

Guide dogs are the service animals for people who are blind or visually impaired or deaf, and they are specially bred and trained for this most important job. There are several guidelines people must follow when in the presence of a service animal to allow for the safety of the dog and its handler. Disregarding these guidelines can distract the dog, which can create a dangerous situation for the dog and its handler.

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1. Don't touch, talk, feed, make eye contact or otherwise distract the dog while he is wearing his harness. Do allow the dog to concentrate and perform for the safety of his master.
2. Don't treat the dog as a pet. Do give him the respect of a working dog.
3. Don't give the dog commands. Do allow the master to do so.
4. Don't try to take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or master. Do assist the master upon his request.
5. Don't walk on the dog's left side as he may become distracted or confused. Do walk on the owner's right side but several paces behind him.
6. Don't attempt to grab or steer the person while the dog is guiding him or attempt to hold the dog's harness. Do ask if the owner needs your assistance and, if so, offer your left arm.
7. Don't pat the dog on the head. Do stroke the dog on the shoulder area but only with its owner's approval.
8. Don't confront the master while the dog is using the bathroom. Do understand that the dogs will need to use the bathroom in green areas (if possible). His master is aware of the dog's needs and will remove waste as needed.
9. Don't assume that the master requires a door to be held open for him. Do assist the master upon his request or ask first.