

Using your wheelchair

Useful tips to help with your wheelchair



*because
you matter*

**St Nicholas
Hospice Care**

A Registered Charity No. 287773



Need to talk?

01284 766133

stnicholashospicecare.org.uk

This leaflet provides information to help you become familiar with your wheelchair.

You will find step-by-step guides demonstrating how to get in and out of your wheelchair as well as useful tips such as assembling and disassembling your wheelchair.

If you have any further questions after reading this leaflet, the Hospice's contact details can be found on the back page.



The wheelchair

Please note: Not all wheelchairs are the same and there may be subtle differences. A self propelling wheelchair will have larger wheels.



Getting into the wheelchair

- Make sure the brakes are on



- Swing the footplates away by releasing the catches.
You can also push the heel loops forward and lift up the footplates



- Lower yourself onto the seat, supporting yourself on the armrests
- Swing the footplates forward - they will lock automatically
Rest your feet on the footplates, heels against the loops which should be pushed back

Getting out of the wheelchair

- Make sure that the brakes are on
- Make sure the front castors are pointing forward
(See picture)



- Swing the footplates away by releasing the catches

- Place hands on armrests, move forward in the seat, bend slightly forward and place both feet firmly on the ground, not on the footplates, and push yourself upwards
Get someone to help if you need to



Folding the wheelchair

Detaching the footplates

- Pull the catch towards the back of the chair to swing the footplates away. Lift up to release from the pivot pins



Removing the armrests

- Turn the lever and at the same time lift the armrest out of the sockets by holding the middle of the arm pad



Folding the backrest

- Slide both plungers upwards and pull the backrest down



Folding the seat

- Remove the seat cushion. Grasp the middle of the seat canvas at the front and back and pull upwards



Unfolding the wheelchair

Lifting the backrest

- Lift the handles up and ensure the plungers have dropped into place



Opening the seat

- Pull the handles outward a little
- Push down on the sides of the seat with the palms of your hands, making sure the lap belt is out of the way



Replacing the armrests

- Put the armrest tubes into the armrest sockets
- If it doesn't click into place, flick the lever until it locks



Replacing the footplates

- Open the footplates if necessary to check which one is left and which is right
- Locate the two holes (on footplate) and the two pins (on wheelchair)
- Line the holes up with the pins and drop the footplate down onto the pins

Lifting the wheelchair into a car boot

- Fold as described, removing all attachments to make the chair lighter to move and more manageable

Please note: if you don't remove the armrests, do not hold the armrests to lift the chair



- Hold the chair as close to your body as possible
- If the chair has large wheels, apply the brakes and hold a wheel rim and the frame
- If the chair has small wheels, hold the frame
- Try to hold the chair as low as possible on the frame to help you lift it high enough to put it into the car boot
- Bend your knees to lift, try to keep your back straight
- Try not to bend or twist
- You can lift the chair in stages by placing a car blanket on the lip of the boot to rest the chair and change hand position
- Handle and store the cushion with care



Kerbs

Getting up a kerb

- To go up a kerb onto a pavement, the person assisting you should push down with one foot on either the left or right tipping lever, situated between the rear wheels
- At the same time they should pull the push handles backward. The combined action will lift the front castors off the road and the chair can be rolled forward to lower the castors on to the pavement
- By continuing to move forward the rear wheels will ride up over the kerb

Getting down a kerb

- Position the wheelchair so that the front wheels face the kerb squarely
- Put one foot on the tipping lever and grip the handles firmly
- Push down on the tipping lever and handles
- Balance the wheelchair on its back wheels and move it forward
- Slide the back wheels down the kerb, while supporting some of the wheelchair's weight yourself
- Keep the front wheels up
- Make sure both back wheels touch the ground gently and at the same time. Then, gently lower the front wheels.
- **Alternatively** - lowering the wheelchair backwards may be easier for heavier users and older people assisting you. But take extra care. Keep a look out for traffic if you are coming down backwards into a road
- Check that the road is clear before turning the wheelchair around and crossing
- **Never** tip the wheelchair forward

Moving a self propelled wheelchair

- To move the chair, reach as far back on to the hand rims (not the tyre) as possible and at the same time, give a long push forward, rather than lots of small pushes
- When going up a slope, lean forward in the chair as you push. When going down a slope, lean back in the chair
- To move to the right, hold the right hand rim steady and push the left hand rim forward
- To slow down, grasp the hand rims - **do not** use the parking brakes
- To make a tight turn, turn the wheels in opposite directions. For example, to turn to the left, push the right hand rim forward and pull the left hand rim backward



Conditions of loan

Your wheelchair

- belongs to St Nicholas Hospice Care
- is loaned to you and must be returned if you no longer need it
- must be maintained and repaired by St Nicholas Hospice Care

To keep safe

- your wheelchair must only be used by you
- if you travel in a vehicle seated in your wheelchair, you should make sure it is clamped to the floor and use a seat belt attached to the vehicle. Any lap restraints on the wheelchair cannot be considered as vehicle restraints
- please check if your wheelchair is “crash tested” before travelling in a vehicle seated in your wheelchair
- your wheelchair must not be altered or fitted with any attachments without our agreement

You are responsible for

- keeping your wheelchair clean, storing it in a safe, dry place and contacting St Nicholas Hospice Care to report any issues with the wheelchair
- letting us know if you move home
- letting us know when you no longer require the wheelchair

Get in touch

If you have any further questions about St Nicholas Hospice Care, please get in touch:

01284 766133

enquiries@stnh.org.uk

www.stnicholashospicecare.org.uk



We offer a **24 hour telephone advice line**

01284 766133

for all patients and family members as well as healthcare professionals including general practitioners, district nurses and carers.

St Nicholas Hospice Care

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Donations Centre

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This leaflet is available in different formats upon request.
Please contact the Marketing and Communications
Department for further information on 01284 766133.

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