

Magical Planners Quick Guide

Your SEND-Friendly Guide to Walt Disney World

A calm, practical guide for families who want a magical holiday that feels manageable, predictable, and joyful.

Welcome

Walt Disney World can feel exciting, overwhelming, magical, and unpredictable — sometimes all at once.

This short guide is here to give you clarity and confidence, so your family can enjoy a holiday that feels calmer, more predictable, and truly magical.

If you need deeper support, I offer a full SEND Planning Guide with detailed strategies, sensory tips, attraction breakdowns, and OT-informed tools.

1. Understanding the Sensory Landscape

Disney is full of:

- bright lights
- loud sounds
- crowds
- heat and humidity
- queues and waiting

None of this is “bad” — but it can be a lot.

 A few things that help

- Noise-reducing headphones
- Sunglasses or a cap

- Cooling towels
- A small sensory kit
- Regular quiet breaks

These simple supports can make a huge difference.

2. Quick Quiet Spaces

These are calm spots you can use for a breather:

Magic Kingdom

- Behind Ye Olde Christmas Shoppe
- Hub grass areas (early morning)

EPCOT

- Japan Pavilion gardens
- Behind the UK Pavilion

Hollywood Studios

- Echo Lake benches
- Walt Disney Presents lobby

Animal Kingdom

- Discovery Island Trails
- Rafiki's Planet Watch

(Your paid guide includes full lists + sensory notes.)

3. DAS (Disability Access Service) — A Simple Overview

DAS supports guests who struggle with traditional queues due to a disability.

What it does

- Gives you a return time
- Lets you wait elsewhere
- Uses the Lightning Lane when it's your turn

✓ What to say

You don't need a diagnosis — focus on functional needs, e.g.:

- “Long queues lead to sensory overwhelm.”
- “Enclosed spaces cause distress.”

(Your paid guide includes step-by-step DAS guidance + example scripts.)

🌟 4. Five Simple SEND-Friendly Planning Tips

1. **Start early** — mornings are calmer and cooler.
2. **Choose one park per day** to reduce transitions.
3. **Build in non-negotiable breaks** (every 60–90 minutes).
4. **Use indoor shows** as sensory resets.
5. **Keep evenings flexible** — fireworks can be loud and crowded.

These small adjustments protect energy and reduce overwhelm.

🍲 5. Mini Packing List

A few essentials that help SEND families:

- Noise-reducing headphones
- Sunglasses
- Cooling towel
- Familiar snacks
- Fidget or comfort item
- Refillable water bottle

(Your paid guide includes a full OT-informed packing list.)

✨ You're Doing Brilliantly

Disney doesn't have to be rushed or intense.

Your holiday can be slower, calmer, and beautifully magical — and it can look different from everyone else's.

If you'd like deeper support, my full SEND Planning Guide includes:

- full quiet-space lists
- sensory-friendly attraction recommendations
- OT-informed pacing strategies

- travel day support
- emotional regulation tools
- packing lists
- park-by-park SEND tips
- and more

It's designed to help you plan with confidence and enjoy a holiday that truly works for your family.

Created by Magical Planners by Ruth Carrick — Helping you plan calm, organised, magical holidays.