



Create an Accessible Lifestyle

Enhance independence with mobility in mind

FAMILY FEATURES

If you're like the majority of the population, mobility is something you take for granted. However, once you or a loved one encounters an illness or disability that results in dependence on a wheelchair, your perspective is likely to change dramatically.

Mobility is a major factor in a person's independence, but when illness or injury hinders free movement, even a simple task like running to the store becomes a challenge. Fortunately, there are numerous options you can explore to improve mobility and accessibility if you or a loved one becomes reliant on a wheelchair or other assisted mobility.

Ramps in Place of Stairs

Safety is a primary concern for someone whose mobility is limited. Even minor falls can cause significant injuries, particularly for seniors whose bones tend to be more fragile. When a loved one begins experiencing trouble with the steps, a ramp is a good solution. In fact, ramps aren't just for those who are reliant on a wheelchair or other motorized device like a scooter. They are also a good solution for someone who uses a cane or walker, or someone who experiences pain or difficulty maintaining balance on the stairs.

Accessible Vehicles and Parking

Getting out of the house is an important way to help someone whose mobility is compromised continue to feel connected to the larger world, and practically speaking, even if they're not physically up to social engagements, chances are that doctor's appointments will still be a necessity. However, parking limitations cause major challenges for wheelchair users.

Not only is getting in and out of the vehicle a chore, 74 percent of people have personally seen a handicap accessible parking space being improperly used, according to a survey by BraunAbility. As a leading manufacturer of wheelchair accessible vehicles and wheelchair lifts, its Save My Spot campaign works to educate the public about the meaning and importance of handicap accessible parking. In addition to understanding and educating others about the proper usage of handicap accessible

parking, chair users may benefit from wheelchair accessible vehicles that provide maximum maneuverability, such as the BraunAbility Pacifica, which delivers the most interior cabin space and widest doorway and ramp for ease of entry and exit.

Hand Rails and Grab Bars

Hand rails add another measure of safety in the home. They can add stability and support on staircases, ramps and other walkways, but they're also beneficial in areas like the bathroom. A rail or grab bar near the toilet can help steady someone raising or lowering to use the facilities. Similarly, rails in or adjacent to the shower can assist with safe transitions into and out of the stall. Remember to follow all manufacturer instructions for installing rails to ensure they provide adequate support and can bear the weight of the user.

Bathroom Modifications

Proper hygiene goes a long way toward promoting overall wellness and independence, but a person with limited mobility may struggle using the features of a standard bathroom. In addition to safety rails and grab bars, devices such as shower stools and raised toilet seats can provide needed support. Depending on your circumstances, it may be necessary to consider renovations to include a roll-in tub or seated shower and a vanity with a counter at an accessible height.

Wider Doors and Hallways

While it's not always possible to widen doors and hallways, this is an important consideration for someone who is heavily reliant on a wheelchair or other motorized device. If the chair can't clear hallways and maneuver around corners, a person's access to the home is severely limited, sometimes to the point of needing to find new housing accommodations. When considering whether the doors and hallways will meet your needs, remember to take into account any accessories or equipment, such as an oxygen tank, that may affect the chair's turn radius.

Find more ideas to promote independence and mobility at braunability.com/savemyspot.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT RESPONSIBLE PARKING

around wheelchair accessible vehicle spaces!



1 of 6 accessible parking spaces must be van-accessible.

Always look for stripes in a parking space before you park. These areas are off-limits to ALL vehicles!

Even if you have a handicap parking placard, please don't park in the striped spaces! This space allows room to deploy a ramp. If you park here, the wheelchair user is blocked from entering his or her vehicle!

The striped area provides an extra car-width of space to allow someone in a wheelchair accessible vehicle room to deploy a ramp and safely enter or exit his or her vehicle.

FACTS*

74% of people have seen a handicap accessible parking space improperly used.

42% of people do not know the stripes represent space to deploy a wheelchair ramp.

75% of able-bodied people said if a car parked too close to them, they would use another door or window to climb in. Chair users do not have that option.

* Statistics from 2018 Save My Spot Survey



Join the conversation!

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#savemyspot



5 Facts About Handicap-Accessible Parking

Handicap-accessible parking plays a critical role in giving chair users independence and mobility, making it important to understand the rules of the parking lot. To bring awareness to the challenges wheelchair users face, BraunAbility offers these reminders:

1. The striped lines next to a handicap-accessible parking space indicate it is reserved for a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. These spaces are wider than regular handicap accessible parking spaces, offering room for people to safely lower a ramp and enter and exit their vehicles.

2. There is a difference between handicap accessible parking for cars and wheelchair-accessible vans. When the parking sign says, "Accessible Vans," it is reserved for wheelchair-accessible vehicles only. Van accessible spaces are easily identified by a striped access aisle on the passenger side.
3. Some people have hidden disabilities, and it may not be visibly apparent that they need a handicap-accessible spot. Not all people who require handicap parking access are reliant on wheelchairs. These spots are also intended for use by people with disabilities such as deafness or a recent injury.

4. Businesses are required to meet a quota for handicap accessible spots. The number of handicap accessible parking spaces required depends on the total number of parking spaces in the lot, but at least one in every six handicap accessible spaces must be designated for a wheelchair accessible vehicle, according to the American Disabilities Act.
5. Wheelchairs continue to increase in size, requiring more room to maneuver in and out of vehicles, and therefore need extra space in a parking spot for the wheelchair user to safely access a fully deployed ramp.