



Total Football - Total Access

Figures to consider

- According to the World Health Organization, there are over a billion disabled people in the world (15% of the population).
- Only 3% of the population is born with a disability (or 17% of disabled people).
- 1% of the population uses a wheelchair, or would if they had access to one.
- Over 5% of the world's population is deaf or hard of hearing.
- 18% of partially sighted and blind people have no sight.
- Many disabled people have more than one 'disability'.
- Mental ill health is the most common disability and 1 in 4 of us will be affected by this during our lifetime.

About CAFE

The Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE) is a European wide charity established to achieve equal access to football - Total Football Total Access.

CAFE is working with key stakeholders towards one clear aim; a more accessible and inclusive matchday experience for disabled supporters across Europe. CAFE works closely with UEFA and its 54 member associations including their clubs and disabled supporters groups.

Alternative accessible formats are available on request

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CAFE

CENTRE
FOR ACCESS
TO FOOTBALL
IN EUROPE

Disability Awareness and Etiquette -HANDBOOK-



Photo courtesy of UEFA

Social model of disability

CAFE supports the social model of disability, which states that it is the physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and attitudinal barriers that cause disability, not impairments.

It is important to see the person and not the disability, and to remove stereotypes. For example, a person who uses a wheelchair is only disabled when there are steps or steep gradients that cannot be accessed in a wheelchair. Likewise, a blind or partially sighted person is only disabled when information is not provided in an accessible format and access routes are blocked by physical barriers or trip hazards.

The old medical model of disability looked at treating the disabled person as unwell or unhealthy and defined them according to their medical condition. This is disempowering and can be patronising to disabled people, who are just as able as anyone else provided their environment is accommodating to their specific requirements.



Why be inclusive?

Inclusive access is important to all of us. As well as disabled people, many non-disabled people derive huge benefits from an accessible and inclusive environment, such as at a football stadium:

- **A temporary injury (such as a sprained ankle, fractures etc.)**
- **Pregnant women or parents with younger children**
- **Children**
- **Older and senior people**
- **People of different languages who may not understand complex signage**

Communication tips – basic

- Always be respectful, and don't be afraid to make a mistake. Don't make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. Ask before giving assistance. If assisting, ask how you can best help and follow directions. Don't insist if the disabled person says that they do not need your help.
- If a disabled person is accompanied by another individual, speak to the disabled person directly rather than through their companion.
- Treat adults as adults.

'Together we can help to improve the lives of many disabled people around Europe through football and its fans'

Words and language

It is important to use appropriate terminology when communicating with disabled people, and to move away from more negative or derogatory stereotypical words and expressions.

This includes derogatory terms such as 'impaired', 'crippled', 'invalid' and 'handicapped'. The word 'invalid', for example, is based on the English word literally meaning invalid or worthless, while the word 'handicapped' is considered by many to be derived from an English word once used to describe someone who begged with a 'hand-and-cap' or 'handicap'.

The football family can take an important lead in talking about positive steps that will help to remove negative stereotypes and images of disabled people.



Photo courtesy of Metalist Kharkiv FC

Blind and partially sighted people

- Speak directly to the blind person, not through a companion.
- Identify yourself when you approach a blind person or enter a room. If a new person joins the group, introduce him or her. Let the blind person know when you are leaving.
- Whilst some blind people may be deaf or hard of hearing, most are not. Face the person and speak directly to them. Use a normal tone of voice, and don't shout. It is acceptable to use words like "see" and "look".
- It is appropriate to touch a person's arm lightly when you speak, so that they know you are speaking to them.
- Always ask before providing assistance. Don't assume that the person needs your help.
- If you are offering direction, be specific and point out obstacles in the path of travel. Alert blind people to posted information. Never push, pull, or grab a blind person - this can be frightening and embarrassing.
- Unless the owner has given you permission, you should never pet, talk to or otherwise distract an assistance or guide dog whilst it is working.
- Please be aware that only 18% of blind and partially sighted people are totally blind. Most have limited or variously obscured vision. Try not to rely on hand signals or gestures.



Wheelchair users and people with limited mobility

- Respect the individual's personal space, which includes a person's wheelchair, crutches, or other mobility aid. Never move someone's crutches, walker, cane, or other mobility aid without permission.
- Do not push a person's wheelchair or grab the arm of someone walking with difficulty without first asking if you can help.
- Try to speak to the person at their eye level. You could stoop, squat or find a chair to do this.
- It is acceptable to ask someone who has difficulty in speaking to repeat something that you did not understand. Carry a notebook and pencil - they may find it easier to communicate this way.

Intellectually (learning) disabled people

- Treat adults as adults.
- Use simple, direct sentences. Gestures, diagrams, pictograms or demonstrations can also be useful. Use clear language and directions.
- Remember that people with brain injuries may repeat themselves, or require information to be repeated.
- Provide information gradually and clearly.
- Don't pretend to understand if you do not. It is ok to ask the person to repeat what they said, and give people time to respond to what you have said.



Deaf and hard of hearing people

- Ask the person how they best prefer to communicate.
- Reduce background noise if possible.
- Make sure that you have the person's attention before speaking (e.g. a wave, a light touch on the shoulder, or other signals).
- Speak in a clear, expressive manner. Speak in your normal tone, unless asked to raise your voice.
- Remember to pause occasionally if you are speaking through an interpreter (e.g. sign language interpreter).
- Face into the light and keep your hands away from your mouth. Look directly at the person and maintain eye contact. Don't turn your back or move around whilst talking.
- A deaf person cannot read a note and your lips at the same time. When you are writing a message, don't talk.
- It is acceptable to ask the person to repeat or write something down that you did not understand.

