



The Accessible Icon Project provides supplies and services to transform the original International Symbol of Access into an active, engaged image

Background

The Accessible Icon Project is not the first to design a new International Symbol of Access (ISA). However, it is the first to use an ISA as a springboard for disability activism. Originally conceived for use in a guerilla art project, Sara Hendren and Brian Glenney overlaid their new transparent ISA over the old, intending to raise awareness about cultural perceptions of disability and social inclusion in the US. Since 2010, the project has grown from this grassroots campaign to become a larger social design effort. Now housed and run by Triangle, Inc., people all over the world use the symbol to signal their desire to create more inclusive institutions, economies, and workplaces everywhere.

Comparing the old symbol with the new

Describing the new image with words such as: active, abled, engaged, ready-for-action, determined, and motivated helps provoke discussion on how we view disabilities and people with disabilities in our culture. The symbol does not “represent” people with disabilities, but symbolizes the idea that all people with disabilities can be active and engaged in their lived environment. Our active accessibility symbol helps reimagine how society and individuals view people with disabilities.

Language about disabilities is changing, so should the icon.



Susan Koefoed
1968



ADA 1969
ISO 1984
Karl Montan



Brendan Murphy
1994



Graphic Artist
Guild Foundation
2000



Street Art Campaign
2011



Accessible Icon Project
2012

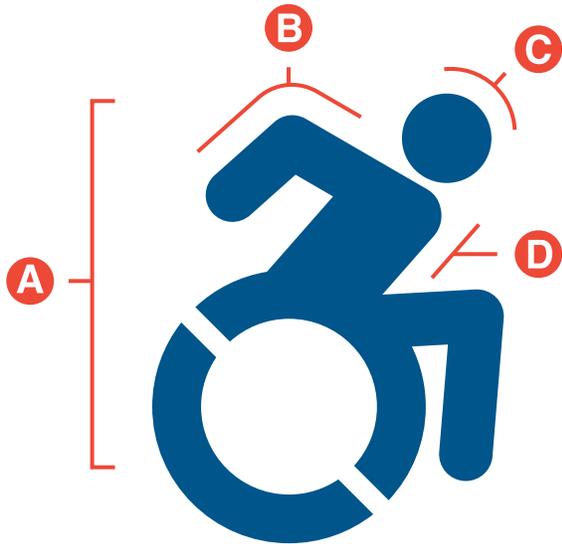
Moving Forward

The Accessible Icon Project works in three ways:

- 1 **CHANGE:** You can use our products or resources to change your signs.
- 2 **ADVOCATE:** We have resources for involving your community in disability advocacy.
- 3 **SHARE:** We'd love to hear from you. The icon is a starting place - a seed for conversations about rights and inclusion in many different contexts. Tell us your story.

The Accessible Icon Makes a Difference

Updated Accessible Icon



A Body Representation

Body symbol is consistent with other symbols (ISO DOT Pictogram): thick and rounded.

B Arm Position

Arm is pointing backward to suggest dynamic mobility.

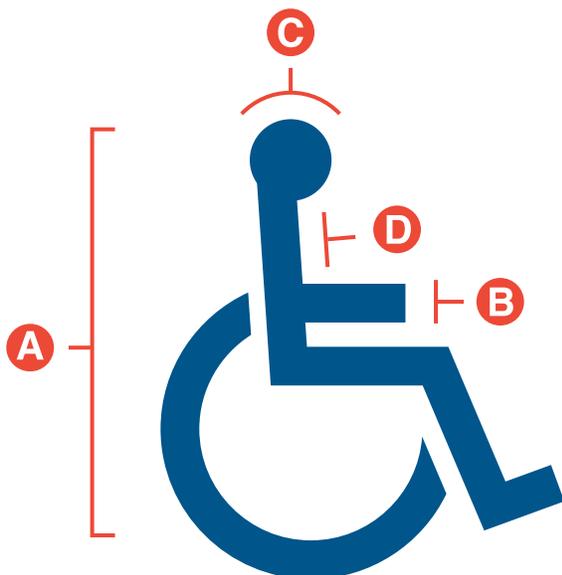
C Head Placement

Head is forward to indicate forward motion and progress.

D Body Orientation

Body is leaning forward to symbolize active status in navigating lived environments.

Original Handicap Symbol



A Body Representation

Body symbol is machine-like and thin, bound to the device.

B Arm Position

Arm is indistinguishable from the armrest symbolizing that the person is part of their mobility device.

C Head Placement

Head is passively placed on top of the body. Original design has no head at all.

D Body Orientation

Body is upright and passive, symbolizing a lack of engagement with the lived environment.