



The following organisations and local contacts can also help:

- Independent Living Centre NSW
Phone: 1300 885 886
- Aged and Disability Services at your local council
- Occupational Therapy Department at your local hospital.
- Aged care assessment team at your local health centre.

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The information in this brochure is intended as a guide only and is subject to change at any time without notice. It does not replace the relevant legislation.

For further enquiries
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A guide to using motorised wheelchairs



What is a **motorised wheelchair?**

A motorised wheelchair is a mobility aid with two or more wheels and a maximum speed of 10 km/h on level ground. Motorised wheelchairs have been specially built to transport a person who is unable to walk, or has difficulty in walking. People using them are defined as pedestrians under the NSW Road Rules.

What is the law regarding motorised wheelchairs?

- A motorised wheelchair user is deemed to be a pedestrian under the NSW Road Rules.
- A motorised wheelchair must not travel along the road unless it is impracticable to travel along the footpath or nature strip next to the road.
- If you must travel on the road, keep as far to the left or right side of the road as practicable, and face approaching traffic.
- A motorised wheelchair must not be capable of travelling faster than 10 km/h on level ground.
- The unladen mass must not be more than 110 kilograms.
- It is an offence to use your motorised wheelchair if your blood alcohol level is 0.05 or more.

Licensing and registration

A motorised wheelchair:

- Does not require a licence or third party insurance.
- Does not need to be registered.

General skills you need to use a motorised wheelchair

There is no formal test needed to use a motorised wheelchair, but if you are concerned about your operating skills, your doctor or health care professional may be able to arrange an assessment.

To use a motorised wheelchair safely you need to be able to:

- Operate the controls and manoeuvre the wheelchair.
- Keep your balance and adjust your body position when travelling across uneven ground.
- Spot obstacles and avoid collisions.
- Judge speeds and distances.
- Make good judgements to protect your safety and others.

What makes a safe route?

Plan a route that allows you to stay on the footpath for all of your journey. Know where there are kerb ramps or driveways you can use for safe road crossings.

If possible, check out a new route beforehand to make sure you can use it with a motorised wheelchair:

Contact your local council's Access Committee, which may be able to provide information to help plan a safe route, such as the location of kerb ramps.

Safety tips

- **Take extra care when leaving the kerb to cross the road.**
- **If there is no footpath and you must be on the road, travel along quieter streets, keep to the side, and face oncoming traffic.**
- **Attach a safety flag to your wheelchair so it is above your head. This increases your visibility to other drivers and pedestrians.**
- **If you must travel at night, lights and reflectors should be used to increase your visibility.**
- **If possible, attach rear-view mirrors on your wheelchair for checking behind you.**
- **Avoid highways, major roads, roundabouts and areas used by heavy vehicles.**
- **Wherever you are using a motorised wheelchair, you should not endanger or obstruct the path of any person or vehicle. Always be prepared to stop.**