

## Kirstenbosch Gardens

Kirstenbosch Gardens sees a plethora of visitors on a daily basis, which include school tours, the elderly, and foreign tourists. The gardens seem to represent a universal approach in their efforts to cater for this vast spectrum of individuals.



After arriving at the entrance from the parking lot, one is greeted by several large and clearly legible signs directing one to the ticket booths. They show only the English word 'tickets'. A low gradient ramp serves as entrance to the building.

### **Good:**

Perceptible information:	Signage is large and clear.
Equitable use:	The ramp leading into the buildings serves both able bodied and disabled people alike.
Low physical effort:	The ramp serves this principle in much the same fashion.

### **Bad:**

Perceptible information:	Signage appears only in English, makes no use of universal symbols.
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**Notes:**

Symbol for ticket counter as specified by AIGA. Available from: <http://www.aiga.org/content.cfm/symbol-signs>





The preceding three images show where ramps accompany flights of stairs in order to accommodate individuals with mobility orientated disabilities, the elderly, prams, or for that matter anyone who would choose to use them. They are used throughout Kirstenbosch Gardens where it is possible, or where their construction is not limited by topography.

**Good:**

Flexibility in use: Ramps are useful for mothers with prams, goods delivery, wheelchairs, etc.

Equitable use: Ramps serve both able bodied and disabled people alike.

Low physical effort: Ramps serve this principle in much the same fashion.



Wheelchair access into the gardens is afforded by the moveable gate, which has a somewhat difficult to notice sign stating this. A point mentioned by the ticket collector at the gate was that individuals with prams often do not recognize the sign and realize that one can gain access by moving the gate, and subsequently try to force their way through one of the turnstiles.

**Good:**

Flexibility in use: Despite the shortcomings of the gate with regards to visibility, it can serve multiple purposes (wheelchairs and prams).

Size and space for approach: There seems to be adequate room to manoeuvre a wheelchair in this area.

**Bad:**

Perceptible information: Signage is too small, blends into the background, at a height difficult to read for a standing individual, and is not recognized by many individuals.

Tolerance for error: By not making this feature readily apparent, the incorrect method of access is chosen, perhaps forcing the turnstile.

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Signage appears more than adequate throughout Kirstenbosch Gardens. The proceeding example illustrates this, and was positioned at a major junction. Note the red block on the top with the letter 'B' surrounded by a pair of headphones. This forms part of the 'Braille Trail', which is a 'short self-guided tour that passes through a patch of wetland and natural forest'. Audio devices can be rented from the information desk.





Pictured above is a sign of one of the various sections of the garden. Note the number in the top left, for reference with a guide map available at the information desk.



This caution sign differs from the other signage in the area, being bright red. This serves to help it stand out from the foliage, as well as being representative of danger.

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Even a display of the various types of proteas situated on a raised platform has both ramp and stairs.



Here again at one of the main entrances ramps are provided at various levels to accommodate people with various abilities or prams.



## Harfield Station

This train station near my house in Claremont is a good example of bad design for accessibility.



Upon approach one encounters this railing, the purpose of which is difficult to decide upon. It could be to keep cars out, or for ticket collection in days past. It is however a barrier that would impede access to the stairs.



Take note of the fact that there is no symbol representing 'no photography' on this sign of prohibited activities. As it was kindly pointed out by an official, photography is not permitted on the station. It does do a fairly good job of inspiring a sense of fear, with 4 symbols representing exactly what weapons one is not allowed to bring onto the platform.



The previous two photographs show the only access to the platform. One first has to descend a flight of stairs then cross through a dimly lit subway, followed by ascending another flight of stairs. This represents a major problem for the elderly or people with mobility orientated disabilities. It actually is a danger to just about anyone, as the stairs are often wet and slimy, and I have slipped and fallen on more than one occasion when in a hurry.

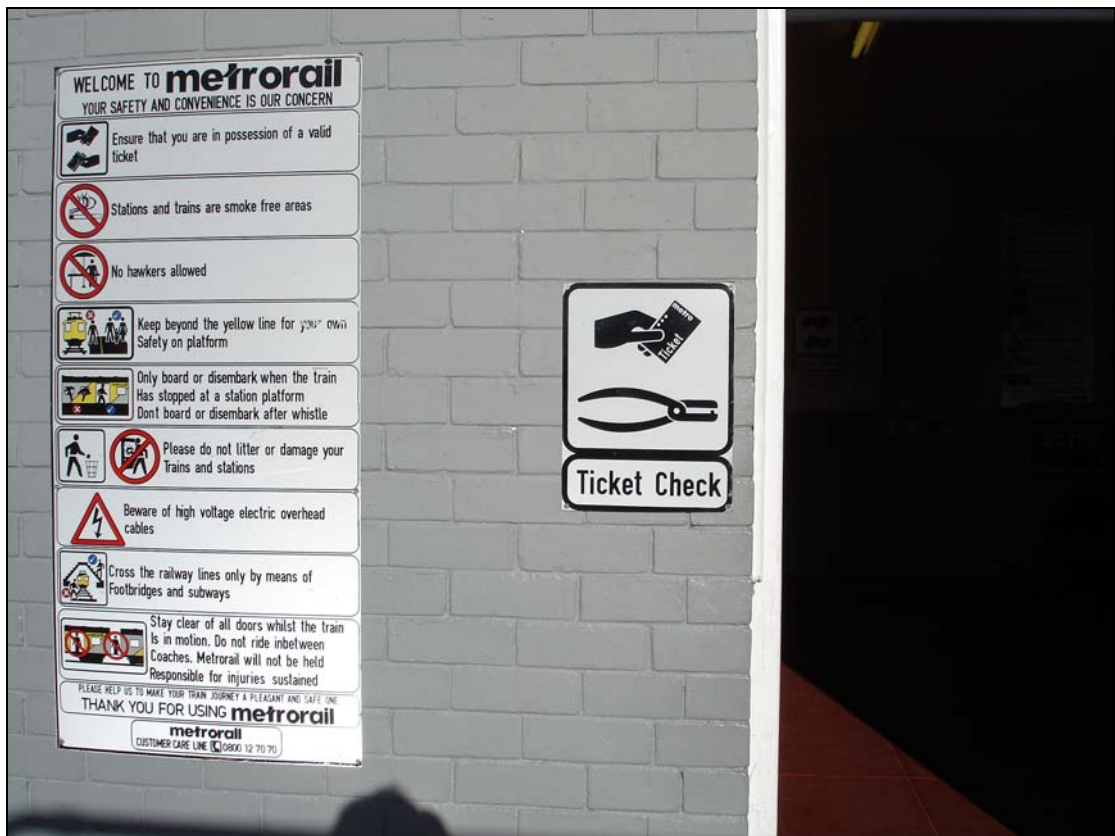


Upon arriving at the station a train arrived, preceded by an audio message that said something along the lines of stay away from the tracks and exit through the doors. The security guard pictured was helping a person with a visual disability onto the train, perhaps to guide him over the large gap and rise between the platform and train. This presents a problem not only for this particular individual but also people with mobility disabilities.

Another point worth mentioning although there is no photograph is the signage for the two platforms. I only noticed one sign reading 'platform 2', which was placed squarely between the two tracks, giving no indication which one was actually platform 2 and in what direction it went.



These steps of unequal height hamper entry to the ticket office.



The sign on the left indicates some of the dos and don'ts of utilizing the Metrorail train service. Most of the writing (which appears only in English) is accompanied by one or more easily understandable symbols. When viewing the sign however, the writing was a little small and the layout cluttered, making for visual confusion.

### **The Waterfront**

The Waterfront, being a popular tourist destination, has some interesting examples of signage and symbols used to portray the various walks and general information. Additionally, most areas seem reasonable accessible, with ramps and stairs often accompanying one another.



The revolving door at one of the main entrances can be seen as inclusive, despite the fact that it was not operational at the time of the photograph. There is enough room within the door to manoeuvre a wheelchair and when operational does not require the use of ones hands to open, as in the case of many side doors in buildings that provide for wheelchair access. The textured material on the floor not only serves as a mat, but also as a tactile stimulus to confirm the transition of the doorway. Surfaces are level throughout with no raised sections that might cause one to trip.



The signage on the door at one of the main entrances at first went completely unnoticed due to its placement on the glass on the far side of the door and the use of partially transparent stickers.



Pictured here is a ramp to afford access to a raised section of ground in the area surrounding the shopping mall.









The preceding three photographs show a signage system employed to help individuals navigate around the waterfront, following one a few predefined routes. Each route has its own icon of differing colour and is easily identifiable.



This obstacle, the support of a structure reminiscent of a ships mast, no doubt has seen many head collisions as people walk by.



Much the same as the previous entrance pictured, this one has varying surface textures that afford some kind of tactile feedback as to the transition between indoors and outdoors.



While these viewing telescopes have a small raised platform, either for children or to lean against (both of which I have my doubts as to functionality), it may actually impede certain individuals. Some form of height adjustment mechanism would seem a more appropriate solution.