Clearer venue information for neurodivergent guests

Clear arrival information, understandable choices and space to process a question can help guests feel more prepared for their visit.

Practical staff guidance; adapt the suggested workflow to your venue and current procedures.

Help people know what to expect

Describe the arrival process, ordering system, payment options and typical environment. Explain where queues form and whether the venue has quieter times or spaces that staff can verify. Photographs and plain descriptions can make unfamiliar steps easier to understand. Keep information accurate as layouts and service arrangements change.

Offer choices without assumptions

People differ in their communication and sensory preferences. Autism is one part of the wider discussion of neurodiversity; a single description cannot predict what every guest will need. Ask what would help and offer realistic options. A guest may prefer written information, more time or a clearer explanation of the next step.

Make the conversation easier to follow

Use clear language and explain one decision at a time where that helps the person. Allow time for a response. Check understanding respectfully and offer to write down practical details. The National Autistic Society describes varied communication preferences; venue staff can respond to the person in front of them rather than expecting a fixed style of interaction.

Prepare a consistent team response

Agree how staff describe the service and what options they can offer. Brief cover staff so a useful arrangement survives a shift change. Record an agreed service preference only where needed and through the appropriate system. A short arrival guide can reduce repeated uncertainty for both guests and the team.

Worked example

Fictional example: a guest is unsure whether to order at the table or counter. The colleague explains the next step plainly, offers a written menu and gives the guest time to choose. They describe a quieter seating option after checking it is available.

Your next steps

- Explain arrival and ordering.
- Describe the environment factually.
- Ask about useful communication options.
- Give clear next steps and time.
- Handover agreed arrangements.

Publish the details that reduce uncertainty

Describe arrival, queueing, ordering, toilets, likely noise and any quieter options using clear words. Include photographs or diagrams only when they show the current layout and have an accurate text alternative. Explain any unavoidable uncertainty, such as variable crowding, without guaranteeing a quiet environment at all times. Give a contact route for a guest who needs to check a particular arrangement.

Use the information during service

Fictional example: a guest asks what happens after joining the queue. The host explains the next steps and expected wait as accurately as possible, then offers any available alternative. If a planned entrance changes, update the arrival instructions and staff briefing together. A useful page should reflect what a guest will actually encounter, rather than an idealised version of the venue.

Does neurodiversity-aware service mean using one approach?

People differ. Offer clear information and choices, allow processing time and ask what helps the individual. Avoid drawing conclusions about someone’s needs from appearance or a diagnostic label.

A guest asks for the running order before a noisy event

A guest explains that unexpected changes are difficult and asks when the loud announcements will happen. The printed timetable is provisional. What can the host offer?

Compare your decision

Ask which information would help. Share confirmed timings and identify the parts that may move. Agree how changes will be communicated and describe available quieter spaces accurately. Give the guest time to choose without requiring them to explain a diagnosis.

Try giving the update in two sentences and in writing. Ask the guest which format they prefer; do not assume the same adjustment suits everyone.

Sources and editorial basis

- National Autistic Society — Autism and communication

Guidance checked on 19 October 2026. Examples and worksheets are original suggested workflows; adapt them to your operation.

Use this on shift

Resource page and fillable working record · Read the online guide · Course details