

Educator Checklist: Preparing an Inclusive Dance Workshop for People with Visual Impairment

1. Prepare the Space

- ☐ Make sure the room is safe and easy to move around.
- ☐ Remove obstacles from the dance area.
- ☐ Keep the layout of the room stable and predictable.
- ☐ Explain the space before starting:
 - Where are the walls?
 - Where are the exits?
 - Where is the centre of the room?
 - Where are other participants positioned?
- ☐ Allow participants time to explore the space before dancing.

Tip: Feeling familiar and safe in the environment helps participants move with more confidence.

2. Prepare the Session Structure

- ☐ Explain the plan of the workshop at the beginning.
- ☐ Give clear information about what will happen next.
- ☐ Use a consistent structure (for example: warm-up → movement activities → creative exploration → cool-down).
- ☐ Allow enough time for participants to understand and adapt to each activity.

Tip: Predictability supports independence and reduces uncertainty.

3. Use Clear Movement Instructions

When explaining movements:

☐ Describe what the body is doing, not only what it looks like.

Instead of:

✗ “Make a beautiful shape with your arms.”

Say:

✓ “Lift both arms slowly from your sides until they reach shoulder height.”

☐ Explain:

- Direction (forward, backward, left, right)
- Level (high, middle, low)
- Speed (slow, quick, continuous)
- Body parts involved

☐ Give participants time to explore movements before adding new instructions.

4. Support Body Awareness and Orientation

☐ Encourage participants to notice:

- How their body feels
- Their balance and posture
- Their connection with the floor
- Their relationship with the space

☐ Use sensory descriptions:

Examples:

- “Feel your feet pressing into the floor.”
- “Imagine creating a circle with your arms.”
- “Notice the movement travelling from your shoulders to your hands.”

☐ Encourage participants to discover their own movement style.

5. Adapt Movement Activities

☐ Offer different ways to participate:

- Standing movements
- Seated movements
- Individual exploration
- Partner activities

☐ Avoid focusing only on visual imitation.

Instead of:

✗ “Copy my movement.”

Use:

✓ “Explore a movement where your arms travel slowly upward.”

☐ Allow participants to interpret movements in their own way.

6. Use Sound, Rhythm and Touch as Guidance

☐ Use music with clear rhythm and structure.

☐ Explain changes in music or activity verbally.

☐ Use counting, sounds, or verbal cues to support timing.

☐ Explore movement through:

- Rhythm
- Breathing
- Vibrations
- Partner connection

☐ If using physical guidance, always ask for permission first.

Example:

“Would you like me to guide your arm position, or would you prefer to explore it independently?”

7. Encourage Connection with Others

- ☐ Create activities that build trust and cooperation.
- ☐ Encourage communication between participants.
- ☐ Use partner exercises carefully and explain roles clearly.
- ☐ Ensure everyone has the choice to participate in physical contact.

Tip: Inclusive dance is not about everyone moving in the same way; it is about creating shared experiences.

8. Create a Supportive Atmosphere

- ☐ Encourage creativity rather than perfection.
- ☐ Avoid correcting movements based on visual appearance.
- ☐ Celebrate different ways of expressing movement.
- ☐ Give positive feedback focused on effort, exploration, and expression.

Examples:

- ✓ “I noticed how confidently you explored that movement.”
 - ✓ “Your movement had a strong sense of rhythm.”
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9. Reflection After the Workshop

Ask participants:

- ☐ How did your body feel during the movement?
 - ☐ Which activity did you enjoy most?
 - ☐ What helped you feel comfortable and confident?
 - ☐ Did you discover a new way to express yourself?
 - ☐ How did you experience moving with others?
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Key Message for Educators

An inclusive dance workshop is not about teaching people with visual impairment to copy movements.

It is about creating opportunities for participants to explore their bodies, connect with others, build confidence, and express themselves through movement.