

COUNTER HEIGHTS

- Height of lower section
- Split level counters are desired for universal access
- Note that screens may restrict communication

DESIRABLE

750 mm - 850 mm

APPROACH TO BUILDING

- The main entrance should be accessible to people with physical disabilities.

PARKING

- One disabled parking bay for every twenty five parking spaces.
- Size of perpendicular parking space **4800 mm x 2400 mm**
- If there is more than one disabled parking bay, add **900 mm** between bays for optimum access.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- All escape routes should be usable by people with disabilities.
- Emergency alarm system should be linked with general lighting for visual alert.

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Access for all

**A guide to creating a barrier-free
built environment for people with
physical or sensory disabilities**



Irish Wheelchair Association

National organisation of people with limited mobility

What are the Building Regulations and Part M ?

The Building Regulations (Part A to Part M) relate to construction and design of the built environment. Part M is entitled **Access for People with Disabilities**. These regulations were enacted in 1992, amended in 1997, and pertain to the Building Control Act 1990.

The regulations were amended in 2000 to include a provision that houses that received planning permission after 1 January 2001 should have a downstairs WC and level access at entry.

Part M is divided into 5 sections:

- M1 Access and Use
- M2 Sanitary Conveniences
- M3 Audience for Spectator Facilities
- M4 Definition of People with Disabilities
- M5 Application of this Part

**Always
be alert for
new
developments**

What does Part M apply to ?

Part M applies to all new public buildings, common areas of apartment blocks, houses that received planning permission after 1 January 2001 and material alterations, for example, change of use to existing buildings, since June 1992. If an extension is added to an existing dwelling, Part M will apply only if this extension creates a new dwelling with separate access.

Part M operates under a process of self-regulation. It is the responsibility of the architect to ensure that the design complies with Part M regulations. Strict enforcement is required if universal access is to become a reality.

SHOWERS

- If washing facilities are provided, please note that level deck showers are preferable to baths.
- Dimension of cubicles **2700 mm X 2000 mm (Desirable and Minimum)**

CORRIDORS / PASSAGEWAYS

	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Minimum</u>
• Width for public access	1800 mm	
• Without public access	1800 mm	1200 mm
• Turning space	1800 mm	1500 mm

LIFTS

- A lift must be provided where the net area of a two storey building is **280 m² per floor**
- Controls: Must be situated between **900 mm and 1200 mm from floor** and should incorporate tactile indicators
- Lifts should be fitted with half length mirror at back wall
- Lift dimension: **Desirable 2000 mm² x 2000 mm²**
Minimum 1000 mm² X 1400 mm²

ENTRANCE and LOBBY

- Dimension **2000 mm² x 2000 mm² (Desirable)**
or 1500 mm² x 2000 mm² (Minimum)
- Signage should be clear, concise and raised where appropriate
- All public buildings should have loop systems installed, to accommodate people with hearing impairments.

STAIRS and STEPS

Desirable & Minimum

- Tread 280 mm
- Risers 150 mm
- Two sets of handrails must be :
 - Fitted for all ramps/steps/stairs 840mm (height)
 - Beyond first and last step by 300mm

All steps must have uniform depth and height. The first and last step should provide a permanent visual contrast with the rest of the steps.

TOILETS: PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Toilet size should be adequate to accommodate the wheelchair user and assistants. Unisex accessible toilets should be independent of other sanitary accommodation.

Desirable & Minimum

- Toilet 450 mm (height)
- Wash hand basin 800 mm (height)
- Knee clearance of 700 mm (height)
- Three grab rails should be positioned by WC
 - Horizontal 700 mm (height)
 - Vertical 800 mm (height)
 - Folding horizontal 450 mm (height)
- Mirror 900 mm (height)
- Hand towel dispenser 1100 mm (height)
- Dimension of cubicle **Desirable 2700 mm x 2000mm**
Minimum 2000 mm x 1500 mm

It is recommended that doors open outwards if the toilet is not larger than **2000 mm x 1500 mm** to accommodate powered wheelchairs.

TOILETS : HOUSING

Dimension of cubicles where storey area is more than 45m²

Desirable 2000 mm x 1500 mm **Minimum 1500 mm x 1400 mm**

Dimension of cubicles where storey area less than 45m²

Desirable 2000 mm x 1500 mm **Minimum 1500 mm x 850 mm**

What is the Technical Guidance Document ?

The Technical Guidance Document (TGD) describes what is adequate and practicable under the Building Regulations. What is adequate and practicable is argued through case law and the Minimum Design Criteria as outlined in the TGD.

The minimum design criteria are referred to in the checklist on page 4.

**It is your right
to find out
whether
Part M
is being
compiled with!**

What to do if you suspect a building contravenes Part M, or you wish to ensure it complies with Part M

For buildings in public areas (for example, a streetscape):

- Contact the Planning Section of your Local Authority;
- Ask to view development plans for the area;
- Use Checklist on page 4;
- Link with local expertise to see if a building complies with Part M.

For both private and public buildings:

- Look at the public notice seeking planning permission on the building site;
- Ask to view plans in the Planning Section in the local Corporation or County Council.

Use enclosed Checklist and link with local expertise to see if it complies with Part M.

What to do if the plans or building do not comply with Part M

- Ensure plans are amended;
- Make an appointment with the Building Control Officer in your Local Authority to discuss access;
- Inform local Access Groups.

What reference material is available ?

Available from the Government Publications Office

☎ 01 647 6000

*Building Regulations
Part M and Technical Guidance Document*

*Building Regulations
Part B - Fire Precautions*

A Strategy for Equality

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities.

Available from National Disability Authority, Clyde Rd, Dublin 4.

☎ 01 608 0400 Email: building@nda.ie

Buildings for Everyone: Inclusion, Access and Use

Prompt
action
prevents
long-term
barriers

Where is help and expertise available?

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| • IWA Housing Officer | ☎ 01 818 6400 |
| • Comhairle / CIC Network | ☎ 01 874 7503 or Local CIC |
| • Local Access Groups | IWA / Local CIC |
| • Building Control Officers | Local Authority Offices |

Checklist

This Checklist can be used as a guide to find out if a building is accessible to people with physical and/or sensory disabilities.

The measurements listed below show both the DESIRABLE measurement / criteria required to meet the needs of people with disabilities, the MINIMUM measurements / criteria are the legal requirements referred to in the TGD Part M. Please note: these MINIMUM measurements do not always meet the needs of all people with disabilities.

FOOTPATHS

	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Minimum</u>
• Width	1800 mm	1200 mm
• Dishing/dipping gradient	1 : 20	1 : 12
• Dishing/dipping width (level surface)	1400 mm	1000 mm
• Kerb edge - maximum height marked with a strong colour contrast	20 mm	

DOORS

	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Minimum</u>
• Main Entrance	900 mm	800 mm
• Internal doors	900 mm	750 mm
• Lift door	900 mm	800 mm
• Glass doors must be visually identified	✓	✓
• Handles must be easily operated by people with disabilities	✓	✓
• Doors should not be heavily sprung and should open out	✓	✓

SLOPES / RAMPS

	<u>Desirable</u>	<u>Minimum</u>
• Width	1200 mm	1000 mm
• Gradient	1 : 20	1 : 12
• Turning width at either end	1700 mm	1500 mm
• All surfaces must be non-slip	✓	✓