

Abbreviations, definitions and terminology

In order to use the guide write-ups easily, you will need to understand the various short cuts we have used in order to reduce the sheer volume of the write-ups. By using abbreviations we will have 'saved' several pages of text, which is particularly important for the print version.

We include here, a description of how we indicate steps, use mathematical terminology and describe the different kinds of lift, and, at the end, a list of abbreviations.

The diagram (in a separate pdf) gives the approximate dimensions of a standard wheelchair AND shows the different kinds of lifts which we distinguish between in the text.

Chairs vary considerably in size so it's worth checking the exact dimensions of yours to relate to the measurements given in the guide. With powered chairs, it's worth checking its weight as well as adding your own weight, as some platform stairlifts have weight and size restrictions. The weight limitations are expressed as the Safe Working Load (SWL) for a particular piece of machinery. (See the lifts description below)

We use some mathematical symbols, which not everyone will be familiar with, as follows:

- + plus (steps up)
- - minus, which may refer to steps down or to a floor level
- > more than
- < less than
- \pm plus of minus

Units and definitions

We have given measurements in centimetres (cm), and metres (m). Although these are the units increasingly being used internationally, many British people still think in Imperial measures. To convert metric measurements to the more familiar Imperial units, use the following guidelines:

- 10 centimetres is about 4 inches (2.5 centimetres=1 inch)
- 1 metre is about a yard
- 1 litre is about 2 pints
- 1 kilo is about 2 pounds

Steps are listed by number, with + indicating steps up and - indicating down.

Occasionally we list them as \pm , as it depends on which direction you are coming from.

The word **steps** is normally included in a write-up only when first used. Afterwards, the use of +8 or -16 (for example), means 8 steps up or 16 steps down.

Omitting the repetitive use of the word reduces the total length of the book significantly.

Where we indicate a **threshold**, what is meant is a low 'bar' across an entrance where the wheels of a chair would have to go up (a bit), across a horizontal section, often less than 10cm, and then come back down to the original level. We would normally measure the height of the threshold eg [10cm].

Movable chairs and tables

In cafés, restaurants and pubs we have not said each time that the chairs and tables are movable. It is assumed that they are movable, and therefore more convenient for chair users

and for others. Where they are not movable, or if the seats and tables are high up or might cause a problem, we have said so.

Toilets (sometimes referred to as loos)

Our definition of a **wheelchair toilet** is one where the toilet is unisex; the door opens outward; the door width (D) is greater than 70 cm and the side transfer (ST) space is greater than 70 cm.

If the toilet does not quite meet these criteria, but is adapted for a chair user, then we call it an **adapted toilet**, and we give the appropriate measurements and information. Sometimes, even though the door opens in, the cubicle is large enough for a chair user, but this is not often the case.

Where the cubicle is INSIDE the mens or womens toilet area, we describe them as being **wheelchair or adapted cubicles**. Unless specified, the toilet seat is at the standard height of about 45cm. We are aware of the need for the provision of a higher pan for those with arthritis. As toilets with higher pans are not yet widespread, we have not made a separate category.

For more information and for proper specifications, see *Designing for Accessibility*, published by the Centre for Accessible Environments.

Lifts

A **passenger lift** is in a lift shaft, with sliding doors, and a cabin which can be large or small. It goes up and down between the floors of a building, and is what we refer to when we just say 'lift'.

A **platform lift** is a small rectangular vertical lift, usually to take one chair user at a time and bypassing just a few steps - often added in a building as an afterthought. The doors are hinged, and open outwards, and sometimes you have to hold down a control button to make it go up or down.

A **platform stairlift** goes up stairs (attached to the wall or banister) and has a platform which folds down, and can take a wheelchair, and occupant. There will be a SWL limit that may preclude the carriage of an electric chair user.

A **chair stairlift** has a seat into which the passenger has to transfer, and then goes up the stairs (attached to the wall). This is very useful for many disabled walkers, but for a wheelchair user, their chair has to be carried up or down the stairs by someone else.

For lift measurements, we quote: door width (D), cabin width (W) and cabin length (L). On this basis, you can decide whether the lift is large enough for you to use.

Stairclimbers

A stairclimber is a free-standing and portable device to which a wheelchair may be attached. These are often used as evacuation chairs in the event of lift breakdown, or of a fire alarm when lifts cannot be used. The biggest ones use a mini-version of tank tracks to provide a smooth ride for the chair user.

Based on an internet search in 2012, we found the following suppliers:

- the Stairmate Major, and other models, from Baronmead International, West Sussex, <http://www.baronmead.com/>
- AAT GB, Wrexham, http://www.aatgb.com/social_inclusion.html
- Sano UK, Ipswich, Suffolk, <http://www.mobilitystairclimbers.co.uk/>
- The Living Centre, Northern Ireland and Midlothian, Scotland,

- <http://www.thelivingcentre.co.uk/>
Access Solutions GB, Cambridgeshire, <http://www.accessolutionsgb.com/> .

In our (limited) experience, the simpler ones can be quite ‘bumpy’ for the passenger, whereas those with the longer tracks provide a considerably smoother ride. None of them are cheap !

Disability terms

The use of language changes, and there is, of course, a danger in worrying too much about precise political correctness. Nonetheless the positive use of language can help to change attitudes, and to increase understanding, especially if it causes people to ask, 'Why did you say it that way ?'

There's a very thorough discussion at:

<http://www4.rgu.ac.uk/files/SocialModelLanguage-newlogo.pdf>

where the application of the Social Model of Disability is outlined.

The Open University website has a similar discussion:

www.open.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching/pages/understanding-and-awareness/describing-disability.php

Throughout the book (and the web files) we have used positive language about disability, and tried to take a positive attitude to obstacles. The barriers are there to be overcome, not simply accepted, but the starting point is to understand and define the barriers. For a long time we have been part of the movement involved in breaking down barriers. Members of our group have a variety of disabilities and as a result, are handicapped by the world around them.

We talk about disabled people and not 'the disabled'.

When people refer to a 'disabled toilet' they imply that the cistern doesn't work, and not that it is big enough for a chair user. Increasingly people are referring to an 'accessible toilet' which is what we have done in our files where we do not have specific measurements, as we haven't actually seen inside.

We have used the terms wheelchair toilet/cubicle, or adapted toilet/cubicle, with some specific criteria attached to the description.

Abbreviations

BB	blue badge for parking concessions. A Europe-wide scheme. Widened here in the guide to include any specific parking for disabled people
BCF	baby change facilities
BO	box office
BSL	British sign language
CBL	City Business Library
CP	car park
CS	commentary spot on a map/plan for an audioguide
D	door width (cm)
D, ST	the door width and side transfer distance in toilets (cm)
D,W,L	the door width, cabin width, and length in a lift (cm)
DAR	Dial-a-Ride
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act

<i>DisEnq</i>	number for enquiries by disabled people
DLO	Disability Liaison Officer
DLR	Docklands Light Railway
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
ETC	English Tourist Council
Ext	extension
FC	Football Club
GA	General admission
GF	ground floor
GFB	ground floor bedroom
JLE	Jubilee Line Extension (from Westminster to Stratford)
L	length (cm)
LGF	lower ground floor
LTB	London Tourist Board
M	management or administration telephone number
M25	the orbital motorway going right round Greater London
Middx	Middlesex
MSCP	multi-storey car park
NCP	National Car Parks
NE, NW	northeast and northwest
NKS	RADAR National Key Scheme
NR	National Rail
O	London <i>Overground</i> (rail network)
ORNC	Old Royal Naval College
PA	personal assistant/carer/friend
PHSP	Pauline Hephaistos Survey Projects
RADAR	Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation
RC	Roman Catholic
<i>RecM</i>	recorded message
RNIB	Royal National Institute for Blind People
RNID	Royal National Institute for Deaf People
SE, SW	southeast and southwest
SNC	Special Needs Coordinator
ST	side transfer space
SWL	safe working load, which is the weight limit for a lift
TfA	Transport for all
TFA	Tourism for all
TfL	Transport for London
UG	London Underground (the tube)
UGCP	underground car park
UGF	upper ground floor
V&A	Victoria and Albert
W	width (cm)
WW	Wellcome Wing (in the Science Museum)
YHA	Youth Hostels Association
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

16thC, 19thC etc are used for 16th century, 19th century etc.