

## The Environment

Ensure there is adequate circulation space and doorway width to use the wheelchair indoors. Remove small obstacles and mats. It is easier to push a wheelchair on floorboards and tiles than carpet.

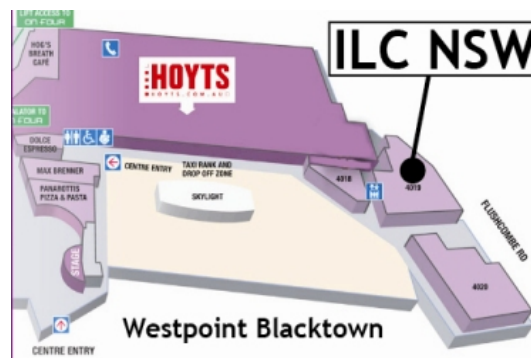
Use a portable ramp to bridge up to 3 small steps. Install a permanent ramp for multiple steps, or where it will be used regularly.

## Transportability

Folding frames may be more convenient to place in a car boot than rigid frames. However, many rigid frames can be dismantled to fit in a boot. Removable wheels may help the chair fit, but can be inconvenient to remove and replace.

To get a wheelchair in and out of a sedan or station-wagon, you can use a wheelchair hoist. Alternatively, you can fit a carrier to the towbar or roof.

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# A brief guide to Manual Wheelchairs



**Independent Living Centre NSW**

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## Manual Wheelchairs Types

Manual wheelchair types are almost as varied as the individuals using them. Choose one to suit your size, the environment you'll use it in, other people who will handle and lift it, and what you can afford.

**Transit Wheelchair** - with small rear wheels, is used if you cannot push yourself and someone else will push you.

**Self Propelling Wheelchair** - with large rear wheels, can be propelled either by the person in the chair or an attendant.

**One Arm Drive Wheelchair** - can be propelled by one arm only, or one arm and one foot.

**Amputee Wheelchair** - configured differently to compensate for the loss of the weight of the leg/s. Boards to rest the stump on are also available.

**High Performance Wheelchair** - very lightweight and suitable for active people. Wheelchairs for specific sports are available.

## Measurements

Measurement by an occupational therapist or experienced sales person is recommended, to determine the dimensions for the seat, backrest, armrests and footplates to suit *you*. An incorrect fit can lead to muscle and joint pain, or poor posture.

## Pressure Care

Discuss your need for a suitable pressure-care cushion with the person prescribing the wheelchair. Refer to our Pressure Cushion Guide



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## Options

Not all options are available on all wheelchairs and some features can add considerably to the cost.

**Armrests** come in different lengths. They may be detachable, fixed and/or height adjustable.

**Footplates** are either fixed, swing-away or detachable. Some offer extra heel or calf support.

**Frames** can be off the shelf or customised. They may be folding or rigid and come in various weights and styles.

**Seats** may be rigid, sling style or designed to accommodate a pressure relieving cushion.

**Rear wheels** come in various sizes and weights and will have either pneumatic or solid tyres. Some wheels can be removed for transportation.

**Front castors and tyres** are either air-filled, solid or foam-filled.

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