This guide provides information about good practice for the design of buildings that are safe and easy to use for everyone.

About this guide: Designing buildings for access and usability

Find out what this guide is for and how to use it, and learn about universal design.

(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/d-access/accessible-buildings/about/)

1. Building user activity: Designing buildings for access and usability

Understanding how users interact with the built environment is important for designing buildings that best meet the needs of all building users.

(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/d-access/accessible-buildings/user-activity/)

2. Surrounding area and transport: Designing buildings for access and usability

How building users travel to and from a building is important for the design of the site.

(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/d-access/accessible-buildings/surrounding-area/)
3. Pedestrian circulation: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

All building users are pedestrians at some point and need a well-designed, constructed and maintained external pedestrian environment.

4. Vehicle circulation and parking: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

Vehicle circulation routes should be logical, safe and easy to follow.


5. Building entrances: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

Design building entrances so that they are as easy to use as possible for a wide range of people.


6. Internal circulation: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

Effective internal circulation is critical to the safe and easy movement of people around buildings.


7. Interior space: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

Design interior spaces and facilities such as kitchens and toilets so they best meet the needs of users.


8. Fixtures and fittings: Designing buildings for access and usability

**GUIDANCE**

Design and place fixtures and fittings such as seating, switches, controls and sanitary fittings in toilets so that they are easily accessed and used.

9. Building types: Designing buildings for access and usability

Transport buildings, sports facilities, retail premises and historic buildings have particular issues affecting their use which need to be considered.

10. Means of escape: Designing buildings for access and usability

When designing a building and escape routes, consider how everyone can evacuate the building quickly and safely in an emergency.

11. Building management: Designing buildings for access and usability

An Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Manual needs to be prepared to record information relevant to the use of the built environment.

Related information

New Zealand Standard NZS 4121:2001 – Design for access and mobility: buildings and associated facilities [PDF]