

Access Aids and Equipment for the Home

2012 Access Fact Sheet 2

Many people with limited mobility may prefer to live in single-storey homes to avoid stairs, but moving house is not always a practical solution. You may wish to explore the option of installing a ramp, stair climber or lift in your home if you have difficulty with stairs. There are a range of products that can assist you with everyday living in your home.

Moving around

Many people require a range of supports in order to move around easily. Products that are available to assist, include:

- cushion swivel – helps you get out of the car
- fold up walking stick – easy to store and carry
- handy bar for car – gives you a hold point to get in and out of the car
- platform lift – wheel or walk on and off with your mobility aid
- seatbelt easy reach – helps with using the car seatbelt
- stair climber – wheelchair may be needed at the top and bottom
- threshold ramp – eliminates a small rise at a door way
- electric wheelchair

Gripping

Gripping and holding things can become difficult, particularly if you have arthritis.

Investing in some of the products below can make life easier.

- door knob 'gripper' – provides an easy to use handle
- Handy hand – pick up stick (a tong-like device that makes reaching for and grasping objects easier)
- key turners – makes the key grip bigger and easier to use
- rubber grips for pens and pencils - so you do not have to grip as tightly
- scissors with large or self opening handles
- touch lamp – to avoid using small switches.

Seeing

For those who find small print challenging, some of these products may help you to see more clearly.

- 'fit over' sunglasses – fit over your prescription glasses
- colour coded luggage tags – so you can identify your bags easily
- glow in the dark key tags – for ease of use at night
- large number or talking calculator

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- large print computer keyboard
- large print Street Directory
- mobile phone with voice over technology – messages and numbers that talk to you
- plastic magnifying sheets
- screen reader on computer – navigate the internet by hearing rather than seeing
- trendy magnifying spectacles – look great and see better.
- big button phone – easy to see and push numbers
- talking clock

Hearing

Products that can assist you to hear better are listed below:

- Hearing aids – many are almost invisible now
- personal amplifier – so you don't miss out on conversations
- talking calculator
- TV amplifier – so you can hear your favourite show.

Dressing

If you find getting dressed difficult the following products may be useful:

- dressing stick – can be used with a range of clothing
- long-handled combs and toenail scissors – assists you to stay independent

- non slip mats – support you to stay on your feet safely
- shoe horn – helps you put on your shoes
- sock notch - an aid that helps you pull on your socks
- zipper and button pullers – helps with these on the back.

Bathing

Slippery surfaces and wet areas make bathrooms a tricky area for many people with limited mobility. The following products and aids can assist you:

- a raised height toilet seat – for comfort
- bath and shower seats – for support and comfort
- grabrails around the toilet, bath and shower – for safety and stability
- inflatable bath lift – helps you in and out of the bath
- safety treads in the shower and bathroom – to stop falls
- tap turners or lever taps – can be used easily with the arm or hand
- toothpaste tube squeezer – to reduce finger pressure needed on the tube.

Cooking

Many products are available to help you in the kitchen. These include:

- can claws - special can holders that prevent stress on your hands
- carton pourers/sealers – stop the

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overflow

- colour coded measuring cups – easy to recognise quantities
- cup and plate suction holder – to stop the crockery moving around
- easy grip jar openers – so you can do it yourself
- electric can opener – does the work for you
- ergonomic peelers, cutlery and knives – easy to grip and use
- jug pourer – to avoid lifting the heavy jug of liquid
- large grip kitchen utensil set – soft, easy to grip handles
- large print recipe books – makes it easy to see
- light, long-handled brooms and dustpans - to avoid bending
- non-slip cutting boards and table mats – reduces dropping and sliding
- plastic wrap cutters – eliminate the stress of finding the end of the roll
- talking kitchen or bathroom scales – when you can't see the small print.

It is important to talk to your doctor or occupational therapist about installing handles, grabrails and seating around your home, to ensure they are the correct type - (to support your weight) - and are appropriately placed.

Gardening

When gardening, the following products may be useful:

- kneeling pads – to reduce stress on your legs and knees
- long, lightweight gardening implements – reduces the amount of bending
- pruning shears - designed to protect your joints
- rubber grip tools - can help prevent swelling of the knuckles and hands
- seed planters – eliminates the need to bend
- stainless steel spades - soil doesn't cling as much as to ordinary spades.

Multipurpose

Here is a list of additional products that may assist you in and around your home:

- adaptable Play Station controller – easy to grip for small or sore hands
- adjustable/electrical lift bed – easily change and set the position that suits you
- audio books – lay back and listen
- book holders - to avoid strain on the wrists and joints
- colour coded TV remote controls – easy to see and understand
- e book reader - adjust the print size to suit you
- large computer mouse – reduces strain on hands and arms
- large grip pens – easy to hold

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- large print books – no more squinting
- large print desk or wall calendar – room to write notes
- large print playing cards and card holder – frees up your hands
- mobility scooter with shelter – stay mobile and shaded
- personal safety emergency alarm – keep safe and reassured
- playing cards with Braille – feel that you are a winner
- power point remote control adaptor – makes all your appliances accessible
- remote controls – easier for everything
- roller mouse for computer – reduces strain on hands, shoulder and neck
- rubbish bin trolley – makes rubbish day manageable
- shopping jeep – shop till you drop
- touch screen computer monitor – easier to use than buttons
- voice to text computer software – reduces the need to type
- wheeler/walker with seat – provides support and a place to rest.

Further information:

A great starting point to find out everything you need to know about the items in this fact sheet is the Independent Living Centre Australia website www.ilcaustralia.org.au or give them a call on 1300 885 886.

Many of the items listed in this fact sheet can be found and purchased commercially e.g. Bunnings Warehouse, Target, and K Mart

Mobility Aids Australia Pty Ltd

Ph: 1800 625 530 www.mobilityaids.com.au

Ebility website www.ebility.com

Your local Council's MetroAccess officer will be able to refer you to other resources and services within the Council to assist you further.

Please note it's always best to consult with your health care professional to seek the right advice for your individual needs.

Some modifications to your home may require Council approval.

Contact your Local Council as you may be eligible for some in-home support services through the Home and Community Care program (HACC).

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