

## Disability and Language

A very brief guide to language and terminology

Language changes fashion. Words used a few years ago may now no longer be regarded as acceptable and may cause offence. Although there is no universal agreement on 'correct' language, the following is recommended as a guide to current good practice. Please do check with disabled people you know and follow their preferences even if they contradict some of what is listed here!

<b>X</b> Words and phrases to avoid	<b>√</b> Preferred words and phrases
The disabled The handicapped	Disabled people <i>(This reflects the social model of people being disabled by barriers outside the individual)</i>
The deaf	Deaf people <i>(use of capital 'D' may indicate first language British sign language user)</i>
The hard of hearing	People with a hearing impairment
Deaf and dumb Deaf mute	Deaf without speech
A mute	Person without speech Person with a speech impairment
The blind	Blind people
The visually impaired	People with visual impairments
Victim of	Person who has / person with
Crippled by	Person who has experienced
Suffering from afflicted by	Lives with
Wheelchair bound Confined to a wheelchair	Wheelchair user
Invalid Person with a disability	Disabled person
Mentally handicapped Backward Retarded Simple	Person with learning difficulties <i>(or learning disabilities)</i>
Mongol	Person with Downs Syndrome
Spastic	Person with Cerebral Palsy
Crazy Mad Mentally ill	Mental health issues Mental and emotional distress survivor
Normal	Non-disabled
Special needs	Access requirements