

Fun at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort!

Tips and Strategies for Families of Individuals with Cognitive Disabilities Including Autism



When going on a family outing it is critical to plan ahead, especially when visiting a place like the *Walt Disney World* Resort with its crowds and various sights, sounds and smells. We have made updates based on guidance from health authorities. These measures are designed to promote health, physical distancing, and reduced contact and may require additional pre-planning before your visit. This document 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 the entire family!

How to Prepare

- 1 Visit *disneyworld.com*.** Our website provides additional information about how we are welcoming all Guests back to the *Walt Disney World* Resort. We have made updates based on guidance from health authorities. These health and safety measures are designed to promote cleanliness, physical distancing, and reduced contact.
- 2 Make Advance Theme Park Reservations.** At this time, to enter one of the Parks, in addition to valid admission, each Guest is required to make a Theme Park reservation via the Disney Park Pass system. Check the Disney Park Pass system to see if your desired Theme Park reservation is available before purchasing your ticket. To check reservation availability or purchase tickets go to *disneyworld.com*.
- 3 Review the Attractions Matrix.** This downloadable attractions matrix, found at *disneyworld.com*, provides an overview of the attractions at each Park. Knowing what to expect is a key component of a successful adventure!
- 4 Create or review a Visual Schedule.** The second page of this guide provides a sample of “What to Expect” to assist in planning a day of fun at one of the *Walt Disney World* Resort Theme Parks. Go over this or a similar timeline or social story with your family member so he or she knows what to expect during the trip.
- 5 Watch videos.** Search *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. You may also want to watch videos about what it is like to visit places while wearing a face covering and how to maintain physical distancing.
- 6 Study the map.** You can find comprehensive maps of all four Theme Parks at *disneyworld.com*. Review the maps with your family and make a plan for your day.
- 7 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 him or her once you arrive. Continue to stress the importance of staying close together at all times.
- 8 Practice waiting in line.** Waiting in a line can be a big part of the *Walt Disney World* Resort Theme Parks experience. With our recent updates, you may be asked to wait in specific places so you can maintain physical distancing from those around you. Practice waiting in line while maintaining physical distancing before you visit. You can do this at home, in the grocery store, ice cream shop, etc.
- 9 Practice wearing a face covering.** Everyone 2 years old and older is required to wear a face covering while visiting the *Walt Disney World* Resort. Practice wearing a face covering at home and while running errands around your neighborhood. Explore different face covering styles before you arrive so you can be sure to have the most comfortable one for you. There will be places in the Parks where you can take your face covering off. You can learn more about our face covering requirements by visiting *disneyworld.com*.

What to Bring

- 1 A face covering.** Everyone 2 years old and older is required to wear a face covering while visiting the Walt Disney World Resort. There are designated places in the Parks where you will be able to take your face covering off. You can learn more about our face covering requirements by visiting [disneyworld.com](https://www.disneyworld.com).
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 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!
- 6 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).

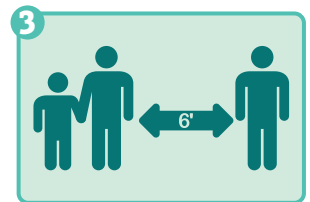
What to Expect



Drive and park the car



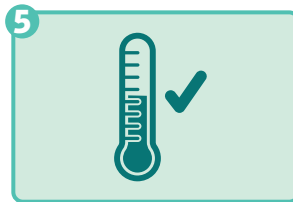
Wear your face covering



Keep a 6 foot physical distance from those not in your group



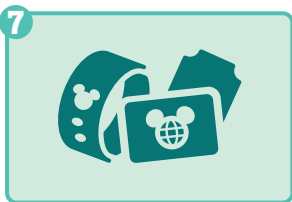
Walk or ride the monorail or bus to the Park



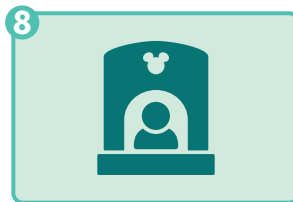
Go through the temperature screening



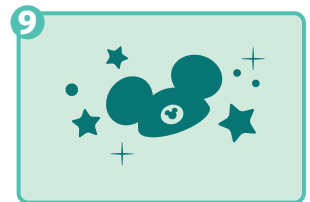
Go through bag check



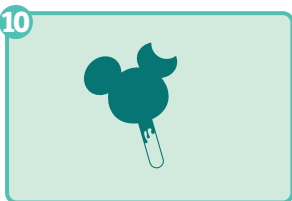
Redeem tickets



Visit Guest Relations



Have some fun!



Get your favorite snack



Take a break



Time to go home

Additional Tips and Tools

- **Stroller/wheelchair rental.** 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 Theme Parks.
- **“Stroller as Wheelchair.”** You can request a “stroller as wheelchair” tag to be placed on a stroller if your family member with a cognitive disability needs to remain in a stroller while in the attraction queues. Visit the Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Parks to receive a “stroller as wheelchair” tag to be placed on your stroller for easy identification by our attractions Cast Members.
- **Rider Switch program.** If you have 3 or more Guests in your party, you may be able to take advantage of the attraction Rider Switch program. It enables you to experience an attraction while another member of the party waits with a family member 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.
- **Disability Access Service program.** The Disability Access Service is designed for Guests who are unable to tolerate extended waits at attractions due to their disability. The service allows Guests to schedule a return time that is comparable to the current queue wait for the given attraction. Depending on the individual needs of a Guest with a cognitive disability, additional services are available. To learn more about the Disability Access Service as well as additional services available based on individual service needs, visit a Guest Relations lobby location near the entrance at any of the four Theme Parks.
- **Break areas.** Should your family member with a cognitive disability become over-stimulated or need some down time, dozens of areas are available throughout the Parks where a Guest can “take a break.” To locate the nearest area, please ask a Cast Member for assistance.
- **Restroom facilities.** There are multiple men’s and women’s restroom facilities throughout our Parks. We also offer companion (family) restrooms in selected locations, including First Aid, which are listed in our Park-specific Guides for Guests with Disabilities that are available on disneyworld.com. 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.
- **Food options/preparation methods.** Most table service restaurants in the Theme Parks and Resorts can accommodate many dietary requests and advanced dietary requests can be made when booking your dining reservation or by speaking with the chef or a manager on duty at the restaurant. Guests are allowed to bring outside food and nonalcoholic beverage items into the Park for self-consumption, provided they are not in glass containers and do not require heating, reheating, processing, refrigeration or temperature control and do not have pungent odors. Inform a Security Cast Member of any food items when you enter the Park. For dining experiences, you should have the latest version of the *My Disney Experience* app on your mobile device, with location services enabled, as well as cashless or contactless forms of payment. Additional dietary and dining information, including policies and further accommodations, can be found by visiting our website at disneyworld.com or by calling 407-939-5277.

