

## Fitting and Positioning your Grab Rail

**This document covers the following:**

[Fitting a grab rail](#)

[Using grab rails around your toilet](#)

[Using grab rails when showering in a cubicle or wetroom](#)

[Using grab rails in an over bath shower](#)

## Fitting a grab rail

How different positions help:

**Horizontal:** A grab rail/bar in this position is particularly helpful if you want to get up from a sitting position, as standing when pushing down on a rail is easier to do than pulling yourself up on one.

**Diagonal:** A grab rail/bar in a slight downwards sloping position is particularly helpful if you have pain or weakness in your arms/wrists, as you can rest your forearm on the rail to help you push up.

**Vertical:** A grab rail/bar in this position can be helpful if you prefer to pull yourself up to stand from a sitting position. Please be aware that positioning the rail/bar vertically may exacerbate any pre-existing pain in your wrist.

- A rail at a 45° angle is unlikely to be useful as this position will not be comfortable either to pull or to push yourself up with.
- Consider the whole action or task when fitting your grabrail, for instance you may need to adjust the position to allow you to both sit and stand using the same rail
- Before the grab rail is finally attached to the wall, please check that the position is right for you and will help with the action or task. Check that it is comfortable for you to hold and it will not cause you any pain in the wrist or hand.
- If you are attaching the grab rail to a wall that sounds hollow, any fixing must be reinforced with batons from behind the wall, your fitter should arrange this.
- Rails that contrast with the surface can be easier to see if you have a sight problem.
- Only fit a grab rail in a mobile home once you have sought specific advice from the manufacturer of the mobile home.
- If you choose to purchase a smooth grab bar please be aware that if your hands are wet, your grip on the bar may slip.
- If there is a radiator or other fitting where you need the rail to be fitted, please seek further advice from your fitter.
- You must **NEVER** put your **full** weight on a grab rail to pull on and/or to support yourself
- We recommend that you ask a qualified joiner and/or plumber to fit grab rails in your home, depending on where you are fitting this. Discuss what position will help you most with your fitter. The fitters will know whether you have a solid or stud wall and fit the rail appropriately. Please ensure that any grab rail you use is fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions as there are safety standards that need to be taken in to account.

**Try before you buy**

- > You can visit an Independent or Disabled Living Centre where there are often lots of products set in position for people to try before they buy.

## Using grab rails around your toilet

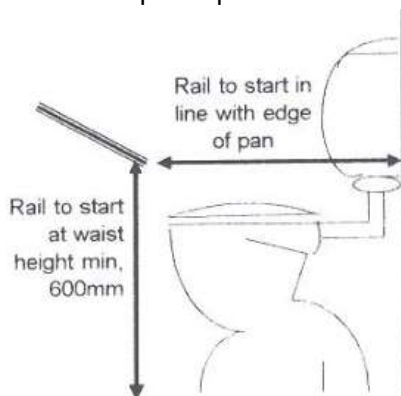
If you are using a grab rail to help you get up and down from the toilet, we recommend that you place it at a slight angle as it is then easier to pull yourself up. If it isn't possible to position the rail like this you could consider an alternative product to help you stand, such as a toilet frame.



The following pictures describe where best to place the grab rail safely to suit your needs:

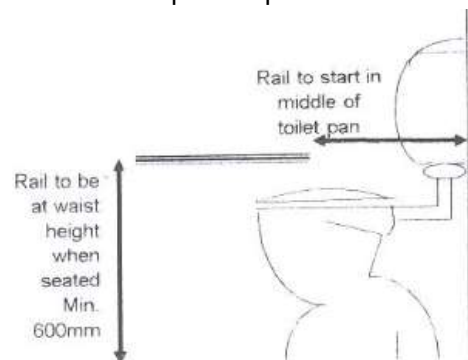
**Diagonal Rail**

To pull up from



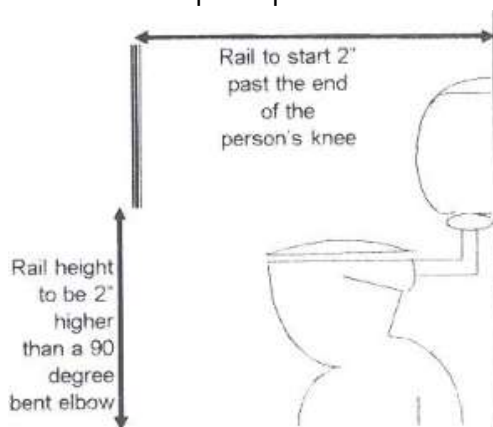
**Horizontal Rail**

To push up from



**Vertical Rail**

To pull up from



**Drop Down Rail**

To push up from



In a separate toilet, please make sure that you can still open the door, if you have a grab rail positioned on the wall.

You may need to move your toilet roll holder and/or your towel rail in order to fit the rail in the correct position.

## Using grab rails when showering in a cubicle or wetroom

### Selecting a suitable rail:

- > If you require a grab rail to help you sit and stand in the shower then we recommend that you choose one that is over 12inch (30.5cm) in length so that you are able to keep hold of it as you both stand up or sit down.

### Positioning rail:

- > If you have a shower seat/chair or stool, think about where to put the grab rail in relation to this.
- > If you only have one solid wall in your shower cubicle it is probably not possible to use a grab rail with a wall mounted shower seat. If a wall mounted seat is necessary, rather than a chair or stool, (this is usually due to limited space), choosing a seat with arms may be a suitable alternative to a grab rail, as you can push up on the arms.
- > When using a bath/box step to help you step in and out of your shower more easily, we recommend that you also use a grab rail/bar to steady yourself as you get on and off the step.
- > It may also be a good idea to have a bar you can simply hold on to whilst showering for extra support. If one side of your body is weaker than the other then we suggest you position yourself so that you can use the rail with your stronger side.

### Two or more rails

You may find that it is useful to have more than one rail in your shower cubicle. This is particularly true if you have a large shower enclosure (e.g. a level access shower or wet room) as an additional rail can be helpful when walking from the entrance to the shower controls.

## Using grab rails in an over bath shower

If you are going to use a bathing product such as a bath board, a grab rail could be useful as well, to help you stabilise yourself whilst using the board.

We would recommend fixing the rail in one of the positions below:

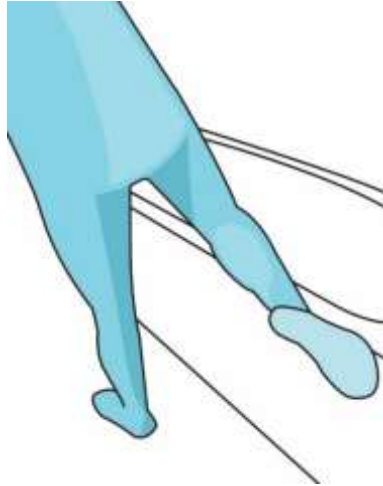
It can be fixed in a position so that you can steady yourself when stepping in and out of the bath.



Alternatively, it can be fixed to the wall so that if you use a bath board to sit on, it will be in a position for you to steady yourself whilst standing to shower.



If you are climbing in rather than sitting on equipment and swinging your legs in, the safest way to climb into a bath is to stand alongside the bath putting your feet/legs behind you when stepping in, or by holding onto a grab rail and lifting your legs over.



If you are trying something new, why not have a practise dry run with a family member or friend to help you.

If you have a weaker leg some people find it easier to position equipment so that the stronger leg goes into the bath first, then as you get out the weaker leg will lead. It is a question of working out which method feels safer for you, but a dry run will help.

Please note if your bath has raised handles on the sides and they would interfere with any equipment that you wish to use, a plumber may be able to remove the handles for you and fill the holes.

Is a bath mat a good idea?

Absolutely, so long as you make sure it is stuck down securely. However, if you use a product that has suckers which stick to the bottom of the bath, it is important that you remember that they will not stick safely to a plastic bath mat and the mat should therefore be removed.