

Home Modifications to Accommodate a Wheelchair

Below are some suggested home modifications to accommodate a wheelchair.

Ramps / Entryways

- Walkway and driveway are smooth but not slippery
- Ramp to the front door has landings at bottom and top
- Ramp has an edging

Doorways

- Doorways are 32–36 inches wide
- There is enough floor space near doors to move a wheelchair
- Threshold on door is 1/4 inch or less

Kitchen

- Cabinet shelves are no more than 10 inches deep
- Stove has controls located at the front
- Faucet and taps are on the side rather than the back of the sink
- There is knee space under all sinks
- There is knee space under the stove
- Oven doors swing to the side
- Counter top is lowered to a usable height for a person in a wheelchair
- Electrical outlets are 27 inches above the floor
- There is a heat-resistant counter near the microwave oven
- Pull-down shelving is installed
- A Lazy Susan is used to reach things stored on deep shelves
- Microwave oven is no higher than 48 inches above the floor
- Pullout shelves are located in the kitchen
- A side-by-side refrigerator is used

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Bathroom

- There is a wheelchair-maneuverable bath with 60-inch turning radius or acceptable T-turn space and 36-inch by 36-inch or 30-inch by 48-inch clear space
- If a stand-up shower is used, it should be curbless and a minimum of 36 inches wide
- There is a wall-hung sink with knee space
- A handheld shower is installed
- There is knee space under all sinks
- There is space to transfer from wheelchair to toilet

Hallway

- Clutter and electric cords are out of pathways
- Hallway should be 36–42 inches wide

Bedroom

- “Walk-in” closet is wide enough for a wheelchair
- A closet organizer is used to help reach all belongings
- Closet rods pull down to a comfortable level
- Floors are smooth; carpet has a low pile and a firm pad
- Pull-down shelving is in place

When a little or a lot of extra care is needed, Responsive Home Health can help, not only with a qualified caregiver, but by coordinating community services so living at home longer is possible. We can also provide a free in-home safety assessment and make recommendations for comfortably aging in place.