

## How to Make a Handicap Accessible Bathroom

By [Chuck R Stewart](#) ★

Whether someone has been in an accident, a child is born with a physical disability or an aging parent who moves into a home, there may come a time when it is necessary to make a bathroom handicap accessible. In addition to removing the fabric shower curtain and the shower curtain rods, homeowners can make simple changes to help adapt their bathrooms for easier use. By expanding doorways, installing hand rails and removing all clutter, homeowners are able to create handicap accessible bathrooms that won't cost a fortune and can be completed in a small amount of time.

A typical doorway needs to be widened to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers and other devices that assist with mobility. By removing the door jam and replacing it with a wider version, a homeowner can also make the choice to eliminate the door all together or make the change to a pocket door. This is a door that slides into the wall, creating more space in the room. Removing the door allows the handicap person to have additional room to maneuver in and out of the bathroom and also eliminates the need to have hands to operate the door itself. Being hands-free and able to get in and out of the bathroom without help, gives the handicapped person the freedom to use the lavatory without assistance from someone else in the home.

The installation of hand rails in and around the bath and toilet are necessary for all handicap accessible bathrooms. These rails give support to people when trying to lift themselves up and down. They also provide safety for them while maneuvering around the bathroom. Whether they are drying off from a bath or just trying to stand up from using the restroom, it is imperative they have the necessary tools to support themselves. Again, adding this type of change to a bathroom gives them the personal freedom to do this type of task by themselves. It is not only liberating for them to feel this independence, it is also a huge safety benefit to add these precautionary measures.

A third change a homeowner can make in a bathroom to make it more handicap accessible is to remove all the clutter. It is imperative to remove all rugs, garbage cans, towels and other things that get in the way of the mobility of a handicap person in a bathroom. Not only can a rug be a nuisance for a wheelchair, walker or crutches, it can also be a safety hazard for someone when exiting the bath or getting up from the commode. If a homeowner must have a rug of some sort in their bathroom, they should purchase a commercial grade skid resistant mat. These can be found at any large home improvement store or medical supply company. This type of floor covering is designed to provide a safe environment in which handicap people can still get around.

Although most homes aren't currently handicap accessible, by completing the suggestions above, a homeowner can adapt their bathrooms with little cost and construction. By doing this the homeowner can have peace of mind as to the safety of their handicapped family member.

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