

DISABLE

ONE ROOT. MANY FORMS.

Understanding language,
accessibility and technology.

WORD FAMILY



VERB

disable

to make something unable to function

- Disable the alarm.
- The accident disabled the vehicle.



NOUN

disability

a physical, sensory, intellectual or mental condition that may affect everyday activities.

- The company provides reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities.



ADJECTIVE

disabled

having a disability.

- Disabled parking spaces are reserved for eligible users.



ADJECTIVE

disabling

causing serious limitation.

- She suffers from disabling migraines.



USAGE NOTE

Many organisations now prefer "person with a disability", although preferences vary by individual and region.



ORIGIN

disable

From Old French *deshabiller* ("to make incapable")

From:

Latin *dis-*
("apart, away")

habilis

("able, capable")

habilis → able → disable

Related words:

able ability enable incapable

RELATED WORD FAMILY



CONTEXTS OF USE



TECHNOLOGY

- disable notifications
- disable Wi-Fi
- disable an account
- disable a feature



HEALTHCARE

- physical disability
- visual impairment
- reasonable adjustments
- mobility aid



TRANSPORT

- disabled parking
- accessible transport
- priority seating



WORKPLACE

- inclusive recruitment
- workplace accessibility
- assistive technology
- reasonable accommodation



LAW & PUBLIC SERVICES

- equal access
- accessibility standards
- public access
- inclusive design

ACCESSIBILITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE



wheelchair access



audio description



captions



guide dogs



keyboard navigation



screen readers



text size



high contrast

COLLOCATIONS



VERB + DISABLE

- ✓ disable a device
- ✓ disable security
- ✓ disable an account
- ✓ disable access
- ✓ disable a function
- ✓ disable automatic updates



NOUN + DISABILITY

- ✓ permanent disability
- ✓ temporary disability
- ✓ learning disability
- ✓ visual disability
- ✓ physical disability
- ✓ hidden disability



ADJECTIVE + DISABLED

- ✓ disabled access
- ✓ disabled parking
- ✓ disabled person*
- ✓ disabled employee
- ✓ disabled veteran

EXAMPLES IN CONTEXT

IT



Please disable automatic updates before installation.

BUSINESS



The administrator disabled the user account.

HEALTHCARE



The clinic supports patients with disabilities.

PUBLIC SERVICES



The station has disabled access and lifts.

EDUCATION



The school provides accessible learning materials.



DID YOU KNOW?

Many organisations increasingly use accessible and inclusive language that focuses on removing barriers rather than defining people solely by disability.



enable / disable

turn on / turn off functionality.



disability access

facilities or features that allow people with disabilities to enter or use a place.



disability benefits

financial support available to people with disabilities.



accessibility features

tools or settings that make technology easier for everyone to use.



inclusive design

design that ensures products, services and environments are usable by all.



assistive technology

equipment or software that helps people overcome barriers.

