

HOW TO CHOOSE A WHEELCHAIR RAMP

People want to stay in their homes as long as possible and maintain their independence even if their mobility becomes compromised. A safe and accessible entry to the home is key to staying safely in the home you love.

A wheelchair ramp is one of the easiest solutions to providing accessibility and helping people to maintain their quality of life. Ramps can be installed permanently or temporarily for vacation or rental homes or for recovery from surgery or an accident.

Choosing a wheelchair ramp for your home is not an easy task. There are many variables to address when determining how to make the home you love accessible and safe when mobility becomes compromised. So how do you decide what you need? Here is a set of questions that will help you make the best choice:



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Is the person using a wheelchair, walker, cane or just struggling with steps? Slippery steps, especially without handrails can create dangerous slip and fall situations.
- If the person is in a wheelchair, is it manual or power? How much does the power wheelchair weigh?
- Is the person always assisted by a caregiver? You want to make sure the ramp is not too steep for the caregiver to push the wheelchair up the ramp.
- How many steps are at your main entrance? The front entrance may not always be the best option for a ramp. A garage or back entrance may be a better choice.
- Are there thresholds outside and inside the home that are tripping hazards? Most tripping hazards can be eliminated with a simple indoor or outdoor threshold ramp.
- Is it difficult to access the deck, porch or patio? A threshold or portable ramp may be able to provide easy access to the outdoors.
- Is the situation permanent or temporary? Some types of ramps are rentable for temporary situations.

THERE ARE FOUR MAIN TYPES OF RAMPS:

Threshold, Portable, Permanent (concrete or wood), and Modular (can be permanent or temporary).



THRESHOLD RAMPS

These are the simplest and most commonly used ramps for heights of $\frac{3}{4}$ " up to 6". They are usually a simple wedge design made of aluminum or rubber that makes it easier to enter or exit a building or transition from one room to another. They are great for a front doorway entrance that has one step or transitioning across sliders to a deck or patio.



MODULAR RAMPS

Modular ramps are made from steel or aluminum and do not usually require building permits. They don't attach to the building and can be easily removed when the ramp is no longer needed with no damage to the building or property - a great solution for rental properties and vacation homes. Modular ramps can be installed in a few days and are RENTABLE. They come in various sizes and widths, with railings and platforms. The ramp pieces are put together to create a ramp of any length required.



CONCRETE AND WOOD RAMPS

Concrete and wood ramps are a permanent solution that require proper design work, a contractor, and may require permits to install. Delivery & installation usually takes the most time.



PORTABLE RAMPS

Great for 1-2 steps, and come in lengths from 2' to 10'. They are relatively easy to move and set up, and can be easily stored away when not in use. However, they do not have railings so they have to be used with caution.

HOW TO MEASURE A RAMP:

A safe ramp requires 1 linear foot of ramp for every inch of rise (or elevation change). For example, if there are 3 steps and each is 7" high, the ramp must be at least 21' long. An accessibility professional can help you make the right choice and ensure that the ramp design is both safe and installed properly. They are also familiar with the different types of products available and can help to assess your home and provide solutions to improve accessibility throughout your entire home (stairs, bathrooms, etc.). When contacting an accessibility professional, make sure to ask if the assessment is free - it should be!



Amramp has accessibility professionals available in many markets across the US and one location in Edmonton, Canada that provide wheelchair ramps, stairlifts, vertical platform lifts and other accessibility solutions.

Call 800-649-5215 to arrange a FREE evaluation for your client or visit www.amramp.com for more information.