

# Ramps

If you have limited mobility and there are steps to your home that you are unable to walk up and down safely, you may wish to instal a temporary or permanent ramp.

We cannot recommend ramp companies. We would recommend you choose a company with positive customer reviews and a history of a reliable service. To view or try a ramp, contact the Lothian Disabled Living Centre at the SMART centre. This is based at Astley Ainslie Hospital, Grange Loan, Edinburgh, EH9 2HL.

Call – 0131 537 9177 (select option 5)

[www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/disabled-living-centre/](http://www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/disabled-living-centre/)

For advice contact our Duty Occupational Therapist on 0131 271 3900.

For guidance on regulations visit the Scottish Government website

[www.gov.scot/publications/building-standards-technical-handbook-2020-domestic/4-safety/4-3-stairs-ramps/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/building-standards-technical-handbook-2020-domestic/4-safety/4-3-stairs-ramps/)

## Portable Ramps

Portable ramps can be folding, modular or two singular tracks. These are generally made of lighter materials and are usually less expensive than permanent ramps. We do not recommend these for powered wheelchairs or mobility scooters as they could move during use with the increased weight of the chair. Consider the weight limit of the ramp and if this will be suitable for the person, wheelchair and carer combined.

Consider how often the ramp will be used and who will be using it. You may consider a portable ramp if it is only required on limited occasions.

## Permanent Ramps

Permanent ramps are usually installed if a home is regularly used by a wheelchair user.

Permanent ramps can be made from a range of materials. Metal can be slippery if wet or icy. Choose a non-slip option.

A permanent ramp should have a level platform at the top so that the wheelchair can safely stop while the door is being opened. Consider upturned edges and a handrail. You may want to retain some steps at the side of the ramp for alternative access.

Permanent ramps can be expensive and may take up a lot of space to comply with gradient requirements. Sometimes it is not possible to ramp a property, especially if space is limited or there is shared access.

## Considerations

- **Permissions** – You must have permission from the owner of the property or other residents if they have shared access. Planning permission and a building warrant may also be necessary.
- **The height of the steps** - We recommend that a ramp should have a gradient of 1:15 for a person in a self-propelling wheelchair. For every inch in height, the ramp needs to be 15 inches in length.
- **Gradient:** The ramp should be 1:12 – 1:15 depending upon the height of the steps and space available. The ramp may take up the whole of the garden.
- **Landing space at the top and bottom of the ramp** – a landing space is required to allow for the safe passage of people up and down the ramp. Additional landings are required depending on the length of the ramp. You may need a larger landing space if your door opens out onto the landing area space.
- **Handrails** – A handrail is recommended for both sides of the ramp. Check the Scottish Government website as there may be some variations on this advice depending on who will be using the ramp.
- **Doorways** – You may need to widen doorways that lead onto the ramp for safety and ease of access or turning. We recommend a door width of 838mm for someone of small to medium build. A wider door width of 900-1000mm may be required depending of the build of person, the type of wheelchair and other potential issues such as the angle you are required to approach the door.

## Local suppliers

### **William P. Whiland & Son Ltd.**

Lime Road, Broadmeadow Estate, Dumbarton, G82 2EL  
01389 730 430      [ramps@whiland.co.uk](mailto:ramps@whiland.co.uk)

### **Johnston Builders & Roofing**

Unit 17/18 Industrial Estate, Mayfield, EH22 4AD  
0131 454 0796      [info@johnstonbuilders.co.uk](mailto:info@johnstonbuilders.co.uk)

### **Fastaid Medical and Mobility**

24/3 Dryden Road, Bilston Glen Industrial Estate, Loanhead, EH20 9HX  
0131 440 3929