



Aberdeenshire  
Health & Social Care  
Partnership

## Top Tips for Ramps



If you are planning to install a ramp at your property, these top tips will guide you. Please ensure you choose a reputable and experienced tradesman when installing a ramp privately.

If you can landscape or alter the front of your property, this can remove the need for a ramp.

### TIP 1

#### Doors

Consider which direction your door opens, for example the door opens into your house. If it opens out of the house, additional space would be required on the top platform to incorporate the door swing and any walking aids or wheelchair required. Remember to consider the weather when looking to install a door opening out of the house, as snow can build up and wind can make opening a door harder. We would recommend the minimum width of a door to be 826mm but this is not always possible in older buildings. Consider the threshold of your door, you can purchase low threshold doors, which eliminate trip hazards.

### Tip 2

#### Materials

Anti-slip materials should be considered when installing a ramp, as these can become slippery in the ice and snow. Ramps can be made of materials, such as slabs, concrete or metal. Concrete and slabbed ramps should have a textured anti-slip surface to minimise the risk of falls. Metal ramps are usually galvanised and have

holes to allow drainage. We would not recommend wood, as this can rot.

### Tip 3

#### Ramps and landing platforms

A flat platform is required at the top and the bottom of any ramp. This is to allow a flat area to position a wheelchair so that the door can be opened without the wheelchair rolling down the ramp. The platforms also allow the wheelchair user to rest when travelling up the ramped area. You will need to ensure there is a path created from the end of the ramp to either the pavement or the driveway. Depending on the length of the ramp, resting platforms will be required.

### Tip 4

#### Gradient

Building Standards recommend the maximum gradient of the ramp to be 1:12, which means for every 25mm (1 inch) you go up, you need to go out 300mm (1 foot). The minimum gradient of a ramp is 1:20 and anything higher than this is considered a path. A gradient of 1:12 is steeper than a gradient of 1:20. We would recommend the ideal gradient to be a maximum of 1:15. The steeper the gradient, the more difficult it is to propel yourself or push others up in a wheelchair.

### Tip 5

#### Width

A ramp should always be a minimum of 1000mm wide, but consideration of the overall width of the wheelchair should be



taken into account. Ideally a 1200mm ramp is preferable if there is space to install this.

### Tip 6

#### Pedestrian Protective Barriers

If a ramp is under 600mm high, then handrails are not required. An upstand kerb of at least 100mm high should be provided at the edge of a ramp. However, if the ramp is landscaped into the garden and does not have a drop, then no upstand is required.

### Tip 7

#### Handrails

If a ramp is over 600mm high, then handrails are required. Handrails should have at least 300mm extension at the landing to allow for a person to steady themselves at the top or bottom of the ramp.

### Tip 8

#### Building Warrant

A Building Warrant is required if the ramped surface is over 5000mm long.

This includes any sloped surfaces and platforms within the ramp. This does not include the platforms at the top and bottom.

### Tip 9

#### Planning Permission

Planning Permission may be required to install your ramp. If your property is within a conservation area or is a listed building, then you will require planning permission. For further information, please go to the Aberdeenshire Council website and search for check if you need planning permission. The Aberdeenshire Council website is [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning)

### Tip 10

#### Assessment if you have a specific condition

If you have a specific condition and would like further information and guidance, please contact Aberdeenshire Council Occupational Therapy Service on **0345 608 1206** and choose **Option 2**



- **Tip 3 and Tip 6** - Flat platform and handrails (above left).
- **Tip 6** - Landing platform and upstands (above right).
- **Tip 7** - Handrails (below tip 10)
- **Tip 2** - Materials shown on front cover

Permission granted from Lux Fabrication, Fencing and Maintenance to use these photographs of the modular steps and modular handrails.

All recommendations are made in accordance with [The Scottish Government's Domestic Technical Handbook](#) issued in April 2024

If you purchase a product due to a medical need or if you a physical disability, then VAT exemption may be available. VAT relief forms are available on the UK Government website and are called Eligibility Declarations by a Disabled person for VAT relief using the following webpage address: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vat-reliefs-for-disabled-people-eligibility-declaration-by-a-disabled-person>