

Manual Wheelchairs - Regular Checks

Regular checks of your wheelchair will reduce inconvenient breakdowns. It is important that you or your carer check your chair **once a week** for any defects. Your chair should also be **cleaned regularly**. Protect any Velcro then clean using a soft cloth dampened with warm, mildly soapy water. Follow up by rinsing with a damp cloth, and dry thoroughly. Clean your chair immediately after exposure to sand or salt, and dry it quickly after exposure to rain. It should be stored indoors in a dry environment when not in use.

Below is a list of some checks that should be carried out by yourself or your carers, with actions that will ensure optimal performance from your wheelchair. **This list is not exhaustive. For specific advice about your own wheelchair, refer to the user manual. IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT, PLEASE CONTACT THE WHEELCHAIR SERVICE IMMEDIATELY.**

PART	CHECKS	WHAT TO DO
<u>SEAT AND BACKREST CANVASES</u>	If your chair has a seat or backrest canvas, check for any tears.	Please contact the Wheelchair Service immediately if you find any tears.
<u>FOLDING MECHANISM (if present)</u>	Fold/unfold the chair	If the operation is difficult, check that the belt is not interfering. Dab a spot of non-penetrating lubricant on the pivot point(s).
<u>TYRES</u> <u>PNEUMATIC TYRES ONLY</u> Pneumatic (air) tyres require monitoring to ensure they are optimally inflated. Under-inflated tyres will make pushing the wheelchair harder, stop the brakes from working and increase wear. Area of concern: <u>Underinflated tyres</u> <u>Flat tyres</u>	Check for wear and tear such as splits, cracks, bulging and significant loss of tread. Check tyre pressures using a pressure gauge to compare actual tyre pressure with optimal tyre pressure, as indicated on the side of the tyre. If your tyres need inflating frequently, check if the valve is leaking by inflating the tyre then putting detergent on the valve to see if it bubbles. Inflate the tyres then check to see if they deflate again within a short period.	If the tyres are showing signs of significant wear and tear, please contact the Wheelchair Service. If the tyre pressure is incorrect, inflate to the correct pressure using a hand pump. NB. It is always useful to carry a hand pump in your vehicle or keep one attached to your wheelchair. If the valve is leaking, please contact the Wheelchair Service. If the tyres deflate within a short period, please contact the Wheelchair Service.

Manual Wheelchairs – Regular Checks (cont.)

PART	CHECK	WHAT TO DO
<p><u>BRAKES</u></p> <p>Brakes can become worn over time, get damaged or work themselves loose and become ineffective.</p>	<p>Brakes should be checked every time the chair is used.</p> <p>Apply the brakes and check that the tyres are held firmly in place and that it is easy to apply/undo them.</p> <p>Release the brakes and check that they do not rub against the tyre when pushing.</p>	<p>If the brakes are not effective and your chair has solid tyres, contact the Wheelchair Service immediately.</p> <p>If the brakes are not effective and your chair has pneumatic tyres, check the inflation pressure of the tyres (see the section above). If the tyre pressure is correct and the brakes are still not effective, contact the Wheelchair Service.</p> <p>Please contact the Wheelchair Service if there is any brake contact with the tyre when the brake is released.</p>
<p><u>WHEEL ALIGNMENT</u></p> <p>Over time, and if damaged, your wheels can come out of alignment. If your wheels have spokes they can become loose.</p>	<p>Check your wheels weekly to ensure that spokes (if present) are intact and rims are not bent. Check that your wheels are parallel to one another unless they were deliberately ‘cambered’ when your chair was set up.</p>	<p>Please contact the Wheelchair Service immediately to discuss any issues and we will agree with you the best course of action.</p>
<p><u>REAR WHEEL AXLES</u></p> <p>Axles collect dirt easily and need to be kept clean to ensure smooth propelling and minimum pushing effort.</p> <p><u>QUICK-RELEASE WHEELS</u></p>	<p>Lift each rear wheel off the ground in turn, release the brake and spin the wheel.</p> <p>Check that the axle housing is free from dirt, hair and mud.</p> <p>Check that axle pins slide through the axle housing smoothly and “click” into place.</p>	<p>If it is not spinning freely, clean around the axle as much as possible. Contact the Wheelchair Service if this does not resolve the problem</p> <p>If dirty, wipe clean the axle housings and the quick-release axle pin and wipe with non-penetrating lubricant.</p> <p>If there are any issues after cleaning, contact the Wheelchair Service.</p>

Manual Wheelchairs – Regular Checks (cont.)

PART	CHECK	WHAT TO DO
<p><u>CASTORS (FRONT WHEELS)</u></p> <p>Your castors should run smoothly. They need to be looked after in the same manner as the rear wheels.</p>	<p>Check that the axles are free from dirt, hair and fluff.</p> <p>Make sure that the castors swivel freely and that the castor forks are not bent.</p>	<p>Pick out dirt and hair with tweezers and wipe clean.</p> <p>If a castor is sticking or a fork is bent, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p>
<p><u>LEG RESTS AND ARMRESTS</u></p> <p>Check if these parts are removable on your model of chair.</p>	<p>Make sure that parts lock in place securely and can be removed without undue effort.</p>	<p>If parts are not moving/locking, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p>
<p><u>NUTS AND BOLTS</u></p> <p>Nuts and bolts occasionally loosen and can be lost if not tightened.</p>	<p>Check that all nuts and bolts are present.</p> <p>Make sure that nuts and bolts are secure.</p>	<p>If you are aware of any that are missing, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p> <p>If any are loose, hand tighten then contact the Wheelchair Service.</p>
<p><u>LAP BELT</u></p>	<p>Check the fit of the belt</p> <p>Check webbing for twists.</p> <p>Check belt webbing for fraying.</p> <p>Inspect the buckle.</p>	<p>If the belt is too tight or not long enough to fasten, check if it has been caught on any part of the wheelchair. If the belt is too loose or too tight, adjust to provide a snug fit.</p> <p>If the belt cannot be adjusted properly, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p> <p>Untwist the belt to avoid further damage and check the route of the belt.</p> <p>If the webbing is frayed, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p> <p>If the buckle is damaged, please contact the Wheelchair Service.</p>
<p><u>WHEELCHAIR FRAME</u></p> <p>If the frame is damaged, your safety is at risk.</p>	<p>Check for cracks or large dents and that all moving parts run smoothly.</p>	<p>IF THE FRAME IS CRACKED OR BADLY DENTED DO NOT USE IT. CONTACT THE WHEELCHAIR SERVICE IMMEDIATELY.</p>