



GRAB RAILS

INFORMATION GUIDE



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The aim of this pamphlet is to provide basic directions for clients and their families regarding selection and placement of handrails in the home.

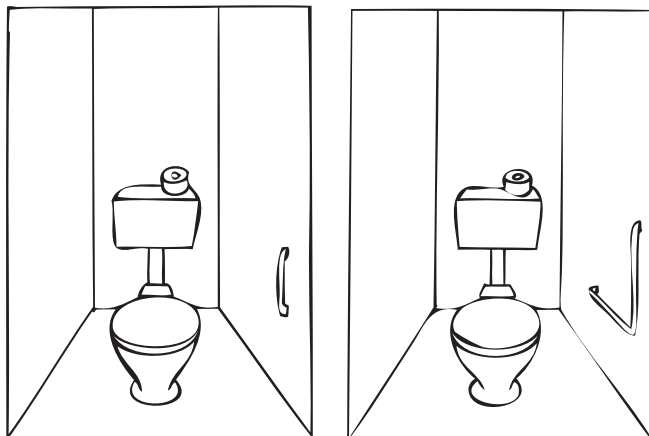
IN GENERAL ALL RAILS SHOULD

- * Be fixed firmly into a stud or dwang and be able to take the full weight of a person
- * Have a non-slip grip if used in wet areas
- * Be visible against the background especially if vision is compromised
- * Provide a secure grip and preferably be circular in shape with diameter between 25-32mm
- * Be installed with a clearance of 50mm between the rail and wall to avoid banging knuckles when gripping rail.

HANDRAIL PLACEMENT

TOILET

Handgrips: Placement is ideally at arms length and shoulder height when the person is seated on a toilet. It is preferable to have handgrips on both sides of the toilet (but not always possible).



DIAGONAL RAILS

These are useful for a person who needs to move their grip upwards for support as they stand. A diagonal rail is also a good option if fixings cannot be located in an appropriate place for a handgrip, as a diagonal rail can run from stud to stud. The bottom of the rail should be adjacent to the front of the toilet; the end of the rail rises to be at arm's length and shoulder height when the person is seated on the toilet.

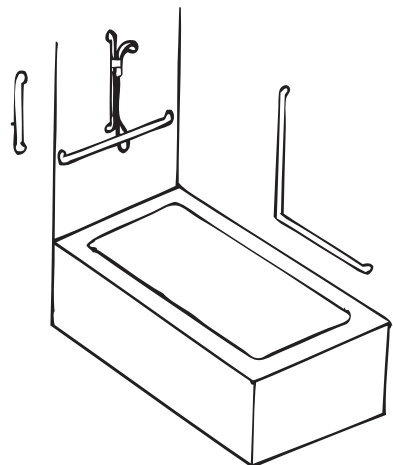
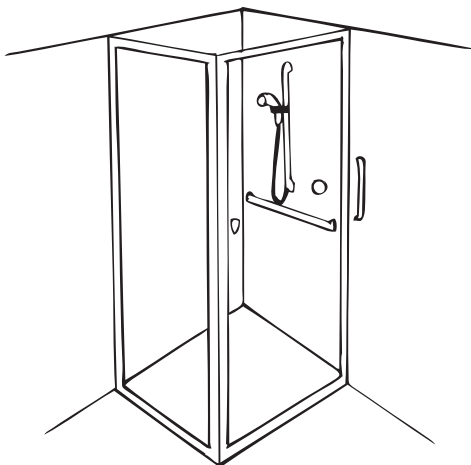
L SHAPED RAILS

This may be the most appropriate rail for a person who needs to move their grip upwards for support as they stand or for support when transferring from a wheelchair onto a toilet independently. A more thorough assessment of transfer technique is required to establish the best placement of a rail in this situation; it is recommended that a referral is made to Occupational Therapy to provide individualised recommendations for this.

SHOWER OR SHOWER OVER BATH

HANDGRIPS

Often useful when stepping into and out of a shower. The handgrip should be vertical with the bottom of the grip at the approximate height of their elbow when standing with arms by their sides.



HORIZONTAL RAILS

Generally placed on the same wall as the shower rose at “tummy button” (waist) height when standing. This means the rail can be used when stepping into the shower and when standing.

VERTICAL RAILS

Can be beneficial on the back wall for use when turning or bending down when in the shower.

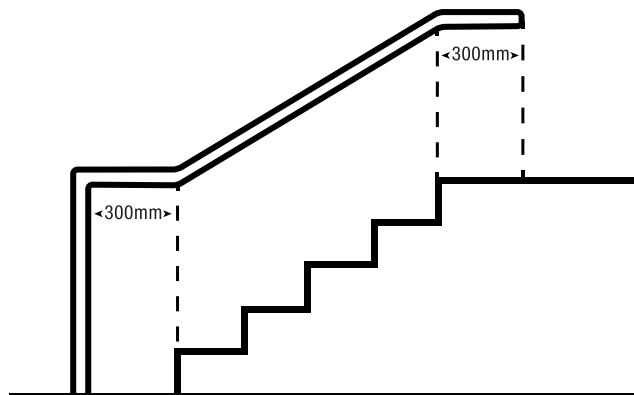
Other equipment used in the shower such as shower stools or benches will need to be considered when deciding the best place for a rail.

BATH

Rails are of limited assistance in getting up off the bottom of the bath. This remains a difficult manoeuvre and is generally not recommended if there is a safer alternative. However, an L shaped rail will allow for support to move from a seated position in the bath to standing.

OUTSIDE RAILS ON STEPS OR PATHS SHOULD BE

- * At a height 850mm – 950mm (around hip height)
- * Parallel to the pitch line of the steps
- * 35-45 mm diameter and provide continuous grip
- * Extend 300mm beyond the top and bottom steps
- * Made of galvanised pipe or similar



HANDGRIPS FOR OVER A THRESHOLD STEP SHOULD

- * Be fixed vertically into the door frame
- * Not impede opening or shutting the door and using a key
- * Be at shoulder height when standing outside facing the door

BUYING RAILS

THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES STOCK GRAB RAILS

Nelson

- * Mitre 10 Mega
- * Access Mobility
- * Prices pharmacy
- * Bunnings
- * Barjen Agencies (customised rails)
(03) 545 1398

Marlborough

- * Placemakers
- * Mico Wakefield
- * Mitre 10
- * Bunnings

INSTALLING RAILS

If you do not have access to a handyman contact a local builder from the yellow pages.

Organisations such as Greypower, Age Concern or local church groups may also be able to provide contact's for a handyman.

GENERAL

If you have a specific health condition/disability that means you may require more than a simple rail installation or if you have further queries regarding rail installation, ask for a referral to Occupational Therapy through your G.P.

DISCLAIMER

This is a general guideline only. The Occupational Therapy service takes no responsibility for inappropriate installation of handrails.

NMDHB
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
APRIL 2015

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