

# Taking a Wheelchair Up and Down Stairs and Curbs

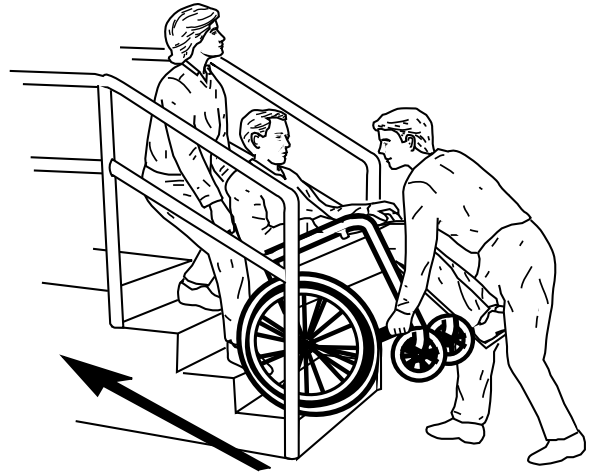


THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

## Going up the stairs

**Two people are needed to get the wheelchair up the stairs. Do NOT try this with one person.** It is unsafe. The stronger of the two people should be behind the wheelchair. This person will do most of the lifting.

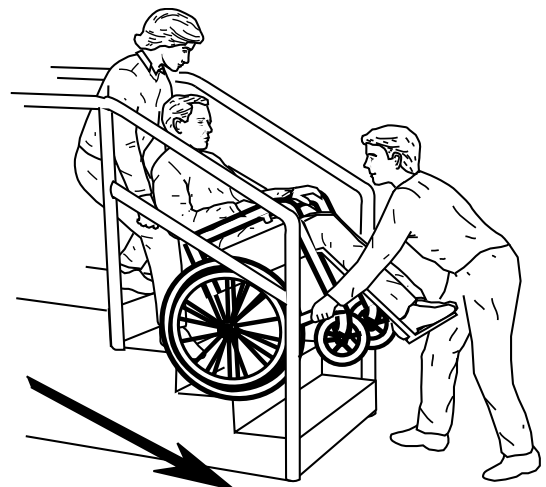
1. Back the wheelchair up to the stairs.
2. Get into position:
  - One helper gets on the stairs and holds the handles. **Make sure that the handle grips do not slip off.** Have one foot on the step above the wheelchair and the other foot on the next higher step.
  - The other helper gets in front of the wheelchair and holds onto its frame just above the front wheels. **Do NOT hold onto any parts that can come off, such as the footrests or armrests.**
  - Both helpers should bend their knees and arch their backs before lifting.
3. Together, both helpers tilt the wheelchair back finding the balance point where only the back wheels are on the ground.
4. Gently lift and roll the wheelchair up onto the next step. If the person in the wheelchair is able to help, he or she should pull back on the wheels.
5. The helpers should reposition themselves on each step after each lift.
6. After going up all the steps, keep the chair tilted back until the front wheels clear the top step. Gently lower the wheelchair so that all four wheels are on the ground.



## Going down the stairs

**You will need two people to get the wheelchair down the stairs. Do NOT try this with one person.** It is unsafe. The stronger of the two people should be behind the wheelchair. This person will do most of the lifting.

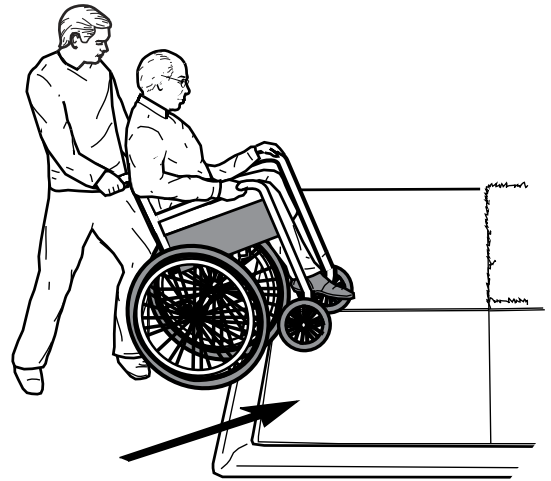
1. Roll the wheelchair forward to the stairs.
2. Get into position:
  - One helper gets in back of the wheelchair and holds onto the handles. **Make sure that the handle grips do not slip off.**



- The other helper gets on the stairs in front of the wheelchair and holds onto its frame just above the front wheels. **Do NOT hold onto any parts that can come off, such as the footrests or armrests.** Have one foot on the second step and one foot on the third step.
  - Both helpers should bend their knees and arch their backs before moving the wheelchair.
1. Together, both helpers tilt the wheelchair back finding the balance point where only the back wheels are on the ground.
  2. Gently roll the wheelchair down each step.
  3. The helpers should reposition themselves on each step after each lift.
  4. When the chair is at the bottom of the stairs, gently lower the wheelchair so that all four wheels are on the ground.

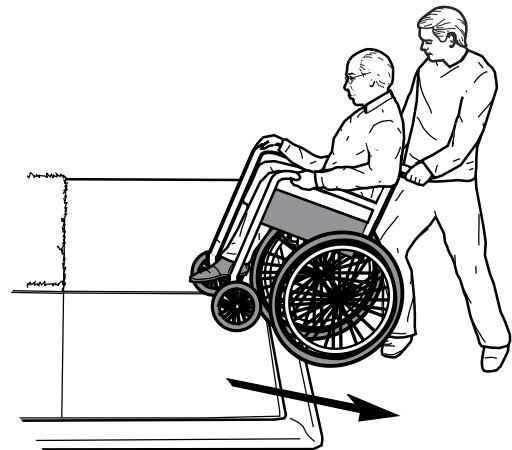
## Going up a curb

1. Push the front wheels of the wheelchair straight up to the curb.
2. Tip the wheelchair back and put the front wheels up on the curb.
3. Push the wheelchair forward until the back wheels are in contact with the curb.
4. Use your hip on the back of the wheelchair to push it forward and up onto the curb.



## Going down a curb

1. Turn the wheelchair around facing away from the curb.
2. Step carefully off the curb.
3. Slowly roll the back wheels off the curb, blocking the back with your hip.
4. Maintain a wheelie as you back the front wheels and legs away from the curb. Once cleared, slowly lower the front wheels and turn the wheelchair around to go forward.



**Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

The Library for Health Information is available to help you find more health information at (614) 293-3707 or e-mail: [health-info@osu.edu](mailto:health-info@osu.edu).