

Planning a trip to the

Walt Disney World® Resort

*A Resource for Guests with Cognitive Disabilities
including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)*





Welcome to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, the place where imagination is the destination. For young and old, big and small - it's the most magical place on Earth! This Guide is designed to assist families of those with cognitive disabilities, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in planning a trip to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort.

Table of Contents

Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Tips	4-11
Trip Planning Strategies	12-13
Transportation & Getting Around	14-17
Park Entrances/When You Arrive	18-19
Cast Members	20-21
Lost Persons/If You Get Lost	22-23
Accessing Attractions	24-27
Need A Break?	28-31
Disney Characters	32-33
Beyond the Theme Parks	34-37

Additional information about the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, including our services for Guests with disabilities, can be found by visiting our website at www.disneyworld.com or by calling (407) 939-5277.

All four theme park-specific Guides for Guests with Disabilities (*Magic Kingdom*® Park, *Epcot*®, *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®, & *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park) are also available for download from this website. These Guides outline specific information about each attraction, including height requirements and health restrictions.



Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Tips

Q: What are some tips to prepare my family member with a cognitive disability for a trip to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort?

A: Advanced planning is recommended for all Guests with cognitive disabilities planning a visit to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort. As you would imagine, our theme parks offer sensory stimulation including crowds, dark and loud theaters and attractions, lights and noises, and waiting in line. It is suggested that you review the planning tips and strategies offered on pages 9-10 of this Guide. You may also refer to this Guide for further suggestions on items to discuss with your family member in advance of your visit and to obtain specific information about our attractions. Additional information can be found by visiting our website at www.disneyworld.com or by calling (407) 939-5277.

Q: When should I purchase tickets?

A: It is recommended that tickets be purchased in advance to avoid the possibility of waiting in line at our ticket locations outside of the Theme Park entrances. Tickets for the Theme Parks and water parks, including Annual Passes, can be purchased in advance online at www.disneyworld.com or by calling (407) 939-5277.

Q: Where is stroller/wheelchair rental?

A: If your group needs to rent a stroller, wheelchair, or ECV/motorized scooter for the day, proceed to the stroller/wheelchair shops located near the main entrance to each of the four Theme Parks, *Disney Springs Marketplace* and Water Parks.

Q: Do you offer a Rider Switch if my family member with a cognitive disability is not able to ride a particular attraction?

A: Yes. If you have 3 or more in your party, you may be able to take advantage of the attraction Rider Switch program that enables you to experience the attraction while another member of the party waits with the Guest who does not ride. You then “swap” to enable the other party member to enjoy the attraction without having to wait in the line again. For details and to use this service, inquire with the Cast Member at the attraction.

Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Tips



Q: What if my family member with a cognitive disability has difficulty waiting in line or understanding the concept of time?

To access our attractions, Guests with cognitive disabilities have several options including use of the standard queue, Disney FastPass+, the Disability Access Service, and/or additional accommodations based on individual service need. To determine which option or options are best for your party, visit the Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks. Additional information can be found on pages 21-24 of this Guide or by visiting our website at www.disneyworld.com.

Q: What should I do if my family member with a cognitive disability needs to remain in a stroller while in the attraction queues?

A: Visit the Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks to receive a "stroller as wheelchair" tag to be placed on your stroller for easy identification by our attractions Cast Members.

Q: Where can we go if my family member with a cognitive disability becomes over-stimulated (has a "melt down") or needs a break area?

A: You can ask a Cast Member where the nearest quiet location is located. An example of a break area is First Aid located at all four Theme Parks and the Disney Water Parks. Please refer to pages 25-28 of this Guide for further suggestions.

Q: Are restrooms readily available in the theme parks and do you also offer companion (sometimes called "family") restrooms?

A: Yes, there are multiple men's and women's restroom facilities throughout our parks. We do also offer companion (family) restrooms in selected locations, including First Aid, which are listed in our park-specific Guides for Guests with Disabilities. These restrooms are larger than traditional restrooms and can be helpful if your family member with a cognitive disability needs assistance or requires that someone be with them in the restroom. Note that many of our restrooms use automatic toilet flushing equipment which can be loud.

Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Tips



Q: How can I find out what each of the attractions at the *Magic Kingdom*® Park, *Epcot*®, *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®, & *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park are like? Is there a listing that outlines the various special effects in each as well?

A: Yes. Please refer to the "Walt Disney World Resort Attraction Details" which is a separate document on the www.disneyworld.com website.

This document lists further information about each attraction including details such as how long a ride might take and the type of special effects it has (smell/scents, flashing lights, loud noises, darkness, etc.). Additional information about our attractions can be found elsewhere on this website or by calling (407) 939-5277.

Q: How can I find out about food options/preparation methods for my family member with a cognitive disability who has specific dietary needs?

A: Most table service restaurants in the Theme Parks and resorts can accommodate most food allergies or intolerances and advanced requests can be made when booking your dining reservation or by speaking with the chef or a manager on duty at the restaurant.

Guests with food allergies or intolerances are also allowed to bring food items into the theme parks. Please inform the Cast Member at bag check that someone in the party has a food allergy or intolerance. Note that Cast Members are prohibited from storing, preparing, cooking or reheating any food brought into the Theme Parks. Additional dietary information, including policies and further accommodations, can be found by visiting our website at www.disneyworld.com or by calling (407) 939-5277.

Frequently Asked Questions & Helpful Tips



Q: Are there any other tools or resources the *Walt Disney World*® Resort offers for my trip planning or during my visit?

A: If you have any questions or require information upon arrival at the Theme Parks, visit Guest Relations near the main entrance. Additional information can be found by visiting our website at www.disneyworld.com or by calling (407) 939-5277. All four theme park-specific Guides for Guests with Disabilities (*Magic Kingdom*® Park, *Epcot*®, *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®, and *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park) are also available for download from this website.

These outline specific information about each attraction, including height requirements and health restrictions. Additionally, you can download the *My Disney Experience* application/app for free to your smart phone or tablet which provides access to information including attraction wait times and helpful park maps, and also allows you to make dining reservations. Visit www.disneyworld.com for more information.

Fun at the Walt Disney World® Resort!

Tips and Strategies Offered by Community Organizations
for Families of Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities

When going on a family outing, especially to a place like the *Walt Disney World*® Resort with its crowds and various sights, sounds and smells, it is critical to plan ahead. This Guide contains tips and tools designed to promote the enjoyment of the *Walt Disney World*® Resort experience for everyone involved.

While you plan and prepare for your trip, keep in mind, this experience is supposed to be fun, not just for your family member with a cognitive disability, but for your entire family!

WHAT TO EXPECT



Drive and park the car



Ride the tram, monorail
or bus to the Park



Go through bag check



Buy and hand in tickets



Study the map



Visit Guest Relations



Have some fun!



Get your favorite snack



Take a break



Time to go home

HOW TO PREPARE

- 1) Review this Guide.** This Guide gives an overview of the parks and what to expect during your trip. Knowing what to expect is a key component of a successful adventure!
- 2) Create or review a Visual Schedule.** The previous page of this Guide provides an overview of a possible timeline for a day of fun at one of the Walt Disney World® Resort theme parks. Go over this or similar timeline with your family member so he or she can learn the routine.
- 3) Watch videos.** Search www.disneyworld.com or other websites for videos of *Walt Disney World*® Resort experiences. There are video tours of the Theme Parks, of certain rides and of the many Cast Members (employees) and characters your family will see during your trip.
- 4) Study the map.** You can find comprehensive maps of all four theme parks at www.disneyworld.com. Review the maps with your family and try to lay out a plan for your day.
- 5) Choose a place on the map to meet in case you are separated.** Be sure your family member is aware of the location and show it to them once you arrive. Continue to stress the importance of staying close together at all times.
- 6) Practice waiting in line.** Waiting in line can be a big part of the *Walt Disney World*® Resort Theme Parks experience. Practice waiting if you can either at home or in lines at the grocery store, ice cream shop, etc.

WHAT TO BRING

- 1) A bracelet or nametag** with your family member's name, a contact number for you, and any other important things to know about your family member.
- 2) Ear plugs or headphones.** The parks can be very noisy in certain places. There might be fireworks or announcements on loud speakers. If you choose to go on fast rides, the sounds from the fellow riders may scare your family member.
- 3) A favorite device or activity.** Bring your family member's tablet, video game, comic book, or anything else you think might distract them and keep them occupied during any periods of waiting.
- 4) Reinforcers for good behavior.** Trips to the parks can be long, so items that motivate your family member will be helpful in reinforcing good behavior so your family is able to enjoy a full day of fun!
- 5) A sensory toy,** like a stress ball or other calming item. If your family member experiences sensory overload (the sights, sounds, smells and commotion could become an issue).

Transportation & Getting Around

There are many ways to get to Orlando and the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, including motor vehicle, airplane, or train. Once at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, there are several ways you and your family may get to and access the Theme Parks and other areas.

DRIVING

If your family is driving to our theme parks each day during your stay, you will be directed to a parking lot where you can then take an open-aired tram to our main entrance area (note that trams do not stop at our disability parking lots). Each section of the tram has a series of rows facing forward and at least one row facing backwards. Each row accommodates 6 adults. If you would prefer, you can also walk from our parking lots to the main entrance area.

NOTE: If you are visiting the Magic Kingdom® Park, the tram will drop you off at the Transportation and Ticket Center at which point your family can choose to ride either a ferry boat or the Walt Disney World® Monorail System to the main entrance of the park.

COMPLIMENTARY DISNEY TRANSPORTATION

Complimentary transportation is available throughout the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, including to and from Theme Parks, to Guests staying at select *Walt Disney World*® Resort hotels. You and your family can take in the sights from a bus, ride high in the sky aboard our world-famous Monorail, or embark on a boat ride-and enjoy transportation that delivers you from your Resort hotel to the Theme Parks and beyond.

Transportation & Getting Around



Buses

Most areas throughout the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, including Disney Theme Parks, Disney Water Parks, Resort hotels and the *Disney Springs* Area, are accessible by bus. Some bus routes may require transfer from one bus to another.

Ferryboats

Magic Kingdom® Park is accessible by boat from Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, Disney's Polynesian Village Resort, Disney's Ft. Wilderness Resort and Campground, and Disney's Wilderness Lodge. Ferry boats connect *Magic Kingdom*® Park and the Transportation and Ticket Center. *Epcot*® and *Disney's Hollywood Studios*® are accessible by boat from Disney's BoardWalk Inn and Villas Resort, Disney's Yacht Club & Beach Club Resorts, and the *Walt Disney World*® Swan & Dolphin Hotels. *Disney Springs* Area is accessible by boat from Disney's Port Orleans Resort-French Quarter & Riverside, Disney's Old Key West Resort, and Disney's Saratoga Springs Resort.

Monorail

Originally conceived as a public transport for the future, the *Walt Disney World*® Monorail System has three separate beams that travel throughout the *Walt Disney World*® Resort. The first makes stops at the Transportation and Ticket Center, *Magic Kingdom*® Park, Disney's Contemporary Resort, Disney's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa, and Disney's Polynesian Village Resort. Beams two and three offer express round-trip services to the *Magic Kingdom*® Park and *Epcot*® originating from the Transportation and Ticket Center.

For further information about transportation options, parking prices, hours, or if you need help finding your way around the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, visit our website at www.disneyworld.com or call (407) 939-5277.

Park Entrances/When You Arrive



Screening Areas

Before entering the Theme Parks, there are Guest screening/bag check areas for personal items. In these locations, Cast Members will be checking bags, backpacks, jackets, and other personal items. Depending on the length of the line, your family may experience some waiting. Also note that the Cast Member will briefly take possession of your personal items so they may be checked. Those with jackets may be asked to open them and pockets should be emptied. You may also be selected to have additional screening through a metal detector. You may speak with a Host or Hostess if you prefer alternate screening options.

Main Entrance

Once your personal items have been checked, you will be in the main entrance area of one of the four Theme Parks. At *Epcot*®, *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®, and *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park, this is also where your family can purchase tickets if you need to. At the *Magic Kingdom*® Park, tickets may be purchased at either the Guest Relations Window to the right of the main entrance or at the Transportation and Ticket Center prior to boarding the ferryboat or Monorail.

Theme Park Entrances

With your park tickets in hand (or around your wrist if you're using a MagicBand), your party can then proceed to the entrance gates of the park you're visiting. Depending on the length of the line, your family may experience some waiting. When it is your turn, you can wave your MagicBand or ticket media on the touch point sensor or have the Cast Member/employee working the line assist you. Depending on the type of ticket you have, each family member may also be asked to scan their index finger. Just inside the entrance at all four theme parks is the stroller, wheelchair, and ECV/mobility scooter rental shop where you and your family can rent a device for the day.

Cast Members

When your family arrives at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, you will meet the friendly Disney employees who are called “Cast Members”.

The term “Cast Member” was coined by Walt Disney himself and pays homage to the name given to those performing in a show or in a movie. Cast Members are easily identified by their nametags which also highlight their hometown. All our Cast Members are trained to assist in answering questions and providing directions.

In the event a member of your party gets lost, have them find a Cast Member for assistance (please refer to pages 19 and 20 of this Guide for further information).



Lost Persons/If You Get Lost

If a member of your family gets lost, have them immediately find a Cast Member who will assist in trying to reunite you.

There is also a lost persons/children location in each Theme Park where lost persons can be escorted by Cast Members.

It is recommended that you take a photo of members of your party (especially if your family member with a cognitive disability has a tendency to wander off) on your mobile device. This photo can be of great assistance to quickly reunite your party if you are separated.

You may also consider making a nametag for your family member that includes their name as well as a family member's name and mobile phone number.

A circular sign with a brown border and a light beige background. The sign is mounted on a green metal post with ornate scrollwork. The text on the sign is in a brown, serif font. The top half of the sign reads "GUEST RELATIONS" and the bottom half reads "LOST & FOUND", separated by two horizontal lines. The background of the image shows a blurred red and white striped awning and green foliage.

GUEST
RELATIONS
LOST & FOUND

Accessing Attractions



The Theme Parks offer a wide variety of great rides and shows, and Guests with cognitive disabilities have several means of access available to assist in creating magical and memorable experiences.

Rides

To access our attractions, Guests with cognitive disabilities have several options including use of the standard queue, Disney FastPass+, the Disability Access Service, and/or additional accommodations based on individual service need. To determine which option or options are best for your party, visit the Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks.

Shows

At our shows, we generally have posted performance times that you can learn about by either visiting www.disneyworld.com, downloading the *My Disney Experience* application to your smart phone or tablet, or by picking up a daily Times Guide from the main entrance or Guest Relations. Lines begin forming leading up to the next show time and how much in advance your party should arrive to line up depends on various factors including the number of other Guests visiting on a particular day. Some shows even offer Disney FastPass+. For additional information on how best to experience one of our exciting shows, visit the Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks.

Disney FastPass+ and My Disney Experience

Disney FastPass+ service is a great tool for all Guests visiting the four *Walt Disney World*® Resort theme parks including those with cognitive disabilities. FastPass+ is a free service that gives you a reservation in line at selected rides and shows which means you will spend less time waiting in line and more time enjoying all the fun the parks have to offer. *(continued)*

Accessing Attractions



Disney FastPass+ and My Disney Experience (continued from page 25)

Visit or download the *My Disney Experience* application, your personal guide to the magic, which offers online and mobile tools that will help you further plan your vacation to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort. Here, you will be able to access *MyMagic+* benefits like Disney FastPass+ service, which will let you also reserve access to entertainment, Character Greetings and viewing areas for parades and fireworks

Disability Access Service

The Disability Access Service is designed for Guests who are unable to tolerate extended waits at attractions due to their disability, and the service allows Guests to schedule a return time that is comparable to the current queue wait for the given attraction. Depending on a Guest with cognitive disability's individual service needs, additional accommodations are available. To learn more about the Disability Access Service as well as additional accommodations available based on individual service needs, visit a Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks.

NOTE: To utilize the Disability Access Service, eligible Guests will participate in a registration process that includes having their photo taken.



Need A Break?

There are so many places throughout the *Magic Kingdom*® Park, *Epcot*®, *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®, & *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park that are great for taking a break. There are also areas to relax that are typically a "little less busy" if your family member with a cognitive disability needs some down time. If necessary, find a Cast Member who will assist in finding a quiet location nearby. Some examples include:

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Magic Kingdom.

Main Street, U.S.A.: First Aid; Side Street by Crystal Arts

Adventureland: Swiss Family Treehouse; Corridor to the left of Pirates of the Caribbean

Liberty Square: Behind Ye Olde Christmas Shop

Frontierland: Tom Sawyer Island (NOTE: You must take a raft ride to/from the island and some waiting may be required); Splash Mountain garden area

Fantasyland: Pathway leading from Cinderella's Castle to Fairytale Garden; Pete's Silly Sideshow area; Pathway behind The Barnstormer

Tomorrowland: Near Walt Disney's Carousel of Progress

Table service and quick service restaurant seating areas (during non-peak periods)

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Hollywood Boulevard: First Aid

Echo Lake: Walkway surrounding Echo Lake

Animation Courtyard: Near the restrooms to the left of The Magic of Disney Animation attraction

Sunset Boulevard: Courtyard outside The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror™

Commissary Lane: Outside ABC Commissary

Table service and quick service restaurant seating areas (during non-peak periods)



Need A Break?



Future World West: First Aid (part of Odyssey Center building next to Test Track); Courtyard and restroom area outside Imagination pavilion; Area between Seas entrance and Coral Reef Restaurant

Future World East: Near Ellen's Energy Adventure

World Showcase: Mexico-Outside area to the right of the pavilion near the backstage gate; Germany-Garden area next to Glaskunst; Japan-Garden area; Morocco-Village Corridors; France-To the right of the buildings along the water's edge; International Gateway; United Kingdom-Garden area at back of pavilion (when shows not running at gazebo)

Table service and quick service restaurant seating areas (during non-peak periods)

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Discovery Island®: First Aid (next to Creature Comforts); Discovery Island Trails

Africa: Gorilla Falls Exploration Trail

Asia: Maharajah Tiger Trek

Table service and quick service restaurant seating areas (during non-peak periods)

Characters



Would you and your family like to see or even meet Disney Characters from your favorite movies or television shows?

Many of our shows, parades, and rides at our theme parks feature Disney Characters as do themed character dining experience in the Theme Parks and Resort Hotels.

You can also share a magical moment together and snap a photograph to capture the memories forever at numerous Disney Character meet and greet locations at all the Theme Parks.

Disney Characters are also available to sign autographs, so bring an autograph book if your family member with a cognitive disability is a collector. You can visit www.disneyworld.com as well as Guest Relations for more information about all of our character experiences.



Beyond the Theme Parks

In addition to our four theme parks, the *Walt Disney World*® Resort offers numerous other experiences including two water parks, the *Disney Springs* Area, Disney's BoardWalk, ESPN Wide World of Sports, and several sports and recreation options.

WATER PARKS

At *Disney's Blizzard Beach* Water Park, discover frosty fun for the whole family at a one-time ski resort that has melted into a watery wonderland. Zip down the slopes of Mount Gushmore on one of the world's tallest and fastest waterslides or float down the tranquil river and sunbathe on the white-sand beach. Children under 48 inches tall can even splash around in their own water play area with a snow-castle fountain and kid-sized waterslides.

At *Disney's Typhoon Lagoon* Water Park, you can escape for a storm of fun in the sun! Snorkel with sharks, stingrays and tropical fish in the coral reef. Plunge down rushing rapids, sunbathe on the sandy beach and glide down the lazy river on a raft ride. After an epic typhoon hurled surfboards into palm trees and tossed boats like toys, the storm-soaked Mount Mayday became a topsy-turvy oasis of water-filled adventure! Note that both water parks require separate admission and parking is complimentary.

DISNEY SPRINGS AREA

Made up of individual areas including Westside, Town Center, The Landing, and Marketplace. Westside: Provides an exuberant atmosphere with lively entertainment. Shopping and dining. Town Center: Offers a sophisticated mix of dining and shopping; along with a promenade where Guests can relax, refresh and reconnect. The Landing: A colorful thriving commercial district with inspired dining and retail and beautiful waterfront views. Marketplace: This family-friendly area will continue to delight Guests of all ages by combining new experiences, such as an over-the-water pedestrian causeway, along with classic Disney favorites, including and expanded World of Disney store.



Beyond the Theme Parks

DISNEY'S BOARDWALK

Experience the timeless charm of Disney's BoardWalk, a quarter-mile promenade of dining, shops and nightlife. Stroll along the water's edge, play afternoon midway games and discover evening street performers. Evoking turn-of-the-century boardwalks in such coastal cities as Coney Island and Atlantic City, Disney's BoardWalk is a short stroll to *Epcot*® and a boat ride to *Disney's Hollywood Studios*®. Parking and admission to Disney's BoardWalk are complimentary.

ESPN WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS

Play at the next level at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex. These 220 acres of professionally run, state-of-the-art facilities host over 60 sports and thousands of events for athletes of all ages and abilities. Train and compete with your team—or catch the excitement as a spectator—in this grand sports setting where classic athletic ideals meet contemporary innovation. Note that ESPN Wide World of Sports requires separate admission and some events have their own ticketing requirements.

SPORTS & RECREATION

Other activities/events available at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort include: archery, arcades, basketball, bike rentals, boat rentals (canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, sailboats, and several types of motorized watercraft), carriage rides, children's activity centers, fishing, fitness centers, golf, golf cart rentals, miniature golf, parasailing, pony rides, resort pools, resort-specific activities, scuba diving, surfing, tennis, tubing, volleyball, and wake boarding. Note that some activities/events are only available to Guests staying at select *Walt Disney World*® Resort hotels and there may be an additional cost to participate.

For additional information about all the *Walt Disney World*® Resort has to offer, visit our website at www.disneyworld.com or call (407) 939-5277.





We hope this Guide has provided helpful information in planning a visit for you and your family member with a cognitive disability to the most magical place on earth- the *Walt Disney World*® Resort.

If you have any questions that were not answered in this Guide, please visit our website at www.disneyworld.com or call (407) 939-5277.