The Seven Principles of Universal Design

1. Equitable Use
   Useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities
   • Provides the same or equivalent means for all users
   • Avoid stigmatizing or segregating any users
   • Make design appealing to all users

2. Flexibility in Use
   Accommodates a wide range of preferences and abilities
   • Provide choice in methods of use
   • Accommodate left- and right-handed users
   • Facilitate accuracy and precision
   • Provide adaptability to user’s pace

3. Simple and Intuitive Use
   Easy to understand, regardless of user’s experience, knowledge, language skills or concentration level
   • Eliminate unnecessary complexity
   • Be consistent with user expectations
   • Accommodate variety of literacy levels
   • Highlight most important information

4. Perceptible Information
   Communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or user’s sensory abilities
   • Use different modes to repeat essential information (pictorial, verbal, tactile)
   • Provide contrast between essential information and its surroundings
   • Maximize “legibility”
   • Differentiate elements in ways that make it easy to give directions or instructions
   • Provide compatibility with devices used by people with sensory limitations

5. Tolerance for Error
   Minimizes hazards and negative consequences of accidental or unintended actions
   • Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors
   • Provide warnings of hazards and errors
   • Provide fail-safe features

6. Low Physical Effort
   Can be used efficiently and comfortably with minimum fatigue
   • Allow user to maintain neutral body position
   • Use reasonable operating force
   • Minimize repetitive actions
   • Minimize sustained physical effort
7. Size and Space for Approach and Use
Appropriate size and space provided for approach, reach and use, regardless of user’s body size, posture or mobility
• Provide a clear line of sight to important elements to any user
• Make reach to all components comfortable for any user
• Accommodate variations in hand and grip size
• Provide adequate space for assistive devices or personal assistants

 Adapted from North Carolina State Center for Universal Design. A 2-page poster of the seven principles is available at: