



# ADA Compliance Overview

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DISCLAIMER: Information included in this document is intended as a non-comprehensive resource and is for informational purposes only. It is not a determination of your legal rights and responsibilities under state or federal access laws. For complete ADA regulations, standards and guidelines contact the U.S. Department of Justice ADA Information hotline at 800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY) or visit the Department of Justice ADA information website at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

## Introduction

You want all your guests to feel welcome, no matter who your business caters to. You ensure the space is clean, products are easy to find and that your business is staffed with friendly, helpful employees.

**But have you taken the time to consider the needs of your guests with disabilities?**

## ADA Regulations and Guidelines for your Sites

[According to the CDC](#), it is estimated that there are 61 million adults—or 26% of the adult population—living with a disability in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990 to identify and accommodate the needs of people with disabilities.

As with most federal laws, there are extensive requirements that go into being ADA compliant and property owners must be aware of these components to make sure their sites conform to the ADA compliance guidelines. Violations of these guidelines can carry steep penalties. Federal regulations include a \$75,000 fine for a first violation and up to \$150,000 for any subsequent violation. Individual states and municipalities may have additional fines. People with disabilities also may be able to sue if a property does not conform to ADA guidelines.

### How to ensure your sites are ADA compliant.

Having managed many ADA site surveys, Sevan has compiled the most general requirements to be ADA compliant into three main ADA categories:

#### PARKING AREAS



#### BUILDING TRAVEL AND ACCESS



#### BUILDING ELEMENTS AND SPACES





## PARKING AREAS

Adequate parking spaces with highly visible signage is imperative for ADA compliance. The parking lot needs to have safe and distinct paths leading in and out of the site so guests with disabilities can easily travel from the parking lot to the building.

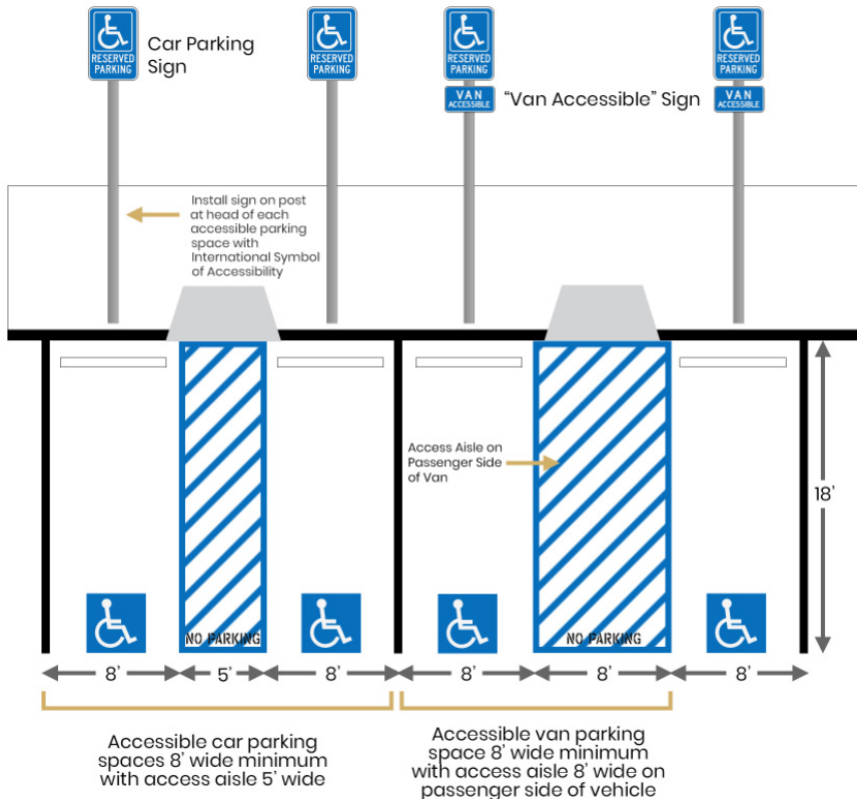


Image sourced from Asphalt Kingdom

The [ADA National Network](#) lists several requirements the lot needs to meet to be compliant:

**Handicap Signage Requirements:** All accessible parking spots must be clearly marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility mounted on a pole. The symbol, usually rendered in white, depicts an individual in a wheelchair painted on a blue background. These signs should be at least 60 inches off the ground from the parking surface.<sup>2</sup>

**Parking space requirements:** The width of the parking space is 8 feet for a car and 11 feet for a van. Note, the van space width can be 8 feet if access aisle next to the van is also 8 feet.<sup>2</sup>

**Access aisle requirements:** The access aisle is a rectangle with diagonal lines running through it next to the handicap parking spot. This aisle needs to be a minimum of 5 feet wide.<sup>2</sup>

**Number of accessible parking spaces:** [This chart](#) lists how many accessible and van accessible spaces are needed based on your lot size. Note that 1 out of every 6 of your accessible spaces needs to be van accessible.<sup>2</sup>

These parking spaces are required to be located so that people with disabilities can take the shortest route possible into the building. If you have multiple lots, the lot closest to the building needs to include the combined accessible spaces between lots and the spaces need to be located as close as possible to the building entrance.



## PARKING AREAS (CONTINUED)

Once the guest is on their way into the building, there needs to be a clear and accessible path provided for them. If the parking lot has a driving lane that separates the lot from the store, there needs to be a clear crosswalk between parking aisles for all guests to safely cross from the parking lot to the building. Regardless if accessible parking spots are located adjacent to the building, or across a driving lane, curb ramps are necessary to allow guests with disabilities to enter the building.

Curb ramps have many components to consider:

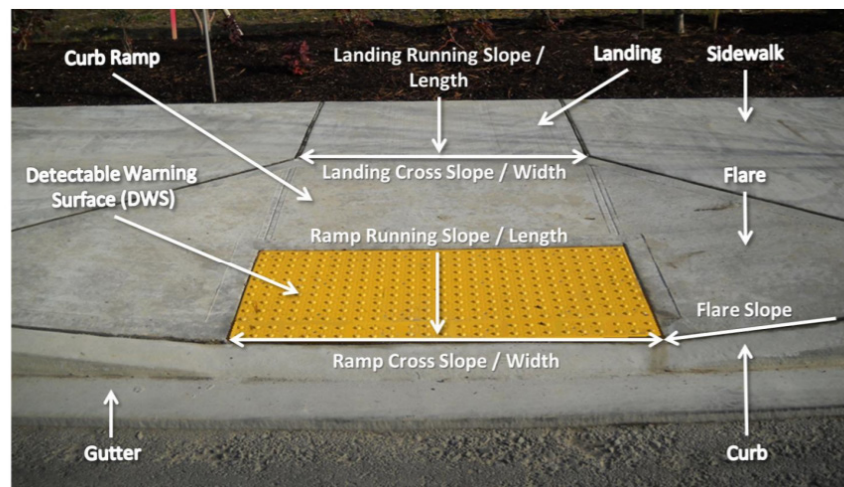
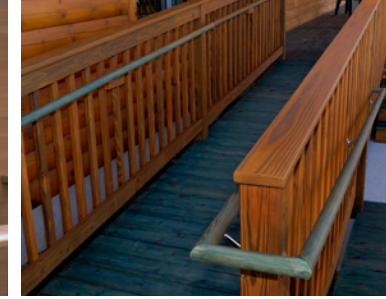


Image sourced from Snomish County

The ADA lists several requirements curb ramps must follow:

- If built after 1992, curb ramps should be no steeper than 1:12 (1 inch of rise for every 12 inches of width)<sup>3</sup>
- The cross slope of the ramp run itself may not exceed 2 percent (1:50). On a curb ramp, the cross slope is the slope perpendicular to [across] the direction of pedestrian travel on the ramp run.<sup>3</sup>
- The ramp, or ramp run, must be at least 36 inches wide, not including the flared sides<sup>3</sup>
- The ramp run must have detectable warnings (i.e., dome-shaped bumps) that extend the full width and depth of the ramp<sup>3</sup>
- Transitions from the ramp to the walkway, gutter, and street must be flush (level) and free of abrupt level changes<sup>3</sup>
- The gutter must have a slope of no more than 5 percent (1:20) toward the ramp<sup>3</sup>

The above are basic requirements listed by the ADA, but be sure to check state and municipality guidelines as they may have additional curb ramp requirements.

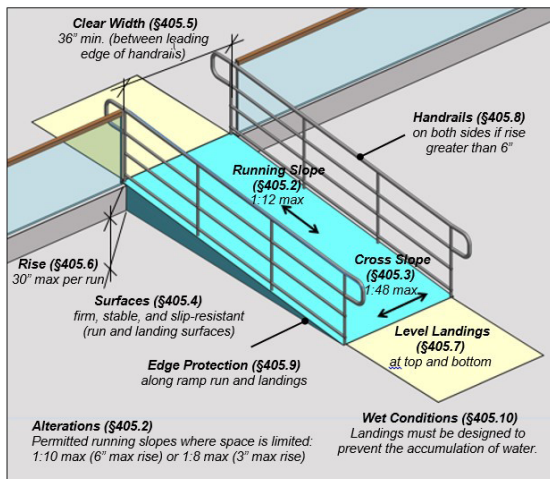


## BUILDING PATHS OF TRAVEL

The main components of the building include entrance and exit points and the floor space. When it comes to the floor space, it is self-evident that your floor and aisles should not be cluttered. Floor signage should not bleed into the aisles and hanging signage should be at least 80 inches off the ground. Aisle width is recommended to be 36 inches for guests with disabilities to be able to move around the space comfortably.

ADA compliant entrance and exit points can be trickier. These are high traffic areas that require adequate space for guests with disabilities to access and move freely. If the building is elevated and stairs are required to enter, a ramp needs to be installed. It may seem straightforward, but there are a lot of requirements that go into planning and designing a ramp.

The [ADA's 2010 design standards](#) lay out the following basic conditions for ramps:

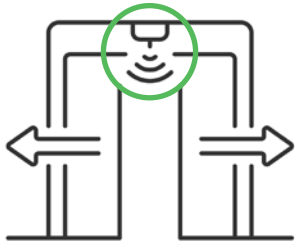


- ❑ Ramps may have a maximum slope of 1:12<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ Ramps must be a minimum of 36 inches wide<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ All edges must be protected to keep anyone from slipping off<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ All ramps shall have level top and bottom landings as wide as the ramp itself and be at least 60 inches long<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ Landing size must be at least five feet square<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ Ramps must have handrails on both sides if their rise is greater than 6 inches or their length is greater than 72 inches<sup>4</sup>

Image sourced from Building Code Trainers



## DOORS AND HARDWARE



There are several different components that go into an entryway, and doors have many ADA guidelines. Many larger buildings use motion-sensing automatic doors for entry and exit into a building, making it accessible for everyone.

Smaller buildings may use other types and styles of doors. According to [ADA Compliance](#), doorways should be

at least 32 inches wide to accommodate guests with disabilities.<sup>5</sup> However, when it comes to doorways, width considerations for wheelchairs and other mobility aids are not the only things that need to be taken into account.



The actual hardware for a doorway must also be considered. Doors that utilize hardware that requires a thumb to grip are not considered accessible. The ideal solution would be an electronic push-plate to automatically open a door but adding a lever push mechanism on the door should also suffice.



## BUILDING ELEMENTS AND SPACES

The most common areas guests will use inside a building include restrooms, fitting rooms, elevators and counter spaces. Most of these areas have similar requirements, but each space serves a unique purpose, so there are some specific guidelines that must be met in order for these areas to be ADA compliant.

[ADA Compliance](#) provides specific dimensions for fitting rooms and restrooms. Here are the specifications for the following areas:

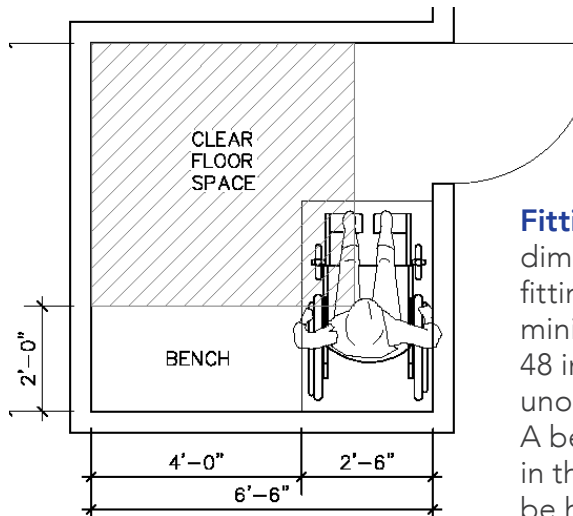


Image sourced from California ADA Compliance

**Fitting rooms:** The dimensions of an accessible fitting room must be a minimum of 30 inches x 48 inches with a 32-inch unobstructed entryway. A bench should be placed in the room and it should be hung at least 17 inches above the floor, have a depth of at least 20 inches and be 42 inches in length.<sup>7</sup>

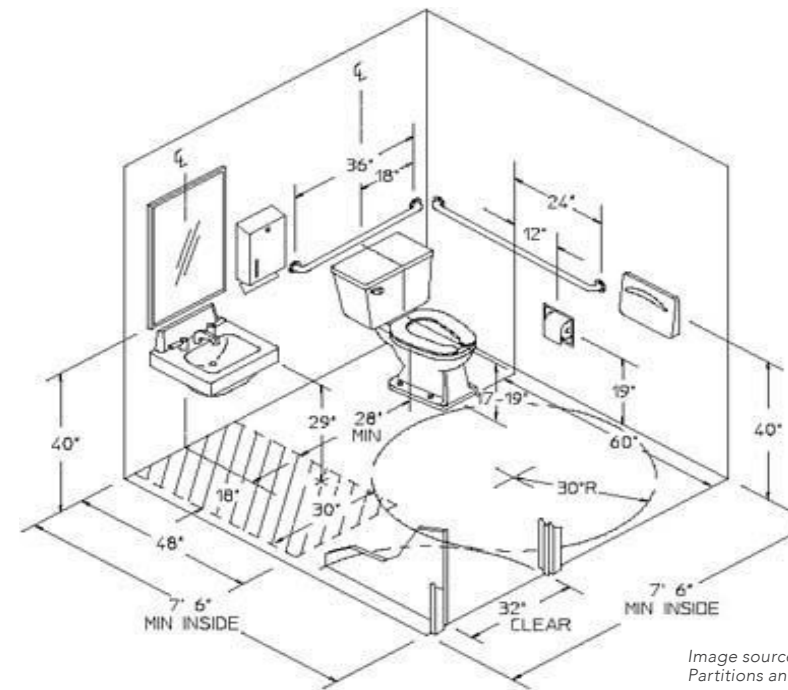


Image sourced from Partitions and Stalls

**Restrooms:** Restroom stalls should be hung at least 17 inches from the floor. Grab bars that are placed in accessible stalls should be 36 inches wide if placed on the rear wall or 42 inches wide if placed on the side wall. The stall entrance should have at least 32 inches of unobstructed doorway space.<sup>6</sup>





## BUILDING ELEMENTS AND SPACES *(CONTINUED)*

[ADA Compliance](#) provides specific dimensions for elevators and counters. Here are the specifications for the following areas:

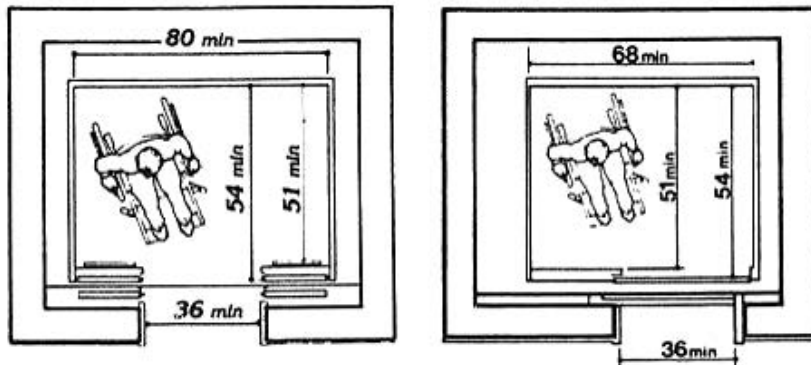


Image sourced from the ADA

**Elevators:** The width of an elevator door should be a minimum of 36 inches. The cabin should have a minimum depth of 51 inches. The cabin should have a width of at least 68 inches but if the elevator has a center opening door, the width should be at least 80 inches.<sup>8</sup>

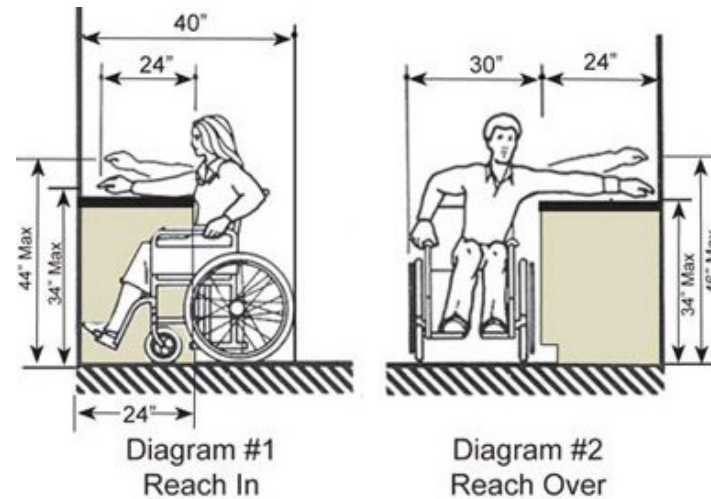


Image sourced from the ADA

**Counters:** An ADA compliant sales or service counter surface height shall be 38 inches maximum above the finish floor or ground. The top of the counter edge protection shall be 2 inches maximum above the top of the counter surface on the aisle side of the check-out counter. This portion of the counter must also be at least 36 inches long for a parallel approach or 30 inches long for a perpendicular approach.<sup>9</sup>

## Conclusion

Implementing ADA guidelines is necessary to be inclusive of all types of guests at your sites. Providing an easy to navigate parking lot, clear and convenient entry and exit points and ample room to navigate building spaces will help ensure all your guests return. Having these areas meet ADA compliance standards will also help avoid steep penalties and potentially will help decrease the chances people with disabilities get injured.

### **But these are only the basics for ADA compliance!**

There are 279 pages in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design which goes over in great detail what parts of a site has ADA regulations tied to it and what the specifics of those regulations are. There are also a number of cases where a particular site has extra regulations or has ADA compliance exceptions depending on the specifics of the site

(i.e. when the site was built, what type of business is occupying the site, the physical size of the site, etc.). If your business does not have a dedicated team with ADA compliance expertise, you could find yourself in violation of the ADA and be at risk of having to pay penalty fees until your sites becomes compliant.

# Next Steps

## 1 COLLECT DATA

**Conduct a thorough survey of all sites to identify where updates are needed.**

This step is essential in determining which sites are compliant and which are not. For instance, are there areas where aisles need to be widened? Do you have sidewalks, ramps or entrances that require repairs?

A comprehensive site survey will help you to understand what changes need to be made so that you can begin to prioritize them for action.

## 2 ASSESS AND PLAN

**Develop a plan for remodeling non-compliant sites.**

- **Prioritize sites:** How many sites need repairs? Which sites require the most repairs? Which are most critical?
- **Develop a timeline:** Determine the scope of work for the project and a reasonable timeline to completion, with dates for important milestones to reach.
- **Plan a budget:** Consider the longevity and adaptability of the proposed updates, and determine the level of investment needed.

## 3 CREATE SITE SPECIFIC ARCHITECTURAL PLANS

**Each site is unique which is why creating a site specific plan will help keep your project on track and on budget.**

- **Source materials and labor:** Ensure efficiency, quality and a sustainable supply chain when identifying materials and labor access.
- **Project manage updates across sites:** Seamless, effective project management across sites is critical to keep your program on time and on budget.



If you are looking for more guidance or if you would like to discuss solutions for your sites, please contact Sevan at [www.sevansolutions.com](http://www.sevansolutions.com).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

<sup>1</sup>Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic | CDC. (2019, March 8). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityand-health/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html#:~:text=61%20million%20adults%20in%20the,is%20highest%20in%20the%20South>

<sup>2</sup>Accessible Parking. (2012, September 19). ADA National Network. <https://adata.org/factsheet/parking>

<sup>3</sup>ADA Tool Kit: Curb Ramps and Pedestrian Crossings Under Title II of the ADA. (2007, May 7). ADA.Gov. <https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap6toolkit.htm>

<sup>4</sup>2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. (2010, September 15). ADA.Gov. <https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAstandards.htm>

<sup>5</sup>404 DOORS, DOORWAYS, AND GATES. (2016, March 2). ADA Compliance Directory. <https://www.ada-compliance.com/ada-compliance/404-doors-doorways-and-gates>

<sup>6</sup>604 WATER CLOSETS AND TOILET COMPARTMENTS. (2018, September 28). ADA Compliance Directory. <https://www.ada-compliance.com/ada-compliance/604-water-closets-and-toilet-compartments>

<sup>7</sup>803 DRESSING, FITTING, AND LOCKER ROOMS. (n.d.). ADA Compliance Directory. Retrieved June 3, 2021, from <https://www.ada-compliance.com/ada-compliance/803-dressing-fitting-and-locker-rooms>

<sup>8</sup>407 ELEVATORS. (2018, September 26). ADA Compliance Directory. <https://www.ada-compliance.com/ada-compliance/407-elevators>

<sup>9</sup>904 CHECK-OUT AISLES AND SALES AND SERVICE COUNTERS. (2018, September 28). ADA Compliance Directory. <https://www.ada-compliance.com/ada-compliance/904-check-out-aisles-and-sales-and-service-counters>

