

# Tips for wheelchair safety



- Always Use the Wheelchair Brakes When Necessary.
- Make sure the leg rests are moved or swung to the side before the transfer
- Follow the guidelines provided for head positioning supports, belts, and trays as recommended by the healthcare
- The patient’s arms, hands, legs, and feet should be on the appropriate armrests/footrests (out of harm’s way) while transporting the patient.
- Make sure the patient is sitting comfortably to avoid blisters and pressure sores.
- To avoid backwards tipping, do not place heavy bags or other items on the back of the wheelchair.
- Do not remove anti-tipping bars from the rear of wheelchair.
- When sitting in the chair, do not over-reach in any direction, as this could cause the chair to tip over.
- Watch for curbs, inclines, and declines, and stay in control of the wheelchair.
- Check wheelchair parts and have regular maintenance.

Use the following measurements to determine if the wheelchair seat and armrests are the correct size for the resident.

**CORRECT SEAT WIDTH**

1" hip width 1"

Hip width + 2 in = \_\_\_\_

**CORRECT SEAT DEPTH**

2"

Thigh length - 2 in = \_\_\_\_

**CORRECT ARMREST HEIGHT**

1"

1 in higher than elbow = \_\_\_\_

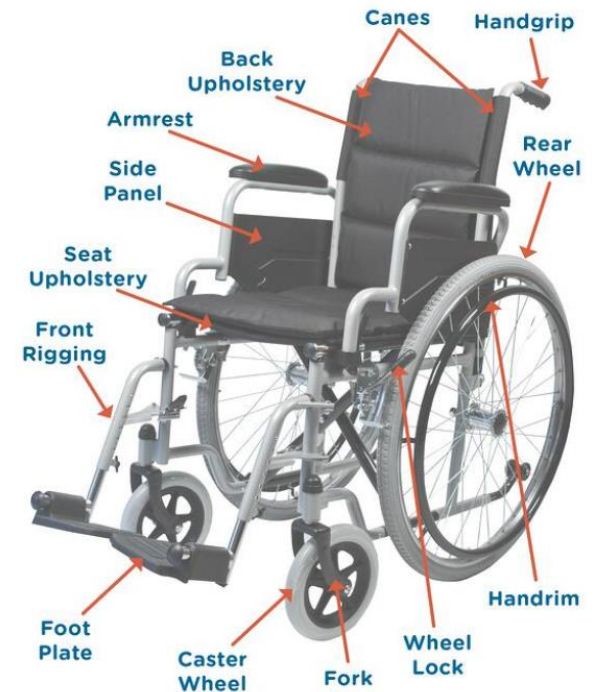
After the resident has been seated in the wheelchair for at least 1 hour, compare her position with the pictures to determine if she is seated correctly.

90°  
90°  
correct position with two 90° angles

sliding down

leaning over

leaning to one side





## Going up and down curbs or small steps in a wheelchair

### To go up a curb or small steps

1. the caregiver should position the wheelchair directly facing (perpendicular to) the curb or small step, with the front wheels near the edge of the curb.
2. The caregiver should use the handles to lean the wheelchair backward just enough for the front wheels to clear the curb or step and then.
3. Push forward so that the front wheels are placed on the curb.
4. Continue pushing forward while lifting up on the handles until the rear wheels roll up the curb or small step.  
\*This may take added force to meet the resistance of the step.

### To go down a curb or small steps

1. It is best to go down backward. The caregiver should position the wheelchair perpendicular to the curb or small step with the rear wheels near curb.
2. Slowly lower the rear wheels down the curb while leaning the wheelchair slightly backwards to allow the front wheels to clear the curb.  
Gently lower the front wheels to the ground