

Planning a trip to the

# Disneyland<sup>®</sup> Resort

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



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Welcome to the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort, the place where imagination is the destination. For young and old, big and small-it's the happiest 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 *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort.

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Additional information about the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort, including our services for Guests with disabilities, can be found by visiting our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or by calling (714) 781-4636.

The *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Park and *Disney California Adventure*<sup>®</sup> Park Guides for Guests with Disabilities 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 *Disneyland*® Resort?**

A: Advanced planning is recommended for all Guests with cognitive disabilities visiting either *Disneyland*® Park or *Disney California Adventure*® Park. 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 trip planning strategies on pages 7 and 8 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.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or by calling (714) 781-4636.

**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 in the main entrance plaza/Esplanade area outside of the Theme Park entrances. Tickets for *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park, including Annual Passports, can be purchased in advance online at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or by calling (714) 781-4636.

**Q: Where is stroller/wheelchair rental?**

A: If a member of your family needs to rent a stroller, a wheelchair, or ECV/motorized scooter, proceed to *Disneyland*® Resort Stroller Shop located in the main entrance plaza to the right of *Disneyland*® Park entrance.

**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, ask 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?**

A: To access our attractions, Guests with cognitive disabilities have several options including use of the standard queue, Disney FASTPASS® service, 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 Guest Relations at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park. Additional information can be found on pages 17 and 18 of this Guide or by visiting our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.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 Guest Relations at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park 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. Examples of break areas include First Aid in *Disneyland*® Park (on Main Street, U.S.A. near the Plaza Inn restaurant) and in *Disney California Adventure*® Park (on Buena Vista Street next to the Chamber of Commerce). Please refer to pages 19 and 20 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 locations, including First Aid, which are listed in our 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 *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park are like? Is there a listing that outlines the various special effects in each as well?**

A: Yes. Please refer to the “Disneyland Resort Attraction Details” which is a separate document on the [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.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 (714) 781-4636.

**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 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 our theme parks. Additional dietary information, including policies and further accommodations, can be found by visiting our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or by calling (714) 781-3463.

**Q: Are there any other tools or resources the *Disneyland*® 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 at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park. Additional information can be found by visiting our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or by calling (714) 781-4636. The *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park Guides for Guests with Disabilities are also available for download from this website. These outline specific information about each attraction, including height requirements and health restrictions.

# Fun at the Disneyland® Resort!

Tips & strategies offered by community organizations for families of individuals with cognitive disabilities.

When going on a family outing, especially to a place like the *Disneyland*® 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 *Disneyland*® 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



1 Drive and park the car



2 Ride the tram or bus to the Park



3 Go through security



4 Buy and hand in tickets



5 Study the map



6 Visit Guest Relations



7 Have some fun!



8 Grab a favorite snack



9 Take a break



10 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 *Disneyland*® Park or *Disney California Adventure*® Park. Go over this or similar timeline with your family member so he or she can learn the routine.
- 3) Watch videos.** Search [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or other sites for videos of *Disneyland*® 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 both *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.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 *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park 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, 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, in the event your family member experiences sensory overload (the sights, sounds, smells and commotion at each Park could become an issue).

## Driving & Parking



Upon arriving at the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort, your family will be directed to a parking location and separate parking facilities exist for the theme parks (combined parking areas for both *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Park and *Disney California Adventure*<sup>®</sup> Park), the *Downtown Disney*<sup>®</sup> District, and the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort Hotels. Depending on availability, you may be directed to an alternate parking facility. The largest parking area for the theme parks is the Mickey and Friends Parking Structure, a 6-story parking garage off Disneyland Drive followed by the Buzz, Woody, and Jessie (Toy Story<sup>®</sup>) parking lots at the intersection of Harbor Boulevard and Convention Way.

Once you park your vehicle, please walk to our transportation pick up area where your family might take either an open-aired tram (at the base of the Mickey and Friends Parking Structure) or bus (at the entrance to the Toy Story<sup>®</sup> parking lots) to our main entrance plaza. Each section of the tram has a series of rows facing forward and at least one row facing backwards. Each row accommodates 4 adults and has closing doors. Note that you can also walk from both parking areas to the main entrance plaza (15-20 minute walk).

For further information about parking prices, hours, or if you need help finding your way to the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort, visit our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or call (714) 781-4636.

# Park Entrances / When You Arrive



## **Screening Areas**

Before entering our theme parks, there are Guest screening/bag check areas at both the Harbor Boulevard entrance as well as the *Downtown Disney*® entrance to the main entrance plaza. 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 plaza, also known as the Esplanade, which is the gateway to both *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park. This is also where your family can purchase tickets, if you need to, as well as rent a stroller, wheelchair, or ECV/ motorized scooter for the day.

## **Theme Park Entrances/Turnstiles**

With your park tickets in hand, your party can then proceed to the entrance gates/turnstiles of either *Disneyland*® Park or *Disney California Adventure*® Park. Depending on the length of the line, your family may experience some waiting. When it is your turn, give your ticket to the Cast Member working the line who will scan your ticket. Your family will then be asked to proceed through a turnstile which includes rotating metal arms that keep track of the number of people entering the park. If requested, and if you have concerns with your family member with a cognitive disability using the turnstile, the Cast Member can also open a manual bypass gate.

# Cast Members

When your family arrives at the *Disneyland*® 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 15 and 16 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 (near First Aid in *Disneyland*® Park and next to The Bakery Tour in the Pacific Wharf area of *Disney California Adventure*® 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.



## 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® service, 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 Guest Relations at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park.

### Shows

At our shows, we generally have posted performance times that you can learn about by visiting [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) 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 FASTPASS® service. For additional information on how best to experience one of our shows, visit Guest Relations at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park.

### Disney FASTPASS® Service

FASTPASS® service is a great tool for all Guests visiting *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park 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. A FASTPASS ticket looks like a movie ticket and is printed after you insert your park admission ticket into a kiosk at the ride or show you want to see. The FASTPASS ticket you receive will tell you what time you can come back so you can get on the ride or see the show with a lot less waiting. *Helpful Tip: If your family member with a cognitive disability might have difficulty visiting an attraction to obtain the FASTPASS® tickets to then have to return later to redeem it, consider sending one member of your party to obtain the FASTPASSES for the rest of the group (just make sure they have everyone's park admission ticket).*

### 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 a 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 Guest Relations at either City Hall in *Disneyland*® Park or the Chamber of Commerce in *Disney California Adventure*® Park. 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 *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park that are great for taking a break. There are also areas to relax that are typically a “little less busy” (depending on time of year and time of day) 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:

### Disneyland Park

**Main Street, USA:** First Aid

**Critter Country:** Near The Many Adventures of Winnie the Pooh attraction

**Adventureland:** Base of Tarzan’s Treehouse

**Mickey’s Toontown:** Planter area in front of Roger Rabbit’s Car Toon Spin attraction

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

### Disney California Adventure

**Buena Vista Street:** First Aid next to the Chamber of Commerce

**Hollywood Land:** Backlot area near the Monsters Inc., Mike and Sulley to the Rescue! attraction

**“a bug’s land”:** All areas

**Cars Land:** Connector between Cars Land and “a bug’s land”

**Paradise Pier:** World of Color viewing area (during the day when no shows are being performed)

**Paradise Pier:** Seating area at Boardwalk Pizza & Pasta/Paradise Garden Grill

**Grizzly Peak:** Redwood Creek Challenge Trail

**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 *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park feature Disney Characters as do themed character dining experiences in our theme parks and 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 both *Disneyland*® Park and *Disney California Adventure*® Park.

Characters are also available to sign autographs if your family member with a cognitive disability is a collector. Just bring an autograph book. You can visit [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) as well as Guest Relations for more information about all of our character experiences.





We hope this Guide has provided helpful information in planning a visit for you and your family member with a cognitive disability to the happiest place on earth- the *Disneyland*<sup>®</sup> Resort.

If you have any questions that were not answered in this Guide, please visit our website at [www.disneyland.com](http://www.disneyland.com) or call (714) 781-4636.