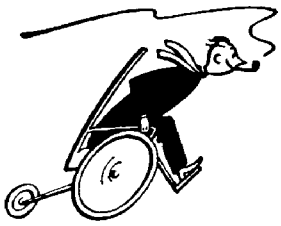


$elling Points: Describing 5 Accessible Housing Features to Potential Buyers with Disabilities

A PUBLICATION DEVELOPED BY THE EASTERN PARALYZED VETERANS ASSOCIATION

PANEL ONE

INTRODUCTIONS

Potential buyers or renters with physical disabilities may have particular concerns about the accessible features of a home. The goal of this brochure is to assist Real Estate Agents in developing better communication with their clients with physical disabilities, which will lead to the successful acquisition of usable housing.
This brochure will provide a brief overview of the general housing needs for buyers with physical disabilities. It begins with a discussion of residential exteriors and continues with general descriptions of accessible hallways, bathrooms and kitchens. Each section highlights the key traits of an accessible home.

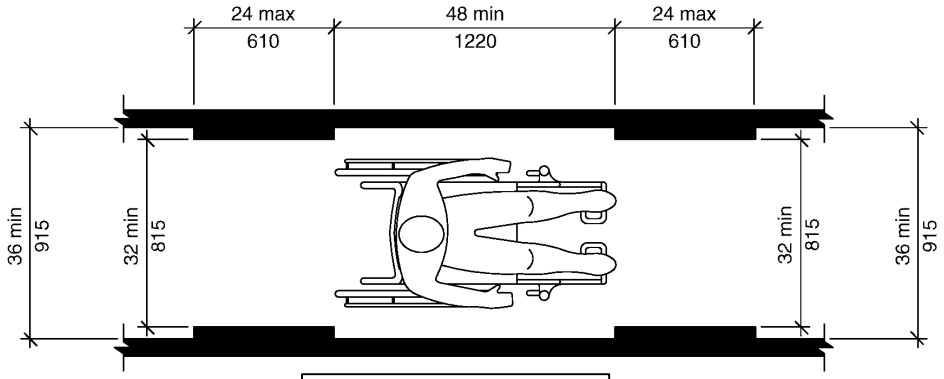
For example, this brochure cites the hallway's width as an important feature; there are other features that can preclude access. For wheelchair users, high pile carpeting in the hallway can also be difficult to navigate. This, however, can be resolved relatively easily and without much expense.

Effective communication regarding a home's accessible features is increasingly important as greater numbers of buyers and their families have mobility impairments and other disabilities. We encourage you to use this brochure in your discussions with clients about their unique access needs.

PANEL TWO

1. EXTERIOR ACCESSIBLE ROUTES

An accessible exterior route should be 36 inches wide and should not offer a significant grade. A client may need a curb ramp or "curb cut" to a sidewalk from the street in situations where there is no driveway or a driveway doesn't provide a firm surface.



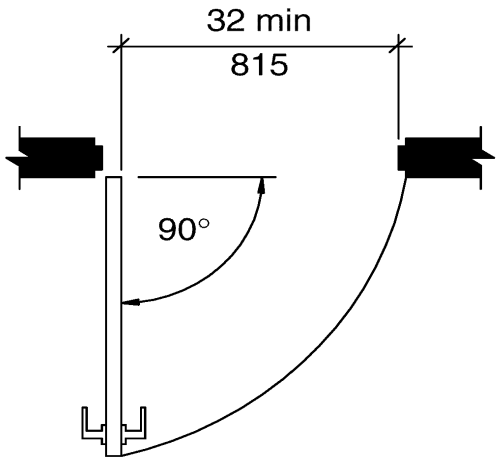
Accessible Route - 1

Even if a walk or drive connects to an entrance, many homes have one or more steps to their entrances. In many cases a ramp can be constructed to provide access. It is important to communicate to a client the height and number of these steps before showing him or her the home – as a temporary ramp can sometimes be installed.

PANEL THREE

2. ENTRANCES

There should be at least one 32-inch wide entrance to the house (measure this from face of door to opposite door frame, when door is opened 90 degrees). Most wheelchair users can easily use a door where the threshold is up to ½ inch high. This entrance will



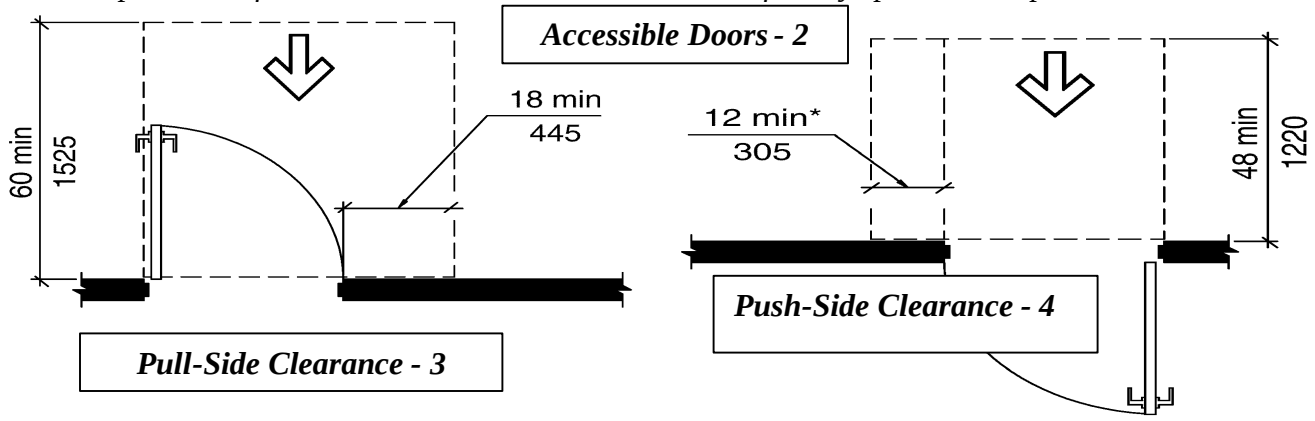
accommodate a typical wheelchair-user.

PANEL FOUR

3. INTERIOR ACCESSIBLE ROUTES

For wheelchair users, one of the particularly important characteristics of a house is the width of the hallways. Hallways of approximately 36 inches accommodate most wheelchair users. Hard floor surfaces are more usable to wheelchair users than thick carpeting.

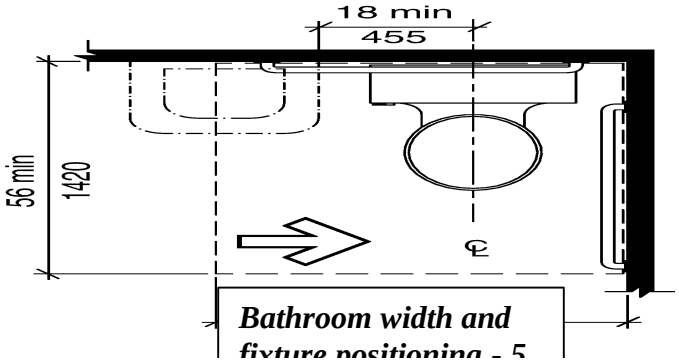
The width of doors inside a house or apartment can be as important as the width of the home's front door. Accessible doors provide a passageway at least 32-inches wide. A hallway should be wide enough so that a person can have sufficient room to "sit" beside the door as he or she is opening it: Eighteen inches is an adequate amount of clear space on the pull-side of the door, while twelve inches is a satisfactory space on the push-side.



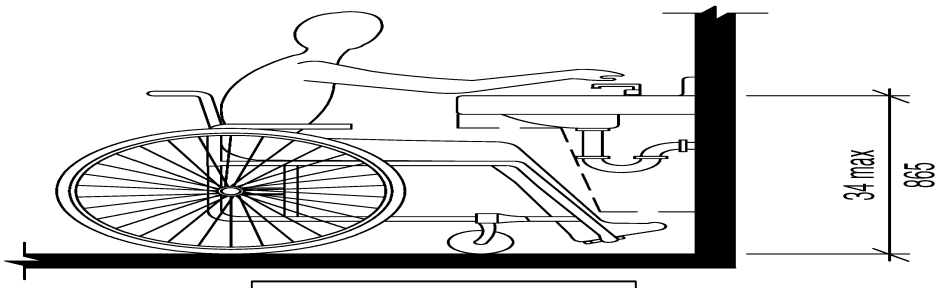
PANEL FIVE

4. BATHROOMS

Adequate space in the bathroom is particularly important for many people with disabilities. Wheelchair users need additional space to turn in the bathroom. One way to determine if ample space is provided is to measure the width of the bathroom (wall to wall). A workable width is 56 inches. While not all bathrooms will be 56 inches wall to wall, measuring the width can provide clients and realtors with a general idea of how easily a person with a disability could use a bathroom or if costly modifications are needed. The location of the toilet and sink is also important. If a toilet is in the corner of the room and adjacent to the wall, then grab bars can be properly installed.



In the following diagram, a wheelchair user is able to use the sink without extensive reaching because he or she is able to position his chair underneath the sink as its base is 34 inch high. Vanity bases can be removed from sinks to provide this type of access.

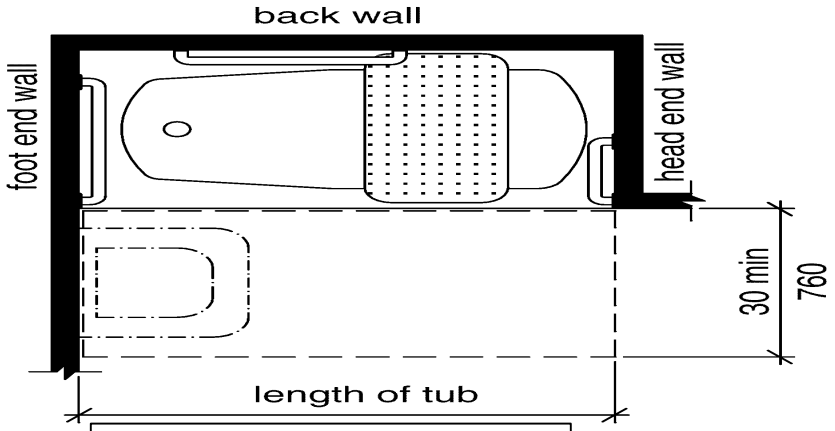


Wheelchair Leg Clearance Under Sink in Bathroom - 6

PANEL SIX

The typical bathtub is 17 to 19 inches from the floor to the tub rim, and at this height wheelchair users should be able to transfer onto a tub seat and a wheelchair user can use a hand-held shower that can be purchased.

Unfortunately, there is not often a great deal of space in front of the bathtub. Ideally, a space of 30 inches before the tub will allow a person with a disability easier access. An owner can install an accessible tub or shower to resolve the problem.

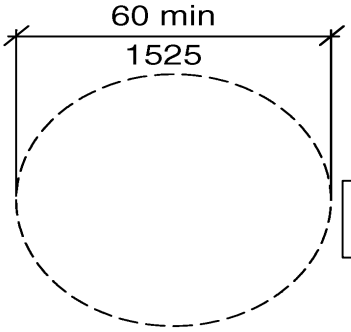


Suggested Clearance at Tubs - 7

PANEL SEVEN

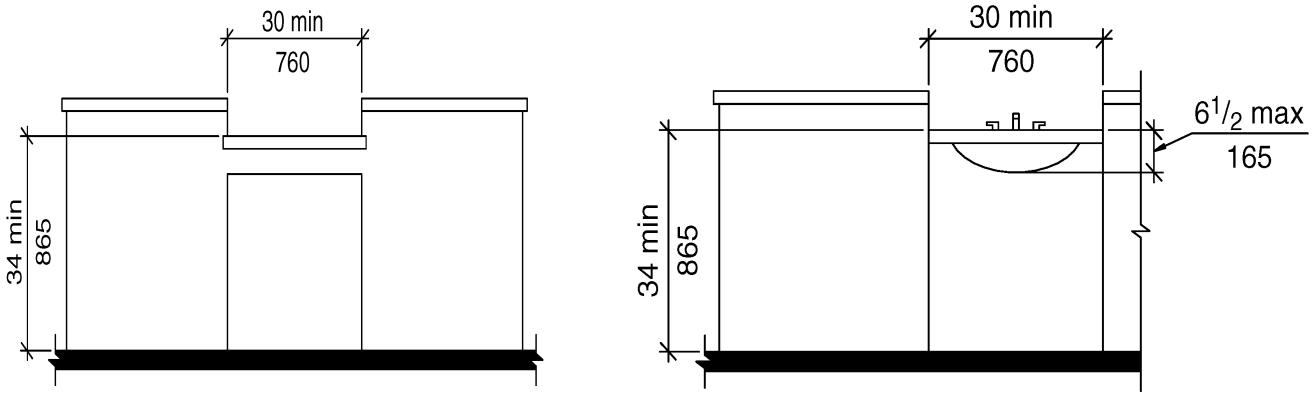
5. KITCHEN

One of the most important characteristics of a kitchen for a wheelchair user is the amount of floor space available. In order to make a complete turn, a wheelchair user needs a 5-foot turning diameter. Increased width is readily accomplished in some kitchens by eliminating a base under a 36- inch long, 30 - inch wide portion of a cabinet (as a wheelchair can use this open space).



Wheelchair Turning Space - 8

It is easier for a wheelchair user to use countertops that are only 34 inches high and wall cabinets that offer some shelving that are only 48 inches high. Space can be provided under sinks as described in the bathroom and shown.



Height of Counters, Accessible Work Surfaces & Sinks in Kitchens - 9

PANEL EIGHT

CHECKLIST

1. The height and number of steps leading to each entrance.

2. The doorway to the home: measure from face of door to opposite doorframe (32 inches).

3. The wall- to-wall width and length of the bathroom (56 inches).

4. The width of hallways (36 inches).

5. The width of interior doorways (32 inches).

6. The width and length of the kitchen (5 feet minimum width).