over will be a growing sector of our population in the years ahead. This means we need to rethink how we deliver goods, services, entertainment, and recreational facilities.



Barrier Free Business

- This checklist is developed to support business in the region.
- Use this guide to help 'future proof' your business so it remains attractive and user-friendly for the changing needs of the population.
- Note that legislation may mandate requirements around access to your business. Make sure you research what the legal requirements are by checking with your local council, consulting [national standards](#), and searching [Building Act requirements](#).
- Developing a Barrier Free Business ensures you are 'open for business' for people with a variety of accessibility needs, including customers with strollers, sports injuries, and customers with visual and / or hearing impairment.

Become a Barrier Free Business: The Competitive Advantage

Did you know that research from the UK shows that 83 per cent of people with memory problems have switched their shopping habits to places that are more accessible? Making simple changes to your business like adopting a [dementia friendly business plan](#) will allow you to retain and build on existing custom, both from people living with the condition and from their carers, family and friends.

Internal Areas:

Making shopping user-friendly for all customers

1. Reception counters are located on accessible routes.
2. Tables and counters are low for wheelchair users, and have a space to rest a walking cane or handbag to enable hands-free transactions.
3. Seating should be made available at frequent intervals and be of contrasting colours to background walls.
4. Quiet space is available, with background music at low levels.
5. Areas of confusing patterns on carpets, curtains and wallpaper are avoided. Pools of bright light and deep shadows are avoided with areas lit with natural light where possible.

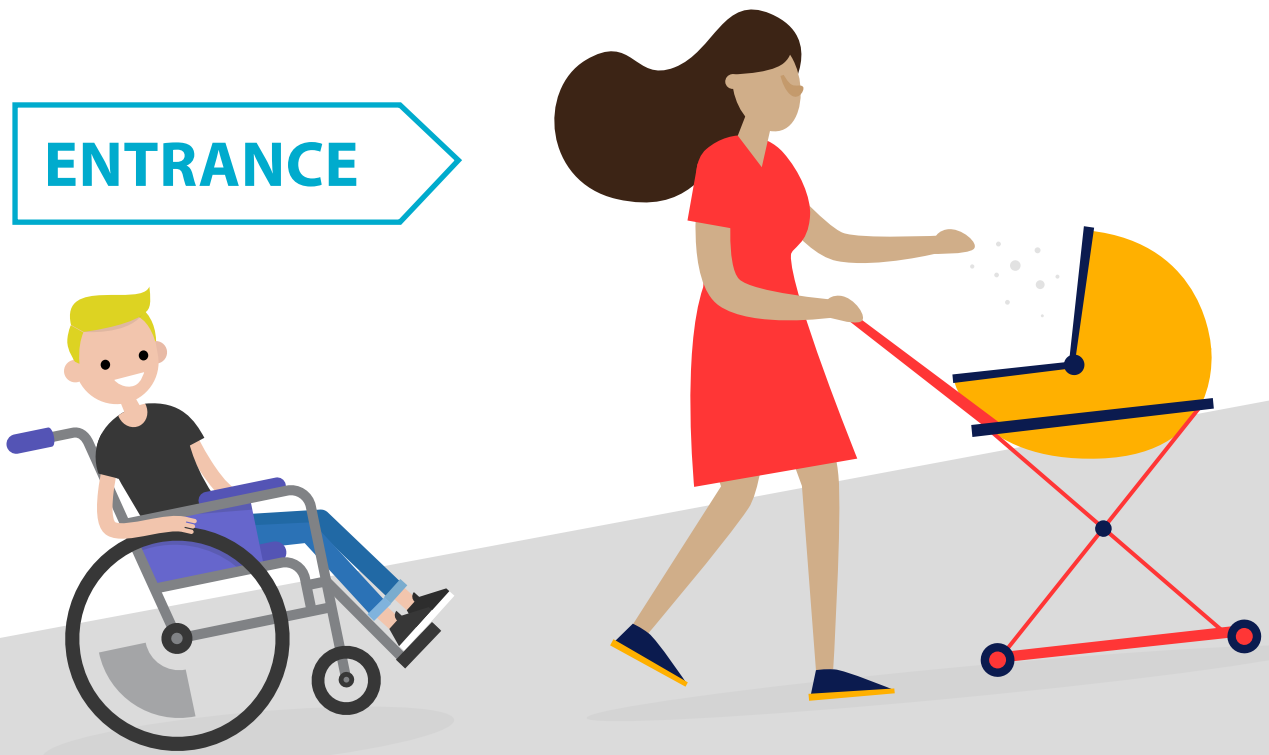
Shelves, Racks and Displays

6. Displays are secure, with the majority of items within reach of those in wheelchairs / mobility scooters, and do not move or tip when knocked.



Entrances and Exits

7. Doors should be self opening or push button operation with a doorbell for assistance.
8. There is ample room to move around in a wheelchair, walker, or when pushing a stroller.
9. Entrances and Exits should have:
 - Good lighting
 - Clear opening no less than 810mm
 - Flat even surfaces, clear of obstruction
 - A ramp of 1.5m wide is needed if stairs are present. Ramp gradient should preferably be 1:14
 - Handrails for ramps and steps
 - Have clear signage and free of obstruction
 - Glass doors marked at eye level with a contrast for safety/ visual indicator.





Parking:

How to get customers to your business

10. Building entrances should be unobstructed, clearly visible and obvious, with potential hazards clearly marked and avoided. Minimise steps if possible.
11. Parking areas are well lit with protection from wind, rain and noise.
12. Accessible parking is close by, appropriately signposted, and in a safe position to allow shoppers to exit a car away from the stream of traffic.
13. Signage (such as sandwich boards and flags) can cause 'visual clutter' and create confusion and obstacles for some shoppers. Ensure footpath signs comply with Council rules, and avoid visual obstacles.
14. [Read more about](#) accessible parking spaces and building code requirements.

Stairs

15. Stairs are avoided wherever possible, with no single steps in isolation that may be a trip hazard.
16. If stairs are used, they should be well lit, non-slip, and step edges clearly marked with contrasting colour and texture.
17. Handrails must be maintained in good order, firmly attached to both sides, and extend down to the last step.

Aisles and Corridors

18. Aisles and corridors should be clear of obstruction, and wide enough (i.e. for walkers, wheelchairs, strollers and scooters, aisles should preferably be a minimum of 1.5m wide).
19. Straight lines of travel should be used whenever possible.

Public Washrooms

20. Wheelchair and walker accessible washrooms should be provided that are 1.5m x 1.5m minimum.
21. Cubicle doors should swing out, with an exit sign on the inside of the door.
22. Good lighting with mirrors at a useable height. Wash basins are preferably in the same room as the toilet and at a useable height.
23. Toilets should be equipped with grab bars, hooks, and handrails, and at the NZ Standards recommended height. See [Access Standard NZS 4121: 2001](#).
24. Toilets should have easy-flush controls, door handles, locks, and light controls.

Signage

Signage throughout the building should be simple, at frequent intervals, with the font easy to read for those with visual impairment. The wording colour contrasts with the background.

[Guidelines are available](#) to assist with signage requirements.

25. Braille should be used on pertinent signs such as washrooms, exits, and stairs.
26. Signs should be fixed to the doors that they refer to.
27. Eftpos machines have a tactile dot on the number 5, should be easy to access from wheelchair height, and have wide-spaced and large keys.
28. Use internationally recognised [pictograms](#) for signage.



Customer Service:

Helping Staff and Customers Engage

29. Staff are knowledgeable, respectful, and comfortable assisting patrons with a range of conditions.
30. Become a [dementia friendly retailer](#).
31. Staff have received the appropriate training, and can identify customers with support requirements and give extra assistance as required.
32. Staff speak clearly and look at customer when talking to allow lip reading when necessary.
33. Staff and businesses should be prepared to supply information in requested format (for example large print or email). Business websites should be accessible to screen readers. Use [guidelines to assist](#) in preparation of websites and print material.
34. Pen and paper is available for exchange of information.
35. Hearing loop is provided and indicated clearly if in operation.
36. Consider having a designated staff member who can assist other staff with information on this Barrier Free checklist and keep up-to-date with the changing needs of the customers.
37. Consider becoming a "Barrier Free Champion" in your area by adopting a "Barrier Free Business Plan" specifically adapted to your needs.

Elevators and Escalators

38. Elevators and escalators are well signposted and easy to access.
39. Control buttons have a tactile distinction.
40. Lift arrival and direction are both visually and audible indicated.
41. There is a change in the surface treatment at lifts and at the head and foot of escalators.

Health and Safety

42. Floors are slip resistant with no loose mats or rugs.
43. There are visible and audible fire alarms.
44. Accessible emergency exits are clearly signed.
45. Have a risk management plan, which is reviewed and updated regularly. There is a risk management plan which includes how to assist people with impairments to safely reach the designated area in the event of evacuation.
46. Adopt a smoke free policy, and have designated areas where smoking is not encouraged / allowed.

Barriers to accessibility can occur at any age. Accessibility not only means access for people with disabilities, it includes customers with strollers, those with visual or hearing impairment, those with respiratory disorders, those with sporting injuries, and people with progressive conditions such as arthritis. This checklist also covers how you can adapt your business to be more user-friendly for those with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

HELP GROW A VIBRANT AND USER-FRIENDLY BUSINESS THAT IS OPEN TO ALL!



Information prepared by the Accessibility for All forum.

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Further information on
making your business is
available from:

Tasman District Council
Phone 03 543 8400

Nelson City Council
Phone 03 546 0200

Barrier Free - 04 915 5848 or www.barrierfree.org.nz
Be.Accessible - 09 309 8966 or www.beaccessible.org.nz
CCS Disability Action (Nelson) - 03 548 4479
or email nelson.admin@ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz