

FACTS ABOUT VISITABLE HOUSING IN CANADA



Concept

VisitAble housing is the concept of designing and building homes with basic accessibility features that provide easy access on the main level for everyone.

Visitability Features

VisitAble homes have three accessibility features on the main floor:

1. No-step entrance (at the front, back or side of the house).
2. Wider doorways and hallways (minimum 36") on the main floor with a path of accessible travel to the washroom.
3. Wheelchair accessible bathroom (minimum 5' turning radius).

VisitAbility does not mean fully accessible or universal design. It does not apply to the upper floors or basement.

Advantages

- Convenience for everyone: people with mobility issues, those with children in strollers, those carrying large or heavy items, furniture, or equipment.

- Easy access to the house and inside the main floor of the house.
- Flexibility with life span changes.
- Reduced risks of fall or injuries at home.
- Reduced costs for home renovations at a time of mobility changes.
- Increased mobility within the home, reducing the need for costly personal care services.
- Aesthetic appeal.

Costs

- When VisitAbility features are planned at the outset, additional costs are minimal.
- VisitAble features can be built into most new homes for under \$1000.
- Factors that affect the cost of building a VisitAble home:
 - Topography – land development for no-step entrance
 - Basement plan (e.g., window wells, depth of basement, foundation walls)
 - Floor plan
 - Variations in prices between builders
 - Local market conditions

Related Facts

- Over 50% of falls that older adults suffer occur in their own home.
- One third of all Canadians aged 65 years or over have mobility problems.
- The vast majority of adults aged 55 or older (89%) want to age in in their own home.
- Seniors are less likely to move to an institution or care home when their homes are equipped with some accessibility features.
- Stairs are the leading cause of serious falls among community-living elderly, accounting for about one-third of all fatal falls.
- A common reason that seniors move from their home is their mobility problems.

For more information, visit:

VisitAbleHousingCanada.com

Like us on Facebook:

facebook.com/visitablehousingcanada

Email us: visitability@disabilitystudies.ca

For the Task Force in your region and their contact information, please visit:

visitablehousingcanada.com/task-forces

VisitAble Housing Canada is a project of:

Canadian Centre on Disability Studies

56 The Promenade

Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H9

204-287-8411

COSTS OF BUILDING VISITABLE HOMES



Concept of VisitAble Housing: VisitAble housing is the concept of designing and building homes with basic accessibility features that provide easy access on the main level for everyone.

VisitAbility Features: VisitAble homes have three basic accessibility features on the main floor: 1) A no-step entrance (at the front, back or side of the house), 2) Wider doorways and hallways (minimum 36") on the main floor with a path of accessible travel to the washroom, 3) At least a half bathroom on the main floor that people with mobility devices can use.

Benefits of VisitAbility: Easy access to the house and convenience within the house, reduced risks of falls or injuries on stairs, resale value, enhanced aging in place potential, and a welcoming environment for friends and family with mobility issues.

Costs associated with the three basic VisitAble features for new construction:

No-Step Entrance

Costs: Varies widely - with planning, it can be less than \$250.

Dependent Upon:

- Whether the no-step entrance is achieved with a ramp or by lot grading.
- Topography of the lot.
- Building methods and materials.
- Design of features such as drainage pipes, earthwork, and depth of utilities.

Wider Doors and Halls

Costs: \$0-\$25. Approximately \$5 per door.

Dependent Upon:

- The type of house and materials used.
- Number of doors.
- No significant cost to increase the width of the hallway.

Main Floor VisitAble Bathroom

Costs: \$0-500.

Dependent Upon:

- Whether other accessibility features are added, such as grab bars.
- On average, VisitAble bathrooms don't cost extra in new home builds.

Incorporating VisitAbility features in the design stage of building a new home reduces the cost of modifying a non-VisitAble home to meet changing accessibility needs of residents over the course of their lifespan.

- The cost ranges provided here are general estimates based on various projects and studies in North America and Europe.
- Many professionals such as builders, developers, architects and realtors have different ideas and understanding of the costs of VisitAble homes.
- Costs will vary in different regions.
- Costs associated with making a house bigger to compensate reduced living space due to larger doorways or bathroom are not included in these estimates.
- For more information, contact a local builder.

For more information, visit:

VisitAbleHousingCanada.com • facebook.com/visitablehousingcanada

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