

PREPARING YOUR STUDIO FOR ALL KINDS OF VISITORS

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 physical barriers to entering your studio.

Older people may have mobility issues. Think about how far away the parking area is from the studio entrance. Can you have an Accessible Parking spot near the entrance?

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. Block 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.

Accessible Open Studio for Visitors

There are lots of resources on the [Vermont Arts Council's website on accessibility](#).

Disabilities You Can't See

Hearing: Adding signs to your studio can help people who don't hear well. Familiarize yourself with the signs of and tips for communicating with people with hearing loss.

Low Vision Challenges: Accommodating someone with vision challenges can mean being sure that your studio is clear from tripping hazards. Be sure your signs have text that is large enough for everyone to read.

Mobility: Have chairs available in the studio for people to rest on. In planning for the next Open Studio, consider adding a railing to steps or routing people through a less challenging entrance to your studio.

Limited Vision: Make price tags and notices use at least a 14pt font or larger.

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?