

Disability Discrimination Act 2004 - FAQ

Updated 25th May 2005

General

What type of fixings should be used on door furniture?

Bolt-Through Fixing should be used on Lever Handles fitted on a round rose and pull handles to ensure that the door furniture does not come away from the door face when used to open the door, particularly if users also have to support themselves when they open the door.

What is recommended to assist people in wheel chairs to close a door when no door closer is fitted?

If a door has no closing device, then an additional horizontal pull handle should be fitted on the push side of the door for use by wheel chair users. This is particularly relevant to toilet doors.

What height should door furniture be fitted?

The fitting of lever and pull handles should be fitted at a constant height from the floor level throughout the building, between 900 and 1100mm. It is recommended to fit the lever handles 1000mm from the floor level.

Can knob furniture be used?

Knob furniture should not be used because people with problems such as arthritis can not grip the door furniture.

How can entrance doorways be sealed to prevent rain and drafts entering the building and still allow access for wheel chairs?

The entrance to a building should be fitted with a low threshold seal, which does not exceed 15mm high. This will be suitable for wheel chair access.

What is the maximum dimension that items may project from doors?

Items must not project more than 100mm, unless protected by a guard rail. The cross bar on Panic Hardware for example should be less than 100mm, for it to comply and operate as intended.

For Lever Handles

What is the minimum diameter of lever handles that is recommended to conform with the DDA?

The minimum diameter should be 19mm, anything less would cause difficulty in operation to a person with special needs.

What is the minimum dimension of the lever handle length?

A minimum dimension of 95mm on the inside of the lever handle should be used.

How can you test that the lever design will comply with the recommendations of the DDA?

The lever should be operable without having to fully grip the handle; an ideal test would be to try and open a door with a clenched fist or with your elbow.

What is the minimum clearance between the lever / pull handle and the door face?

Minimum clearance between the inside of the pull / lever handle and the face of the door should be a minimum of 45mm.

How can we specify furniture that will assist people with sensitive skin complaints to cold surfaces?

Furniture with a texture or warm feeling assists special needs people who suffer from problems associated with sensitive skin complaints, therefore for external areas use textured or colour coated furniture.

Can any shape door furniture be used?

Furniture should not have sharp edges; it is therefore recommended that round or oval type sections are used for the grip area.

For Lock Cases

What type of lock cases should be used?

Lock cases should have a minimum of 72mm centres or the cylinder should be fitted above the lever handle to prevent the user's knuckles from connecting with the lever handle when turning the key.

How can bathroom furniture be easily locked and unlocked from the inside?

Use a bathroom indicator and release with a large turn on the inside.

How far from the door edge should the lever furniture be fitted?

The minimum distance, known as the backset, should be 54mm from the door edge.

For Pull Handles

What is the general specification for pull handles?

Pull Handles should be bolt-through fixed, fitted with a rose, have a minimum diameter of 19mm and a maximum diameter of 35mm. The minimum length between centres should be 400mm and the minimum clearance from behind the pull grip to the door face should be 45mm.

What finish should the door furniture be?

Use furniture that has a contrast with the colour of the door. Do not use coloured door furniture on a door which is the same colour.

What can be done that will assist people with impaired vision to find pull handles on a door?

Pull Handles should be fitted with a rose cover to provide a larger surface area for people with impaired vision.

What is recommended for external use for people with sensitive touch to cold condition?

External Handles on an entrance door should be warm to touch. Therefore either Stainless Steel with a coated grip area, Aluminium which is colour coated, Nylon or timber grips are recommended.

Colour Contrast

What colour should the door be?

All door furniture should contrast in colour and luminance with the surface of the door, for easy identification by the visually impaired. Therefore, the colour of the door can be either a painted finish or timber. A guide is to try and establish a 20 points colour differentiation between the door surface and the door hardware. Unfortunately there is not a method that can easily be used to measure the difference without specialist equipment such as a spectrophotometer. This equipment is capable of measuring non-flat, gloss and metallic surfaces.

What is LRV?

LRV stands for Light Reflectance Value. This is the term used to measure the level of light that a surface reflects. All surfaces have a LRV value; to determine a 20 points difference the value of one surface is subtracted from another.

What is recommended on various surfaces?

High gloss finishes should be avoided on floors, walls, doors and ceiling surfaces, as these are reflective surfaces and can cause glare for people suffering from impaired vision. Architraves may be the same colour as the door, but should be a different colour from the wall, so a visually impaired person can recognise a door area.

Can Stainless Steel and Aluminium continue to be used for door furniture in buildings?

Satin Stainless Steel and Satin Aluminium door furniture is ideal for timber and coloured steel doors, however caution should be taken when using coloured furniture on a similar coloured door surface.

What other areas of a building does the DDA cover?

The DDA considers all aspects of a building, for example:-

- The numbers of steps allowed on a staircase
- Handrail designs
- Effective clearance of a door way
- Heights of window transoms
- Location of window controls
- Heights of light switches
- Space allow for manoeuvring of people, particularly wheel chair users
- Locations of mirrors and wash basins
- Heights of work surfaces