

Over 100 ways to improve access at home

For more information or if you would like this booklet in other formats such as large print, audio tape or audio CD, please contact:

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A Smart State initiative

Over 100 ways to improve access at home

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Cover feature

Francis is a person with a disability who lives independently in accommodation of her choice, by using portable equipment items to address her needs.

Francis works part-time as a lecturer at the University of Queensland. She also works for the Community Resource Unit Inc. The unit exists to support the development of leadership and authentic change that enhances the possibilities for people with disabilities to belong to and participate in community life.

Francis says when she looks for accommodation, she first assesses what she needs to live comfortably in a property.

“I think some private sector properties can be improved when portable equipment or modifications are used. If a booklet was created to provide enough detail on portable equipment items, the booklet could be used as an information tool to help improve people’s lifestyle and independence.”

“I tell my students that people just want to stay where they are. They don’t want to move just because they can’t turn a tap or climb a step,” she said.

“Information empowers people to make choices in their lives.”

Francis was consulted in the development of this booklet.



Francis

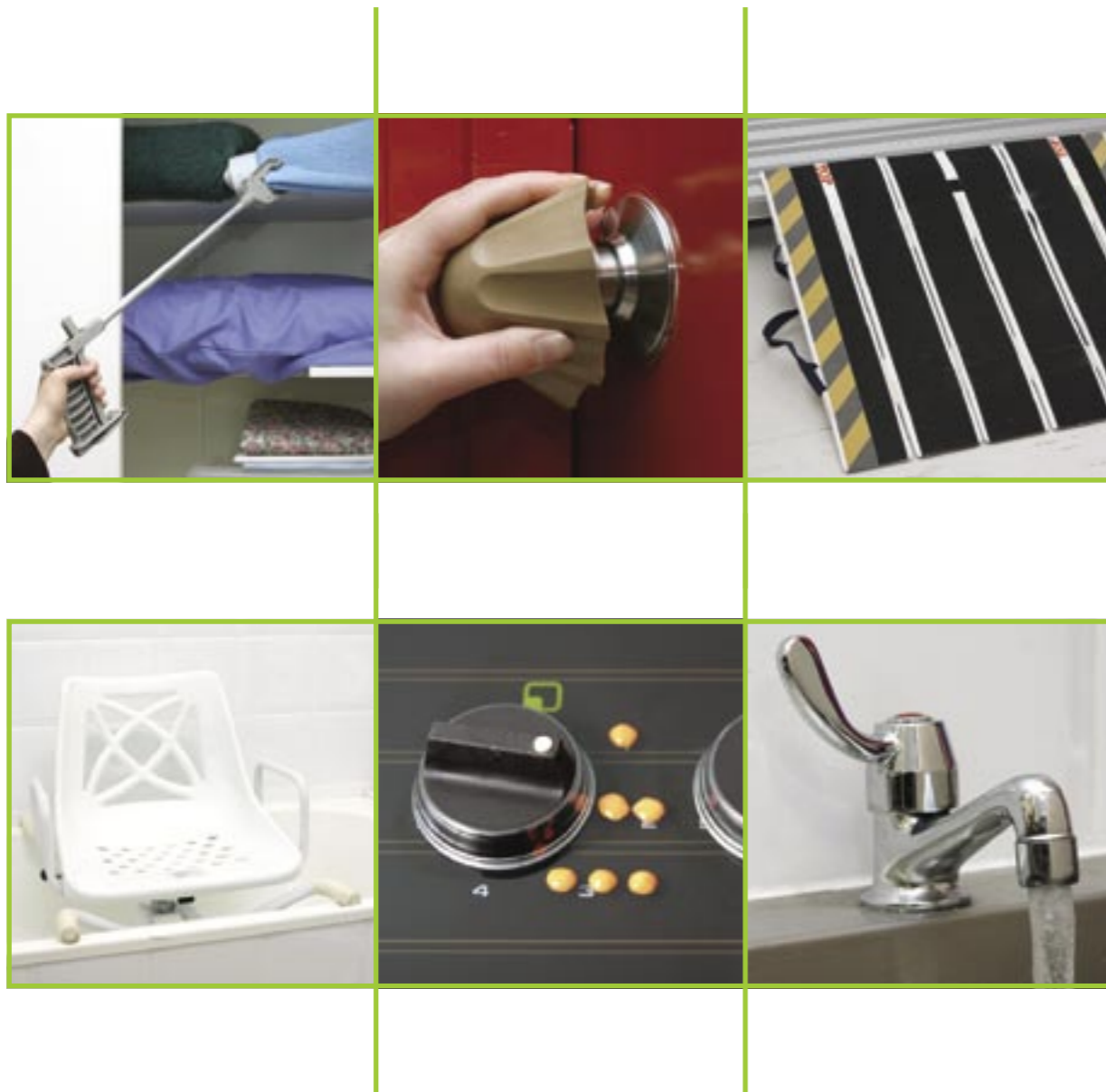


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1 Introduction

Background

Many Queenslanders find it difficult or sometimes even impossible to enter, get around or use some of the features in their home. Homes with steps, narrow passageways, internal stairs and small bathrooms can prevent people from living safely and independently. These features can also make it difficult for them to visit the homes of family or friends and can affect their quality of life.

This booklet includes tips for overcoming some of the barriers found in housing, such as steps and hard to grip door knobs. Information is also provided on organisations that can provide further assistance.

What is Home Access?

Home Access is an initiative of the Queensland Department of Housing to address the need for accessible housing in the private housing system (private rental and owner-occupation), and to enhance housing options for people with a disability¹ and older people.

What are some of the barriers you may face in your home?

- steps leading to your front door;
- taps and door knobs that are difficult to grip;
- a step into the shower;
- door handles and window latches that are hard to open and close;
- deep storage areas and cupboards;
- slippery surfaces both outdoors and indoors; and
- hard to reach power points and light switches.

How can these be overcome?

Home modifications, minor fixtures and fittings or equipment items are an effective way of making homes easier to access. Part 2 of this booklet identifies solutions that would make it easier for you to manage in your home.

¹ Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities that prevents people who have impairments from taking part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers. (Swain et al, 1993)

Some of these solutions include items that are:

- portable (can be taken with you if you move);
- easy to install or remove (by yourself or a handy/trades person);
- reasonably inexpensive to purchase and/or install; or
- small structural alterations (completed by a tradesperson).

The price and installation of the items may vary depending on the quality of the product, the brand name, the design of your home, the type of item being installed and the availability of products.

Professional and technical advice

Before you purchase equipment or install fittings referred to in this booklet, you may wish to seek professional advice from an **occupational therapist** with specialist home modification assessment skills. An occupational therapist can advise you about alternative techniques, assistive devices and services that may be more appropriate to your home situation.

A number of the items referred to in this booklet are available at your local hardware store and may require a tradesperson to install them.

Where complex modifications are required to the structure of your home, you may wish to engage a licensed contractor. Contact your nearest **Building Services Authority** office or visit their web site at www.bsa.qld.gov.au to confirm, free of charge, whether the contractor has a current licence suitable for your job.

The **Independent Living Centre** can provide information and advice on the range, price and availability of a number of the products listed in this booklet. They can also provide you with information about experienced tradespersons who can undertake modifications in your home.

Part 3 of this booklet provides information on making changes or alterations to rental properties.

In some instances, more extensive modifications may be required. Parts 4 and 5 of this booklet identify organisations that may be of assistance.

See the **Home Access Useful Contacts** booklet for more details on the organisations mentioned in this booklet.

2 Over 100 ways to improve access at home

Entering the home

The street number is small and hard to see.

- Ensure the street number is a different colour to its background and large enough to see from the road. Consider installing signs that are big, bold and contrasting and are well lit on a matt finish.
- Place the property number in a prominent position to ensure it is easily seen from the street by day or night.
- Paint the property number onto the kerb.

The front entry is hard to find.

- Install sensor lights on pathways and at the property entrance.

Available from hardware, lighting and discount department stores. Tradesperson or electrical assistance may be required for installation.

- Cut back any bushes or shrubs overhanging the footpath or property entrance.

Entering the home – continued

There are a number of steps at the entry door.

- Install a modular ramp system at the steps. It can bridge height differences between the path/yard to the entry in low-set houses.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.

- Install hand rails on the steps. (This is a horizontal or sloping rail at about waist height which is grasped by the hand for support and forms a safety rail to guard the side of a stairway, landing, elevated platform or walkway.)

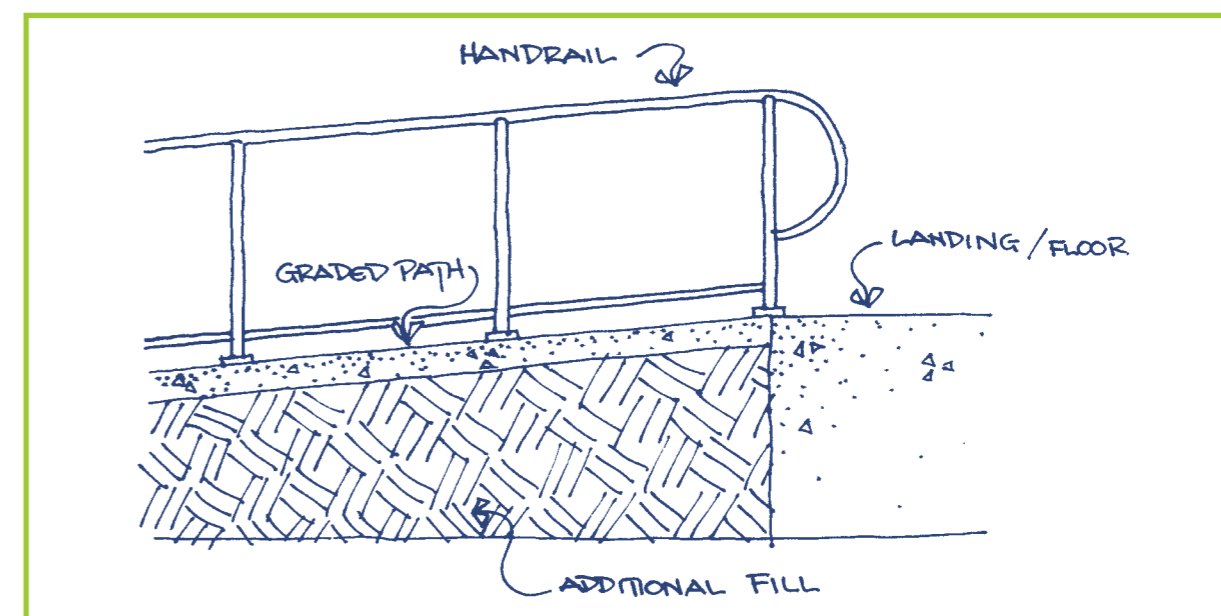
Available from hardware and discount department stores.

- Remove the steps and replace with a graded path. Install hand rails along the path or ensure the surrounding soil and/or grass is level with the new path at the edges (see diagram below).

Contact a landscaper, builder or tradesperson for assistance.



Modular ramp system



Entering the home – continued

The steps are slippery and dangerous.

- Tape non-slip, colour contrasting strips (self-adhesive tape glue strips) to the top (tread) of each step.
- Paint the steps with slip-resistant paint.

These items are available at hardware stores.

- Clean the steps regularly, making sure no excess water remains.

The edge of the steps cannot be seen clearly.

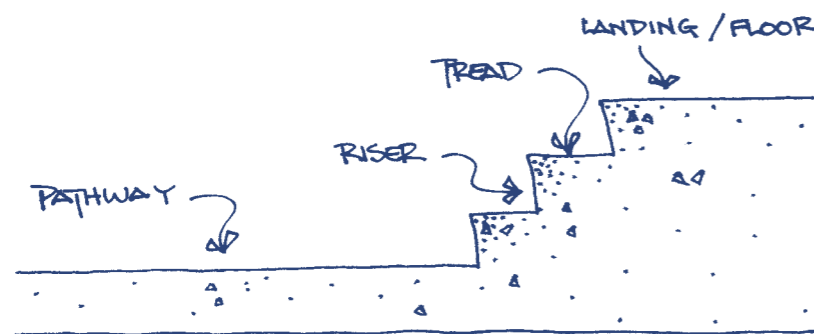
- Install sensor lights that automatically light up the steps as they are approached.

Available from hardware, lighting and discount department stores.

- Paint the edges of the risers and/or treads of the steps with a strip of colour-contrasting paint.
- Tape non-slip, colour contrasting strips to the top (tread) of each step.



Paint on edge of stairs (on the riser)



Entering the home – continued

There is a step or change of level at a doorway.

- Place a wedge/threshold ramp at the step/change of level.
- Install a plastic modular ramp system at the step/change of level.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above two items.

- Install a grab rail on the wall. (This is a vertical or inclined rail that may be grasped for body support or to assist movement.)
- Install hand rail from wall to ground or landing.

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.

- Remove the steps and replace with a graded path. Install hand rails along the path or ensure the surrounding soil and/or grass is level with the new path at the edges.

Contact a landscaper, builder or tradesperson for assistance.



Timber wedge built by tradesperson



Prefabricated door threshold ramp



Portable ramp

Entering the home – continued

The door handle and lock require two hands to operate.

- Replace the existing door handle with a key-in-lock lever action handle.
- Install a lever door handle and separate deadlock.

These items are available from hardware stores or a locksmith.



Key-in-lock lever action handle



Lever door handle and separate deadlock

The round door handles are difficult to turn.

- Use a lid turner.
- Use a piece of non slip matting to help grip the handle.
- Replace the handles with lever door handles.



Lid turner

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores.

There are too many keys to manage the different door locks around the home.

- Change the lock cylinder on all doors to be keyed alike. One key then operates all doors.

Available from hardware stores or a locksmith.

Entering the home – continued

The lock is located too close to the door frame.

- Install a lever door handle and a separate deadlock on the entry door or a key-in-lock lever action handle.

Available from hardware stores or a locksmith.

- Use a built-up key holder to assist in putting the key in the lock. This is a key with a moulded or larger handle attached to its base. It gives an easier grip, good leverage and more length to assist in turning the key.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.



Built-up key holder

The door, the door handle and lock are hard to see.

- Paint the door frames a contrasting colour to the walls. Ensure the door handles and locks are a contrasting colour to the door.
- Avoid shiny door and doorframe surfaces as this may cause glare. Use matt or low-sheen paint finishes.

The style of door does not allow for easy opening and closing.

- Remove or change the style of door.
- Rehang doors so they swing in the opposite direction eg. outwards rather than inwards.

These may require tradesperson assistance.

- Attach a piece of string/rope around the door handle to pull the door closed.

Entering the home – continued

The doors do not stay open.

- Place a door-stopper at the bottom of the door.
- Attach a magnetic catch on the doorframe.
- Use a door wedge.
- Use a door hook.

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores.

- Remove the closer on the security screen door. Do not remove the closer from a fire door.

May require tradesperson assistance.

Some of the solutions from ‘Entering the home’ can be used in the following section ‘Internal hallways, doorways and windows’.



Internal hallways, doorways and windows

There is a step or change of level between floor surfaces.

- Place a wedge/threshold ramp at the step/change of level.
- Install a plastic modular ramp system at the step/change of level.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above two items.

- Install a grab rail on the wall.

Available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Prefabricated aluminium threshold ramp



Plastic modular ramp system

Doorways and door handles are hard to see and locate.

- Ensure that the walls, doors and floors are all different in some way. Paint the door frames a contrasting colour to the walls and make sure that the door handle contrasts with the door to make it easier to locate a doorway.
- Avoid shiny surfaces as this may result in glare. Use matt or low-sheen paint finishes.

Internal hallways, doorways and windows – continued

The hallways and doorways are too narrow.

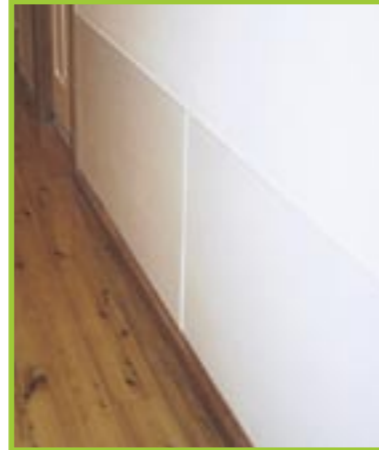
- Remove doors to create extra door clearance. Also consider replacing the door with a curtain for privacy.

- Widen doorways off hallways.

These may require tradesperson assistance.

- If door frames and walls are being damaged by equipment, consider installing corner and wall protection.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.



Wall protection

The window latches are difficult to reach, open and close.

- Use a long-handled reacher stick to reach the window latch.

Contact the Technical Aid to the Disabled Queensland Inc for information.



Winders on windows

- Install windows that have height adjustable window latches.

Contact a window manufacturer.

- Arrange for the window to be serviced so that the opening/closing mechanisms operate properly.

- Install winders on windows.

These items are available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.

Some of the solutions from 'Entering the home' on pages 6–12 can be used in this section.

Bathroom/toilet

There is a step into the shower.

- Install a false draining floor in the shower recess or shower floor. Ensure the sides of the false draining floor are flush against the sides of the shower recess or walls.

- Install grab rails to give better stability while getting in and out of the shower.

These items are available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



False draining floor

A fixed shower screen limits access.

- Replace the fixed shower screen with a shower curtain hung from a continuous curtain rail.

May require tradesperson assistance.



Bathroom/toilet – continued

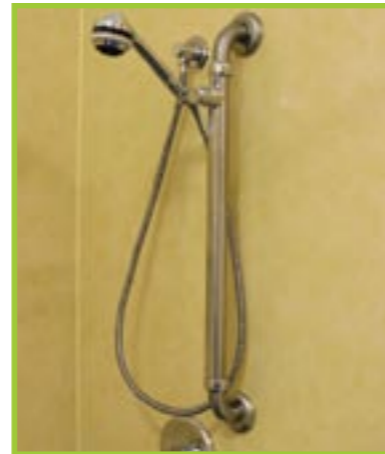
The water flow is hard to direct because the shower rose is fixed.

- Replace the fixed shower rose with a hand-held shower set on mounting brackets or a vertical grab rail. The shower rose can be used in a sitting or standing position. Consider “AAA” or higher rated water conservation showers.

Before fitting the hand-held shower with a flexible shower hose, seek advice from an electrician and/or plumber to ensure that the finished installation complies with the requirements of the Plumbing Codes and Wiring Rules.

- For baths, use a hand-held shower with adaptors that push onto single and double bath taps.

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Shower with vertical grab rail

Bathroom/toilet – continued

Seating is needed in the shower.

- Place a plastic shower chair/stool with metal legs and non-slip feet in the shower. Plastic garden chairs are not recommended as hot water makes them brittle and crack over time.
- Use a mobile over-toilet shower chair if the shower allows wheel-in access.
- Install drop down shower seat.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.

- Install grab rails for support.

Available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation



Shower chair



Mobile over-toilet shower chair

Bathroom/toilet – continued

The bath edge is high and the base of the bath is low.

- Place an adjustable bath board on top of the bath.
- Use a bath board and bath seat (inserted low in the bath) if the bath is made of steel (as the weight of the person on the bath seat may cause damage to baths made of weaker materials).
- Use an overbath swivel chair.
- Use a tub transfer bench if the bath edge does not support a bath board.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.

- Grab rails and hand held showers can also be used with the above items.

Available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Bath seat (left), bath board (right)



Overbath swivel chair



Tub transfer bench

Bathroom/toilet – continued

The toilet seat is low.

- Use a height adjustable over-toilet frame that has a built in seat and arm rests to raise seat height and to provide armrest support.
- Use a toilet surround frame to provide arm rest support.
- Use a mobile over-toilet shower chair if the area can be accessed by a wheelchair.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.



Height adjustable over-toilet frame



Mobile over-toilet shower chair



Mobile over-toilet chair



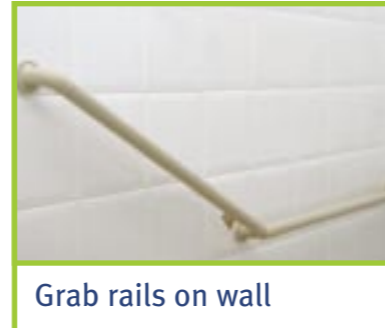
Toilet surround frame

Bathroom/toilet – continued

There is no structural support around the toilet.

- Install grab rails on the wall.

Available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Grab rails on wall

- Install grab rails that clamp onto the toilet to provide armrest support.
- Use a toilet surround frame to provide armrest support.
- Use a height adjustable over-toilet frame to raise seat height and provide armrest support.
- Use a mobile over-toilet shower chair if the area can be accessed by a wheelchair.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.



Clamp on toilet rails

The bathroom floor is slippery especially when wet.

- Treat the bathroom/shower floor with a “slip resistive when wet” solution to give the surface a better grip.

Look up Floor Treatment Products in the Yellow Pages.

- Place self-adhesive, non-slip rubber strips or shapes on the floor (including the shower and bath surfaces).

Available from discount department stores.

- Clean the shower/bathroom floor regularly and ventilate the room.

Kitchen

The hotplate controls are too small to grasp.

- Use a contour turner over the top of the hotplate controls to help with turning them.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.

- Consider using other appliances for cooking which may be easier to operate eg. a freestanding single hotplate, a microwave oven, a small grill oven, a crock-pot or an electric fry pan.



Contour turner

The hotplate control markers are very small.

- Place fluorescent markers, stickers or puff paint (dimensional fabric paint – these paints have a raised surface) on the hotplate controls to highlight them and make them more visible.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.



Fluorescent markers

- Install direct lighting to the cooking area. This might be a light in the range hood or a ‘down light’ above the kitchen bench.

The lighting will require assistance from a tradesperson or electrician.

Kitchen – continued

The oven is too low.

- Place a firm chair next to the oven to sit on while using the oven.
- Consider using cooking appliances that can be placed on a bench eg. a microwave oven, a small grill oven or an electric fry pan.

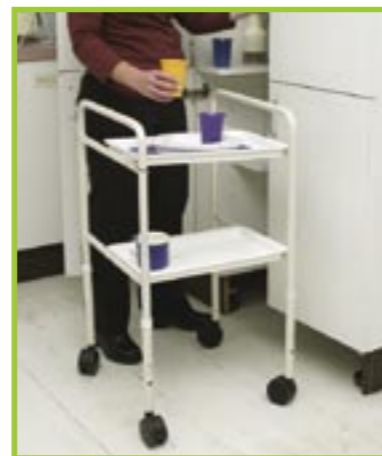
The shelves in the fridge are too deep, high or low.

- Store most-used items within easy reach in the fridge.
- Place a firm chair or stool next to the fridge to sit on while reaching items on the lower shelves.

The sink, stove and fridge are too far apart.

- Use a trolley with wheels to move heavy items around the kitchen.

Available from hardware and furniture stores or contact the Independent Living Centre for information.



Trolley

Bedroom

The toilet is too far from the bedroom.

- Place a commode next to the bed.
- Keep a bedpan in a convenient place close to the bed and use with a plastic draw sheet.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.



Commode

The light switch is too far from the bed.

- Place a lamp (with a large power switch) beside the bed. Touch sensitive lamps are good for people with limited hand movement.
- Attach a night light just above the bed height. Plug-in sensor lights are also available.

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores.

- Install an additional light rocker switch close to the bed.

May require tradesperson assistance for installation.

- Keep a torch close to the bed (on the bedside table if possible).



Rocker switch

Cupboards, wardrobes and drawers

The shelves/hanging rails are either too high or low.

- Use a long-handled pick-up stick to reach the items you want.
- Install pull-down baskets if the shelves are too high.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items.

- Use a piece of dowel/timber rod with a hook on the end to reach the required items.
- Move the hanging rail to a lower position in the wardrobe.
- Install a second hanging rail in the wardrobe that is below the standard rail.

These may require tradesperson assistance for installation.



Long handled pick-up stick



Piece of dowel with a hook on the end

Cupboards, wardrobes and drawers – continued

The shelving in the cupboard/pantry is too deep.

- Store regularly-used items on a kitchen bench top or a trolley.
- Install small wire baskets on the inside of cupboard doors to store regularly used items.
- Install a lazy susan (rotating shelf) to store regularly used items.
- Install 180 degree hinges on the doors. The doors fold back and provide extra space.
- Lower or raise shelves to make them easier to reach.
- Use baskets to store regularly-used items and place on top of cupboards, shelves or the pantry floor.
- Install pull-down baskets.
- Consider using drawers to store grocery items.



Wire baskets on cupboard door



Lazy susan

These items are available at hardware, furniture and discount department stores or contact the Independent Living Centre for information. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.

Cupboards, wardrobes and drawers – continued

The drawers and cupboard doors are hard to open and close.

- Install easy-pull D handles. They can also be used on sliding doors.
- Install open shelving for easy access to regularly used items.
- Replace difficult-to-open drawers with drawers on easy glide runners with stops.
- Place 180 degree hinges on the cupboard doors to allow them to be pulled back easily.
- Remove the cupboard door and install a curtain.
- Arrange for the cupboards or drawers to be checked and if necessary repaired for easy opening and closing.



These items are available at hardware stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Lighting, controls, taps and flooring

The lighting level is low.

- Replace the light bulbs with higher output bulbs. Consider using low energy efficient lamps eg. fluorescent.
- Install task lighting or plug-in sensor lights to focus light in particular areas.

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores. Assistance may be required by a tradesperson or electrician for installation.

There is not enough lighting as the ceiling fan is in place of the ceiling light.

- Install a fan with a light fitting and remote control.

Available at hardware and discount department stores. Assistance may be required by a tradesperson or electrician for installation.

The light bulbs are high on the ceiling.

- Use a small plastic device called a globe grabber which is fitted on the end of a long handle (ie. broom handle). Do not use a globe grabber on cord suspended light fittings.

Contact the Independent Living Centre or Technical Aid to the Disabled Queensland Inc for information.



Lighting, controls, taps and flooring – continued

The light and power switches are difficult to turn on and off as they are too small and/or too hard to reach.

- Replace standard switches with large rocker switches.
- Use a piece of dowel/timber rod fitted with a rubber thimble on the end to turn light and power switches on and off.
- Mount a plug-in power board on the wall, floor or in a place that can be easily reached. Consider a power board with a large rocker switch.



Rocker switch

These items are available at hardware and discount department stores. Assistance may be required by a tradesperson or electrician for installation.

The mat and carpet edges are a trip hazard.

- Secure carpet edges.
- Remove any mats, carpet or vinyl where edges cannot be secured.

These may require tradesperson assistance. Contact a carpet manufacturer for advice.



Lighting, controls, taps and flooring – continued

The taps are difficult to turn.

- Attach a removable tap turner to the tap.
- Change the taps so that they are half-turn, short or long lever handles.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information on the above items, tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Removable tap turner



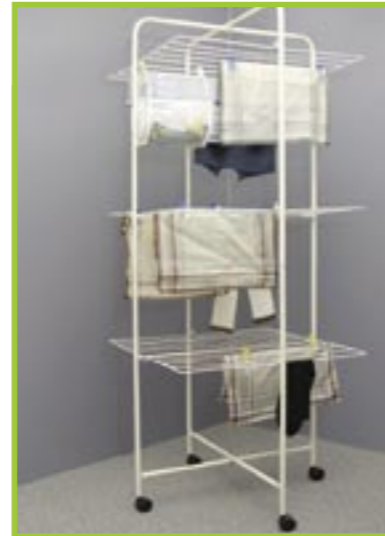
Tap with long lever handle

Outdoor areas

The clothesline is too high.

- Install a height adjustable rotary clothesline.
- Install a fold-down clothesline outside your home (eg. Paraline).
- Install a fully retractable clothesline to outside walls and/or posts.
- Use a drying rack.

The items are available from hardware and discount department stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.



Drying rack



Paraline

The garden gate latch is difficult to reach and use.

- Replace the gate latch with an opener with a lever handle.

Available from hardware and discount department stores.

- Attach a length of rope to the gate latch and use it to pull the latch open and closed.
- Remove your garden gate if you have no need for it.

Outdoor areas – continued

The garden latch is located on one side only.

- Install 180 degree hinges on the gate.
- Install spring hinges on the gate.
- Install a lever handle on both sides of the gate.

These items are available from hardware stores. Tradesperson assistance may be required for installation.

The garden tap is difficult to turn.

- Install a lever handle.
- Use a tap turner.

Contact the Independent Living Centre for information.

It is difficult to open the letter box with one hand.

- Install a letter box with a side opening door, drop down door or no door.

Available from hardware stores.



3 Tenants' rights and responsibilities

If you rent your home, contact your lessor/agent before you install household fixtures or make changes to your home.

You may need written agreement from your lessor/agent before making any changes to the property. A written agreement between the lessor/agent and tenant should specify:

- the nature of the change;
- any terms about removing it; or
- compensation to the tenant at the end of the tenancy for improvements to the property.

If you are unsure about the process or have other queries about your tenancy, contact one of the following organisations for information.

Contact details for these organisations are provided in the **Home Access Useful Contacts** booklet.

Residential Tenancies Authority

The Residential Tenancies Authority is the statutory body established by the Queensland Government to administer the *Residential Tenancies Act 1994* and *Residential Services (Accommodation Act) 2002*.

The Residential Tenancies Authority assists lessors tenants, residents and service providers with information about their rights and responsibilities under the Acts.



Tenants' rights and responsibilities – continued

Tenancy Advice Service, Tenants' Union of Queensland Inc.

The Tenants' Union of Queensland is a Statewide, community-based advocacy organisation for tenants. It provides a range of information including:

- a telephone advice service;
- tenancy publications;
- tenancy law training;
- research on tenancy issues;
- a specialist legal service (available only to tenants); and
- advice to tenants about their rights and responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1994* and the *Residential Services (Accommodation) Act 2002*.

Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Queensland)

The Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service (Queensland) is primarily aimed at assisting you to understand your rights and responsibilities as a tenant in your negotiations with lessors and real estate agents.

A total of 29 services are offered throughout the State, that provide information and referral to people in housing need to assist them to establish and/or maintain housing in the private market.



4 Useful organisations

The following organisations provide information or services that assist people to improve access in and around the home with either home modifications, equipment or free advice. This list is not exhaustive.

Contact details for these organisations are provided in the **Home Access Useful Contacts** booklet. Eligibility criteria may apply.

Home modifications

Home Assist Secure

Home Assist Secure aims to remove some of the practical housing difficulties experienced by older people and people with a disability who wish to remain living in their home.

Home Assist Secure provides free information, advice and subsidised assistance that relates to the health, safety and security of eligible clients, such as:

- information and professional advice on home maintenance, repairs, minor modifications and home and personal security; and
- advice and assistance with employing tradespeople, contracting experts or in planning future work.

Home and Community Care Home Modification Services

Home and Community Care Home Modification Services aim to assist older people and people with a disability to remain living in their home.

The Services may provide information, assessment, project management and/or financial assistance with larger home modifications, such as ramps and bathroom adaptations.

Queensland Home Adapt Loan

The Queensland Home Adapt Loan is a low-interest loan available through the Queensland Department of Housing. It provides financial assistance to home owners with a disability or those who have a household member with a disability, so they can modify their property to enable the person with the disability to remain living in their home.

Applicants who are eligible for this loan can borrow between \$5,000 and \$30,000 at a fixed interest rate.

Useful organisations – continued

Modifications can be small or large, however they must be authorised by a qualified occupational therapist (this service is provided free through the Department of Housing). Modifications may include: access ramps; widening hallways or doorways; and modifying your kitchen, toilet and bathroom.

This loan is being trialled in the pilot location of north Brisbane for 12 months from May 2004. Please contact Housing Loans on 1300 654 322 to find out if the loan is available in your area and if you are eligible to apply.

Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Department of Veterans' Affairs provides home modification services to eligible clients with its Rehabilitation of Appliance Program.

The program provides appliances for self-help and rehabilitation purposes, and surgical aids for home requirements.

Home modifications are only provided where the entitled person is unable to safely use existing facilities and where simple aids/non-structural modifications do not provide sufficient assistance to maintain an appropriate level of independence or safety. Home modifications are not provided in public housing dwellings owned by the Queensland Department of Housing.

Disability Services Queensland

Disability Services Queensland has two Statewide programs to assist people with a disability. These programs provide grant monies to individuals, rather than directly to organisations. Home modifications are not a core business of either program, but in some instances clients may be able to access monies for these purposes.

The two programs are:

- The Adult Lifestyle Support Program for adults with a disability between the ages of 18 and 65 years; and
- The Family Support Program established to provide flexible, responsive support for households who have a child or children with a disability, especially where the family has complex needs and requires a range of support services to strengthen their ability to care for their child/children and participate in the community.

Useful organisations – continued

Equipment

The following organisations provide advice on equipment, including trialling equipment to make your home more accessible.

Deafness Resources Australia

Deafness Resources Australia develops and distributes a specialised, comprehensive, up-to-date range of resources and provides consultation and referral in this field.

Deafness Resources Australia provides a range of deafness related products and services that include devices to access television, telephone, doorbells and alarms and also a wide range of relevant technology, such as teletypewriters (TTYs), alarm clocks and telephone amplifiers.

Independent Living Centre Association of Queensland Inc.

The Independent Living Centre is a Statewide, non-government, non-profit, community-based equipment information and advisory resource service that provides:

- information about equipment, assistive technology, building and access design, and available resources for people with disabilities, injuries and age-related difficulties; and
- professional, unbiased advice to help people make informed decisions about the most appropriate equipment or other practical solutions.

The Centre is staffed by occupational therapists and has a display and advisory service covering a broad range of equipment and home modifications.

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme, Queensland Health

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme provides eligible Queensland residents, with permanent or stabilised disabilities, access to subsidised provision of approved aids and equipment.

The range of aids and equipment is selected primarily to assist people to live at home and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

Useful organisations – continued

The aids and equipment provided by the Scheme include communication, continence, daily living, mobility, orthoses, oxygen and medical grade footwear.

Royal Blind Foundation

Royal Blind Foundation services are available to people who are blind or vision impaired. The Foundation sells adaptive equipment to assist people with daily living and individual assistance to maintain independence in their home. A catalogue is available in printed and tape form and can also be accessed on their web site at www.rbf.org.au. Referrals can be made by individuals or other community service organisations.

Technical Aid to the Disabled Queensland Inc.

Technical Aid to the Disabled is a not-for-profit organisation which coordinates the work of volunteers to provide technical assistance to people with a disability in Queensland.

The organisation designs and constructs specific personalised aids, modifies existing aids, and refurbishes and delivers recycled computers.

Advice

The following services provide free advice and referral to assist older people and people with a disability to better access areas in and around their home.

Commonwealth Carelink Centre

The Commonwealth Carelink Centre is a free and confidential information service for older persons, people with a disability, carers, health professionals and other service providers.

Centres are able to provide information on the kinds of services that are available within the community such as accommodation, transport, health and mobility aids, home maintenance and modification, respite, personal care, home help, legal and advocacy services, social support and volunteer opportunities.

There are over 60 Commonwealth Carelink Centres throughout Australia.

Useful organisations – continued

Disability Information Awareness Line, Disability Services Queensland

The Queensland Disability Information Awareness Line is a free, Statewide information, resource and referral service that can also be contacted for information about home modification providers in the community.

The service produces a range of publications and resources to assist people with a disability, their family, friends, carers and service providers.

Smart Housing, Queensland Department of Housing

The Department of Housing's Smart Housing initiative aims to help Queenslanders to plan and build new homes that are more sustainable over time.

Smart Housing is good practice in designing, planning and building homes to make them more socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. In a Smart House, you will be able to move around more easily, feel safer, save money and help the environment as well as being able to live there through all stages of your life.

The Department, through its Smart Housing initiative, supports the principles of Universal Design, and has produced booklets on 'Universal Housing Design' and 'Safety and Security' which can be found on the Smart Housing web site.

Visit the Smart Housing web site at www.smarthousing.qld.gov.au for more information.

Services

The following list of organisations is provided to assist you to modify your home to make it more accessible. Please note that most of the following organisations may charge a **fee for their services**. This list is not exhaustive.

Contact details for the following organisations are provided in the **Home Access Useful Contacts** booklet.

Useful organisations – continued

Archicentre

Archicentre offers architectural services to homebuyers, new home builders and renovators with registered architects. Archicentre provides technical advice through a range of property inspections, the Architects Advice reports and free seminars.

Association of Consultants in Access Australia Inc.

Association of Consultants in Access Australia is a national membership-based association for people working to achieve accessibility of the built environment for people with a disability and older people, including homes.

The Association holds a directory of accredited access consultants who provide auditing and design services including appraisal of plans and design drawings, design brief development, design detailing, design reviews, and complete design and documentation that produce accessibility. It may relate to whole or substantial parts of buildings, landscapes and the like and also to specific elements such as ramps, kitchens, communication systems and navigation aids.

Building Services Authority Queensland

Building Services Authority provides information and advice to consumers and contractors throughout Queensland.

The Authority is able to provide information ranging from free licence checks and details about licence holders, through to information on its Statutory Insurance Scheme and dispute handling procedures.

The Authority offers three types of contracts that together cater for the full range of domestic building, renovation and maintenance work. These contracts strike a good balance between the interests of consumers and building contractors.

The Authority is the body which accredits individuals as Building Certifiers. It is also responsible for investigating complaints and conducting audits of building certifier's work. You can confirm a certifier's accreditation free of charge by contacting any Building Services Authority office or visit www.bsa.qld.gov.au.

Useful organisations – continued

Home Assist Secure Services and Home and Community Care Home Modification Services

Home Assist Secure and Home and Community Care Home Modification Services can provide a list of contractors and/or builders who have worked with the Services, older people and people with a disability on home modifications.

Independent Living Centre Association of Queensland Inc.

The Independent Living Centre can provide a list of experienced contractors and architects who can assist with home modifications.

OT Australia Queensland (Australian Association of Occupational Therapists – Queensland Inc.)

Occupational therapy is a health care profession that offers skills and advice aimed at increasing a person's safety, independence and quality of life.

The Association can provide a list of private sector occupational therapists that specialise in the home modification field throughout Queensland.

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www.arc.org.uk/about_arth/booklets/6017/6017.htm

Canada Safety Council, *Home Adaptation Checklist*
www.safety-council.org/info/seniors/adapt.html

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *Maintaining Seniors' Independence Through Home Adaptations*
www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/burema/rep/masein/index.cfm

Disabled Living Foundation
www.dlf.org.uk/factsheets/

EnableNet
www.enable.net.au

Home and Community Care Program
www.health.qld.gov.au/hacc

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www.ilcnsw.asn.au/database.cfm

Independent Living Centre Queensland, Equipment Information Sheets
www.ilcqld.org.au/infosheets/index.htm

Independent Living Centre Queensland, *Great Gadgets for the Home*
www.ilcqld.org.au/infosheets/homemods/factsheet-24.htm

National Resource Centre on Supportive Housing and Home Modification,
The Do-Able Renewable Home
www.homemods.org/library/drhome

OT Australia – Australian Association of Occupational Therapists
www.ausot.com.au

OT Australia, Queensland – Australian Association of Occupational
 Therapists
www.otqld.org.au

Queensland Department of Housing, Smart Housing *Universal Design Booklet*
www.housing.qld.gov.au/builders/smart_housing/universal/uhd_booklet_index.htm

Queensland Department of Housing, Smart Housing *Safety and Security Booklet*
www.housing.qld.gov.au/builders/smart_housing/ss_booklet/index.htm

Queensland Department of Housing, Smart Housing
www.smarthousing.qld.gov.au

Over 100 ways to improve access at home

Feedback form

*We welcome your feedback, so we can keep improving our service to you.
 Please mail your completed form to us, reply paid.*

- 1 Did the advice in the booklet assist you to remain living in your home? Yes No
- 2 Did you use any suggestions in the booklet to make changes to your home? Yes No
- 3 Which suggestion/s in the booklet did you find most useful? And why?

- 4 Were any of the suggestions too difficult to undertake? Yes No
 If yes, please specify:

- 5 Do you have any other suggestions to improve access at home? Yes No
 If yes, please specify:

- 6 Are there any other barriers you face at home not mentioned in the booklet? Yes No
 If yes, please specify:

- 7 Please rate each section of the booklet on how useful it was:

	Extremely	Mostly	Partly	Not at all	Why?
Entering the home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Internal hallways, doorways & windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Bathroom/toilet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Cupboards, wardrobes and drawers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Lighting, controls, taps and flooring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Outdoor areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Tenants' rights and responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Useful organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Bibliography and web sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Thank you for taking the time to give us your comments.

For more information or if you would like to provide feedback using other formats, please contact:

The Coordinator
Home Access
Queensland Department of Housing
GPO Box 690
Brisbane QLD 4001

Telephone: 07 3238 3996

Email: homeaccess@housing.qld.gov.au

Web site: www.housing.qld.gov.au/homeaccess

If calling the **National Relay Service** 133 677 (textphone and modem callers) or **Speech to Speech Relay** 1300 555 727, please ask for telephone number 07 3238 3996.

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