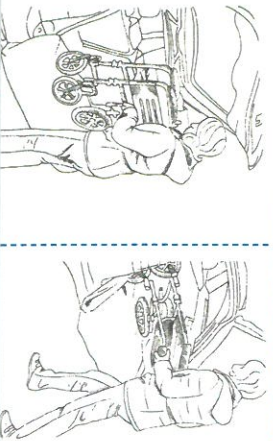


GOING DOWN A STEPKERB

- Communicate with the wheelchair user throughout the manoeuvre.
- Ensure the lap strap is fastened.
- Reverse the wheelchair to the edge of the step/kerb; be aware if the wheelchair user has spatial orientation problems.
- Pull the wheelchair towards you allowing the rear wheels to roll gently over the kerb and down, using your body weight as a counterbalance.
- Lower the front wheels onto the receiving surface.

DOORS

- Get assistance from another person, where possible, to hold the door open.
- Carry a door wedge in your pocket so if you are unable to keep the door open, you can wedge it. Remember to remove it after use.
- Avoid banging the footrest into the door to open it.
- Doors that push open: brace it with your body and reverse the wheelchair user through the doorway.
- Doors that pull open: open the door and brace it with your arm as you push the wheelchair user through.
- Ask the wheelchair user to tuck in their elbows to avoid injury.



LOADING A WHEELCHAIR INTO A VEHICLE

Loading a wheelchair into a vehicle

- Plan the process.
- Ask for assistance if available.
- Remove cushions, footrests, armrests, rear wheels etc. if possible.
- Drop the backrest of the wheelchair.
- Fold the chair – see opening and closing a wheelchair.
- Use a blanket over the back of the boot sill to protect it from scratches.
- Hold the wheelchair by its frame.

- Remember good posture and lifting principles, lift and place it on the edge of the boot opening.
- Pivot the wheelchair into the boot and secure.
- Reverse the procedure for removing.
- Bags and hoist are commercially available for lifting manual wheelchairs in and out of cars.

HOW TO PUSH A WHEELCHAIR

– USERS PERSPECTIVE

- Ask me before you start to push.
- Understand that the wheelchair is an extension of my body.
- I am still in control even though you are pushing.
- Aim for a smooth ride; no sudden stops, starts or turns.
- Do not lean on the chair.
- Look where you are going avoid, glass, chewing gum, dog mess etc.
- Keep an eye out for raised paving slabs.
- Beware of other pavement users.
- No texting or answering your phone when you are pushing me.
- Steer away from cobblestones, uneven floors etc., the vibration can be very painful.
- Bumps are painful – WARN ME, then avoid them, steer round them or go more slowly.
- Avoid recently laid tarmac.
- Avoid puddles.
- Ice is BAD, snow is SLIPPY.
- Never ever let go without telling me.
- If I am in a group of people, let me be in the middle.
- Don't speak for me.
- When talking to me come down to my level to avoid me twisting and looking up all the time. If I like you a lot, lean forward and speak to me with your head next to mine.
- When we stop, consider where you are going to leave me and what I am looking at. Put the brakes on and check that I am happy.

FURTHER INFORMATION

MHRA (2008). *All posture/safety belts fitted to seating, stair lifts, hoists and wheelchairs* (MDA/2008/037) www.wisc-online.com/Objects/ViewObject.aspx?ID=OTA703 interactive learning tool www.wheelchairguide.net/manual-wheelchair-parts-diagram

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The safe handling of a manual wheelchair

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INTRODUCTION

Many carers use wheelchairs on a daily basis to assist in moving their clients. Knowing how to handle a wheelchair safely is therefore important for reducing the risks of injury to both the carer and wheelchair user. This leaflet summarises the important information that needs to be considered.

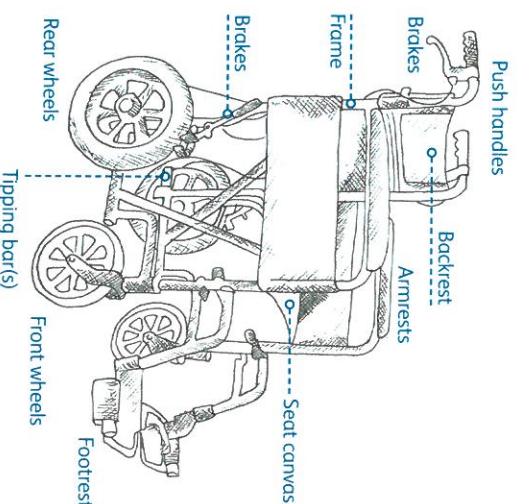
DO'S AND DON'TS OF USING A WHEELCHAIR

DO'S

- ✓ Check the wheelchair is in good working order and report any problems or defects immediately to wheelchair services.
- ✓ Consider whether you are dressed appropriately for pushing a wheelchair; wearing trousers and flat secure shoes offers greater stability and promotes better postures for movement.
- ✓ Ensure that the user's clothing, scarves, sling straps, oxygen tubing, feed tubes etc cannot become tangled on the wheels or hooked over the wheelchair armrests/framework.
- ✓ Ensure you know how to operate the brakes and that they are on when the wheelchair is not in motion.
- ✓ Adjust the height of the push handles where possible to prevent you stooping.
- ✓ Ensure you maintain a good posture – keep upright, pushing using the power of your legs, keep close to the wheelchair and don't twist.
- ✓ Do talk directly to the wheelchair user.

DON'TS

- ✗ Overload the back of the wheelchair with heavy bags; it alters the stability of the wheelchair.
- ✗ Add cushions or other accessories without assessment from a therapist.
- ✗ Stoop when making checks and adjustments to lap straps, footrests etc – use a step stand, kneel, squat position or sit on a chair or stool.
- ✗ Lean on the wheelchair.
- ✗ Take over the person's wheelchair and push them, if they don't require assistance.



Manual wheelchair parts