

Braille Blocks

Most of you must be familiar with yellow blocks on streets or railroad platforms. These blocks are called “braille blocks.” They support the safe walking of visually impaired people. When they walk, they touch the blocks with their feet or canes to get information.

Braille blocks were invented by Miyake Seiichi in Okayama. One day, he saw a man with a white cane on the street. When the man crossed the street, he was almost hit by a car. Miyake realized streets were dangerous for visually impaired people. When he was thinking about ways to help them, one of his friends gave him a good hint. He was visually impaired. He said, “My feet can feel the difference between moss and soil with my shoes on.” Then, Miyake realized people could feel bumps with their feet. After that, he developed paving blocks with small bumps. The bumps looked like braille, so he called the blocks “braille blocks.” The first braille blocks were placed in Okayama City in 1967.

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