

## PREPARING YOUR STUDIO FOR VISITORS

### **Covid-19 Safety**

Check in with the Vermont Department of Health for their latest advice. You can set the rules about social distancing and mask wearing. Have your rules posted outside and inside the studio and have disposable masks to provide to visitors who might not have them.

### **Parking:**

If you think this will be an issue, please mark out a place for people to park. A plastic ribbon stretched between posts will work. Add a "Park Here" sign.

### **Dogs - Consider confining them in another part of the house.**

We love them but not everyone does, and small children are often cautious about them.

### **Entering the Studio:**

Make sure that there aren't barriers to entering your studio. Remember that older people may have mobility issues. Mark the studio entrance. Greet everyone and introduce yourself (you might have a studio assistant for the event.)

### **Setting up Your Studio**

If your studio is in your home you may need to block off parts of the house to keep visitors in the studio section. I know people who use parts of their craft/art show booth to do this. Keep pathways clear. Cordon off dangerous materials or tools or remove them from the studio setting. If demonstrating a dangerous process, tape a line to the floor to let people know where to stand.

### **Open Studio for Visitors With Disabilities**

There are lots of resources on the [Vermont Arts Council's](#) website on accessibility. From their page "Programs and activities are more welcoming and inclusive when they engage a broad spectrum of people in integrated settings that provide, equal, effective, and enjoyable arts experiences for all. This includes participants, visitors, staff, patrons, and artists along with their friends and families."

The key is to consider how to welcome those that may have disabilities, to your open studio. Consider those with hearing loss, mobility restrictions, and vision challenges. Many older people have some degree of this. Inform yourself about easy ways to include these visitors. Be sure to have a chair or two available for people to sit down for a rest.

## **The Flow**

Imagine your space with several groups of people in it. Can people make their way around and out a different way or is there an area where they will become boxed in. Are there stations where a visitor can learn something about your work without having you explain it to them (portfolio of work or a slideshow on your computer)? Here's an opportunity to use signs.

## **Kids Area**

If you can do this, set up a space where children can work with materials. This lets their parents concentrate on your work. Really small children may still require supervision however.

## **Bathrooms**

If you are willing to let visitors use your bathroom, great. If not, know where the closest public bathroom is so you can direct them to it. Another opportunity to use signs.

## **Food and Seasonal Beauty!**

People appreciate a snack and a drink. This does not have to be extensive or expensive. Crackers, cheese or fruit, and water will work. Partner with a local farm and trade your promotion for their food. Pumpkins, apples, a bouquet of seasonal flowers might also grace your table.

## **Sales During Open Studio Weekend**

Label your work with prices, or post a sign, prices upon request. Remember that people are sometimes reluctant to ask because they don't want to interrupt you.

## **Future Sales**

Have a guest book where people can leave their addresses and email. If you do custom orders, advertise that and the deadline for holiday delivery.

Have a stack of business cards or postcards in a place where someone could pick one up on the way out of the studio. Let people know about your website, Instagram and Facebook.

Are you going to be showing in special exhibits or holiday shows? Do you think you will be open during our other Open Studio Weekend? Will you have a holiday open house?

These announcements could all be presented in the same area as your guest book.

## **In the Studio - Signs Can Help**

If you think you will be answering a question frequently, you may save yourself having to repeat the answer by using signs that you can post prominently.

Examples:

Where is the bathroom?

Checkout Area?

What is the Price?

Do you do custom orders?

How long will it take for me to get my order?

Do I need to wear a mask?