

Lavatories and sinks

At least 5 percent but not less than one of the lavatories in a toilet facility must be accessible. There must be enough room to get to and use the lavatory. Therefore, Standard A117.1 requires that a clear floor space be provided in front of the sink to allow the person in a wheelchair the room to use the sink. In order for a person in a wheelchair to get up to the sink and use it, he or she must extend his or her legs under the lavatory. Therefore, the standard requires a minimum knee and toe clearance under the fixture (Figure 11-7). [Ref. 606.2, 305.3, 306 (A117.10)]

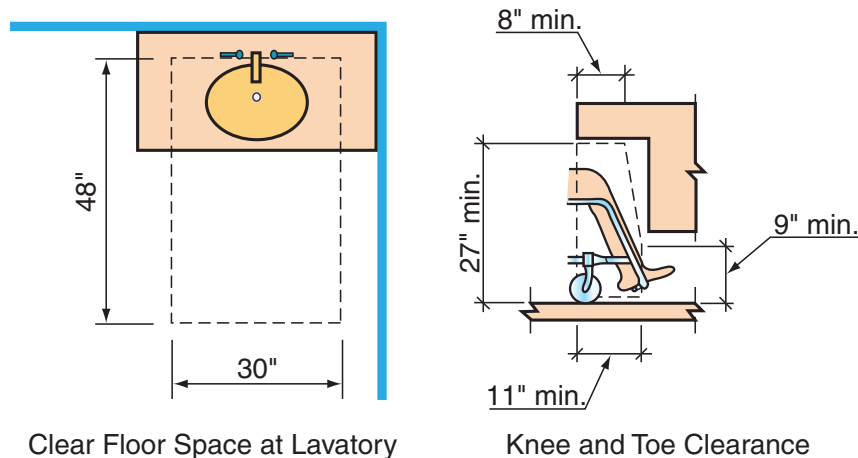


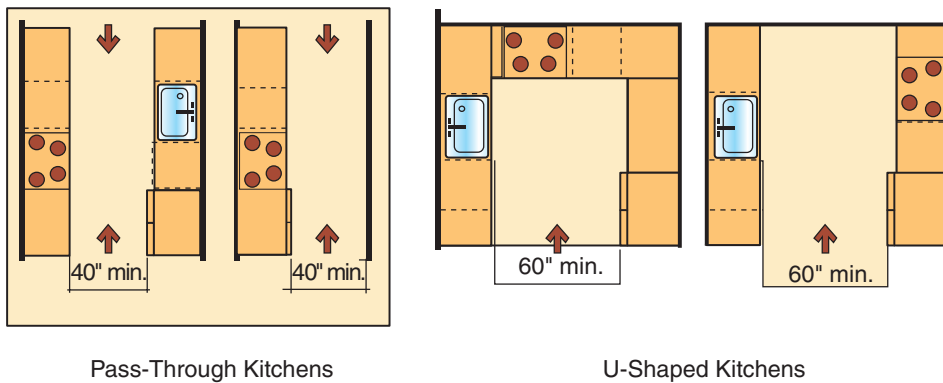
FIGURE 11-7 Required clearances for lavatories

The front of the lavatory must be a maximum of 34 inches above the floor. The faucet must be operable with one hand and must not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist; or it must be a hand-operated metering faucet that remains open for a minimum of 10 seconds. Any water supply and drainpipes below the lavatory must be insulated or protected so that persons in a wheelchair without feeling in their legs do not burn themselves. Sharp or abrasive surfaces are also prohibited under lavatories for the same reason. [Ref. 606 (A117.1)]

Kitchens

When kitchens are provided in a building, they must be accessible to people who are physically disabled. A kitchen includes kitchenettes and wet bars. This section discusses kitchens that are not part of a residential unit. Residential kitchens are required to meet different standards than kitchens in a nonresidential occupancy. Commercial kitchens serving restaurants are considered employee work areas and are only required to be on an accessible route and be designed so a disabled person can approach, enter and exit the area. The kitchen equipment is not required to be accessible. Therefore, this section only discusses kitchens located in break rooms and similar areas.

Two types of kitchens are covered by Standard A117.1: pass-through and U-shaped. A pass-through kitchen is just like it sounds; a person can go completely through the kitchen. Typically, the counters, appliances and cabinets are on two opposing sides. The minimum clearance between the counters, cabinets, and appliances is 40 inches. This allows a person in a wheelchair to use the kitchen in a side-approach manner. A U-shaped kitchen must have a minimum clearance of 60 inches between all of the counters, appliances and cabinets. This allows someone in a wheelchair to enter and turn around in the kitchen (Figure 11-8). [Ref. 804.2 (A117.1)]

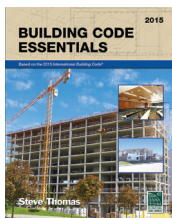


The countertops must be between 28 and 34 inches above the finished floor. If the kitchen does not include a cooktop or range, the kitchen sink can be used by a person who is in a wheelchair set parallel to the counter. However, if there is a cooktop or range, a forward approach must be provided to the sink, similar to that discussed regarding lavatories. The required

FIGURE 11-8 Kitchen options

knee and toe spaces noted for lavatories must be provided. The faucets must also be operable with one hand and must not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist; or they must be hand-operated metering faucets that remain open for a minimum of 10 seconds. The piping below the kitchen sink must also be insulated. [Ref. 804 (A117.1)]

If appliances are provided in a kitchen, they must also be usable by a person with a physical disability. Two requirements need to be addressed regarding the accessibility of appliances. The first is the clear floor space in front of the appliance. The second is the location of the operable parts of the appliance. The clear floor spaces are dependent on the type of appliance. A dishwasher must have a clear floor space adjacent to the dishwasher. A range or cooktop is permitted to have either a forward or parallel approach. If a forward approach is provided, the required knee and toe space must be provided. Ovens must have a clear floor space adjacent to the door. The clear floor space in front of a refrigerator/freezer must be a parallel approach. All of the operable parts of the appliances must be within the required reach range.



This excerpt is taken from ICC's *Building Code Essentials: Based on the 2015 International Building Code*®.

The I-Code Essentials series uses a straightforward, focused approach to explore code requirements with non-code language, allowing readers to gain confidence in their understanding of the material. Each book is an invaluable companion guide to the 2015 IBC, IRC, IFC or IECC for both new and experienced code users.