

Mobility and Seating Adaptations Checklist

How to use this list

The Shambhala international working group on Accessibility and disability (A&D) is charged with helping and guiding accessibility efforts for both physical environments and electronic media. Too often accessibility guides provide long lists of expensive to implement solutions. In reality, many effective solutions to accessibility challenges are homemade. Making the adaptation your self can be both cost effective and precisely tailored to the situation at hand. So, in reading these notes, think of how you might be able to put together a system that will work for you. You also might want to join the accessibility forum group in the Shambhala network site ([URL here](#)) as well as view the list of resources for mobility problems we have put together ([URL here](#))

For All Centers:

Seating adaptations: *This is a high priority and is an increasingly important issue as our sangha ages.*

- ☐ Does your center maintain a varied supply of floor seating materials?
 - *Consider including zafus and sitting benches in addition to gomdons*
 - *Have a variety of cushions and small pillows available*
- ☐ For those who need to sit in a chair for practice, are chairs available that are appropriate for several hours of practice?
 - *Are they of the similar standard and quality as zabutons and gomdons?*
- ☐ In selecting chairs, consider the dynamics of a proper sitting position over aesthetics.
 - *The front of the chair seat should not be higher than the back. The pelvis should tilt forwards or have no tilt, rather than tilting backward. This is the single most important factor for selecting chairs.*
- ☐ Select chairs in the middle range in terms of depth and height.
- ☐ For long hours of practice cushioning is essential; choose chairs with 3-4 inches
 - *Foot rests should ensure that shorter people do not have to practice with their feet dangling in the air and also insulate stocking feet from cold floors*
- ☐ Are all people sitting in chairs required to sit at the back of the room?
 - *Where possible, consider chairs at the side rather than in back.*
- ☐ Is there a workable alternative to low puja tables for those who use chairs?
 - *It may be possible to add longer legs to some existing puja tables.*

- ☐ Are there thick rugs or mats? How thick is the carpeting?
 - Avoid carpeting, rugs, or mats thicker than ½ inch, secure rugs and mats carefully.

Medium Size Centers:

Wheelchair Adaptations:

- ☐ Are places for wheelchairs considered when planning for programs at your center?
- ☐ Do program application forms include a question asking whether the person has any disability and requesting information about what would help that individual to fully participate?
- ☐ Can transportation be provided when needed for program participants?
- ☐ Are there any steps required to gain access to the center or in the route to any of the shrine rooms and other facilities of the center? If so where?
 - *Any steps at all are a barrier for wheelchairs and particularly a powered wheelchair weighing over two hundred pounds.*
- ☐ Does your centre have an elevator?
- ☐ Does your building have ramps, curb cuts, handicapped vehicle unloading areas, designated and level parking near the entrance?
- ☐ Usability of Rest Rooms: Is the lavatory seat rim approximately 17-19 inches high (the higher end is better) with grab bars within easy reach? Is the door at least 30 inches or wider? (32-36 inches is recommended)
- ☐ Has the director and/or other non-disabled member of the sangha spent at least half a day in a wheelchair at the center, including going to shrine rooms, bathrooms and all other public areas, as well as entering and leaving the center?

Land Centers:

- ☐ Has the *ADA Checklist for Barrier Removal*, been used to survey the centers accessibility?
 - *This document can be downloaded from <http://www.ada.gov/checkweb.htm>*
- ☐ Are bathing facilities and beds available to people in wheelchairs?
- ☐ Have accessibility design resources been consulted in the design and implementation of renovations or new construction?