

WORKSHEET FOUR: ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

These questions may be important if you, a housemate or guests with mobility limitations. Keep in mind that these questions aren't exhaustive nor does every question apply in every situation. You should determine if an item is present in the home and important to you.

OUTDOORS AND ENTRY

| | Present | | Important | | Comments |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| | Y | N | Y | N | |
| Are walkways clear and wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs or walkers? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Are the walkway and entry areas well lit? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Is there a ramp at a manageable angle for walkers and wheelchairs, if necessary? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Is there an intercom at the front door or wireless doorbell with receiver that can be carried? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Are doors at least thirty-two inches wide (for people who use a wheelchair)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Do sliding glass doors have thresholds that are low enough for easy and safe crossing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Are sturdy railings installed on both sides of the front steps? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Are there lever door handles rather than round doorknobs on entry doors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Is there a single-action dead bolt lock on the inside of entry doors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Is the mailbox in a location that makes it easy to retrieve mail? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

GARAGE /PARKING

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Is the garage wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair exiting from a van, or will the person have to get out of the van outdoors? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Is the garage entrance high enough for a van, if necessary? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Is there an automatic garage door opener?

Are garage lights, switches, outlets, hangers for tools and other things easy to find, reach and use?

Are disability parking spots available and convenient?

INDOORS – GENERAL

Are switches and thermostats easy to find, reach, and control and within forty-four inches of the floor for easy access from a wheelchair?

Are electrical outlets located twenty-seven inches from the floor to minimize bending?

Will carpeting allow easy navigation with a wheelchair or walker?

Is it securely fastened to the floor?

Are there hardwood floors so that it could be removed, if necessary?

Is carpeting on steps in good repair and tightly secured to the steps?

Do stairs have sturdy rails or banisters with secure hand grips?

Do doors to stairways close completely?

Do doors have lever handles instead of round doorknobs?

Are doorways at least thirty-two inches wide for wheel chair access (or can doors be re-mounted with swing-clear hinges)?

Are windows easy to open? (Windows that tilt out open easy and help keep out rain.)

Are there high ceiling or wall lights? Can bulbs in high lights be easily replaced using a light bulb changer pole?

Do lights have long-life bulbs to minimize frequency of replacement?

Do any lights have switches activated by touch or sound?

Are jacks for telephones installed throughout the home for safety and security?

Are smoke detectors hard-wired or located to easily replace the batteries?

Is there a convenient location to mount a rechargeable flashlight for use in a power failure?

Are personal alarm systems available to call for help if someone falls or needs emergency assistance?

Are closet clothing rods at the proper height or easily adjustable?

Do closets have lights that turn on when the door is opened?

In addition to these accessible home features, the following is a list of other items that can improve accessibility and safety:

- Availability of a cordless phone or a speaker phone can be an important safety as well as communication device for people with mobility impairments.
- A bed that is the right height for a minimally assisted wheelchair-to-bed transfer, if necessary.
- Have a telephone next to the bed.
- Lamps near the bed that can be turned on by touching the lamp base or another easy way.
- Remote control devices to allow control of appliances and lights from another room are often desirable. (For instance, these devices can be used to turn lights on before entering a room.)
- Remote controls on the TV, VCR, radio, CD, etc. can be helpful.
- Curtains of the easy gliding type, rather than curtain rods and drawstrings.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is usually one of the most “lived-in” rooms in a house. Cooking, eating, cleaning, and entertaining can be easier with housing modifications and assistive devices. Safety is also an issue in the kitchen because of the potential for burns, spills and fires.

Are burner controls mounted on the front of the stove to eliminate the risk of burns from reaching over a heating element?

Is there an acceptable smoke detector?

Are fire extinguishers accessible, light-weight, properly filled, and easy to use?

Is lighting adequate, especially in work areas?

Do switches & outlets have ground-fault protection or are located away from the sink?

Is there adequate space to maneuver with a walker or wheelchair, if necessary?

Is the sink easily accessible? (Some sinks have sloped fronts so that dishes can be slid into them. In addition, long-handled lever faucets and spray nozzles simplify dishwashing.)

Does the refrigerator have a side-by-side refrigerator/freezer or a freezer on the bottom for easy access?

Is there adequate, safe, and accessible counter and storage space? Especially if wheelchair access is necessary.

Do any shelves roll out to minimize bending and providing access to the items in the rear?

Are any special modifications necessary for dishwashers, microwaves, washers and driers (e.g., Braille or tactile labels, or customized knob turners, special on/off switches)?

In addition to these accessible features, there are many inexpensive “tricks of the trade” that allow easier maneuvering in the kitchen:

- It’s often helpful to have a shelf with cutouts that can hold bowls securely for one-handed stirring or that is placed at a level convenient to a person who is seated.
- Can openers, vegetable peelers, and other kitchen utensils with easy-grip handles that are securely mounted are easier to handle.
- A small mirror mounted over the range allows seated cooks to see into the pans on back burners.
- Unbreakable glass pots let seated cooks see how the food is cooking.
- Clamps (like clothespins) can be attached to burner knobs, making turning easier, or used to secure pots on a range to help with one-handed stirring.
- An old-fashioned potato masher or slotted spoon can be used to turn knobs on a clothes dryer.
- Tongs can help get cans or boxes off cabinet and refrigerator shelves.
- Oven rack push-pulls can help cooks in wheelchairs or who have limited reach.
- A cart can be used to minimize carrying.

BATHROOM

The bathroom often presents some of the greatest challenges for people with physical disabilities. these challenges include preventing falls and eliminating the hazards of using electrical appliances around water, maintaining privacy and dignity while attending to problems of accessibility and safety, and making necessary modifications in efficient and cost-effective ways.

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Is the bathroom is located in an easily accessible area of the home? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the entry adequate, safe, and accessible? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are mirrors, switches and outlets located at easily reachable heights and in safe and convenient locations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do switches & outlets have ground-fault protection or are located away from sink and bathtub/shower? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are grab bars around the toilet and tub/shower? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there anti-slip material in the tub/shower and other areas that can become wet and slippery? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there a telephone or emergency alert device or alarm or can one be installed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Can a wheelchair pull right up to the sink, toilet, tub/shower?

Will a commode or chair fit in the shower or is a sturdy seat installed?

Is the faucet hardware easy to operate?

Is there adequate, convenient, and accessible storage for linens and accessories?

ARE THERE OTHER MODIFICATIONS YOU WANT TO CONSIDER?
