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México

Eetov is a design studio focused on accessibility, sustainability and experimental design based in Mexico City.

Founded in 2019 by Enrique Tovar, architect member of the College of Architects of Mexico City, LEED Green Associate by the USGBC and Certified Professional in Accessible Built Environments (CPABE) by the IAAP.

The formal expression of his work focuses on the forcefulness and pure forms of its projects, where each of them responds to the historical, social, economic, and environmental context, seeking to create a strong identity in the relationship between the object and its user.

His work has earned him publications in media such as The Wall Street Journal, Dezeen, RTF and Architectural Digest, he has also participated in international firms where he is a member of the design team for projects of various typologies and scales

Basic Accessibility Recommendations Applied to Interior Design

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Have you ever stopped to think how much time of the day you spend inside an interior space? Sometimes this fact may be imperceptible, but for most of the day, we find ourselves interacting with and within a built environment.

Regardless of whether the environment in which we carry out our activities is a home, school, hospital, or workspace; The right to live and participate fully in all aspects of life is undeniable, as indicated by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in its article 9°.



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This text proposes to present in a global way general strategies that we must and can follow whenever an interior space is being designed, covering not only how the space itself is conceived, but also the elements that are an active part of it.

Finishes are your Ally

One of the determining elements to endow built environments with vitality and character is the finishes, which is why architects and designers can spend entire weeks considering the materiality of the project.

Within this approach, it is necessary to consider, in addition to aesthetic issues, the technical and functional characteristics that will make it possible to eliminate barriers within the space.



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One of the most important premises that we can highlight in accessible design is to maintain uninterrupted and fluid circulation within the spaces we inhabit. To this end, the conscious selection of floor finishes is vital.

In most cases, it is recommended that the floor surfaces be stable and non-slip to ensure safety during transit on it. With this objective, it is important to consider not only how the material behaves under normal and ideal scenarios, such as when it is dry, but also to assess its qualities under humid environments or high traffic conditions.



03_ ©Ilyuza Mingazova

Podotactile tiles are usually one of the most well-known and recurring finishes in universal design, given their texture and color to integrate with accessible routes. This same principle of easily identifiable colors through their physical characteristics can be applied not only to tiles but also to wall finishes to create distinctions in spaces and to be able to recognize them by hand through touch or visual contrasts from the color in the finishes.

Accessories are Everywhere (And they have more relevance than you think)

Many of the elements that we design and that we integrate into the interior design project require an accessory to function properly. The accessories can be found in different typologies; windows, doors, lights, sinks, closets, and endless elements that will require that final piece so that they can be functional.

Within this concept of functionality, it is important to value that, without considering the application of the accessories, these can mean a barrier if their nature or actuation system is not adequate or turns out to be highly complex to actuate, hence the concept of usability.



04_ ©Finn Mund

What are the characteristics that could define whether an accessory is accessible or not? In most of the typologies mentioned above, we can find as a common element that most of them require a drive or ignition system to be able to carry out their function, so it becomes extremely important that these are lever mechanisms or pressure that do not require overexertion for its use.

One of the great changes brought about by the pandemic is that many brands rethought the elements or devices that are integrated into interior design, achieving that they currently have many contactless products in their catalog.



05_ ©Jonas Leupe

In addition to the drive devices, another determining factor is the way they are placed, emphasizing the height and approach area. Accessories like bathroom fixtures, door handles, and light switches can make a big difference when it comes to universal design. Thanks to universal design standards, and local and

international codes, it is possible to find a reference for the scenarios in which they can be applied.

Furniture Can and Should Be Accessible

Sometimes in the conception of society, thinking about strategies related to accessibility and universal design could suppose hypothetical solutions that are highly specialized or have complex technical requirements. But within the concept of reasonable accommodation, we can achieve barrier removal using conventional methods or items.

When we develop the layout of any space, the distribution and the way users move in it is the main axis to maintain a fluid and uninterrupted circulation. From these interior transit spaces, we can focus on the particular characteristics of each piece of furniture, regardless of whether these pieces are mobile or fixed elements.



06_@CDC

For horizontal surfaces such as bars or work tables, the main aspect to take into account is the free space at the bottom that allows the correct approach of a person using a wheelchair, always avoiding elements that may obstruct the approach, such as crossbars, plinths, and voluminous posts.

The elements adjacent to work surfaces such as auxiliary elements of kitchens, rooms, or workspaces such as shelves, or shelving, must be placed at attainable heights following the applicable regulations on the topic.

There are many furniture brands and developers that are seeking to promote inclusion, where brands such as Ikea and Steelcase stand out, which through their proposals will allow the creation of accessible spaces with a comprehensive approach, taking into account not only the elements that define the form and the functions of built environments but also those that give that final touch to each space.

References List

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