

Physical Disabilities

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities. Not all physical disabilities require a wheelchair.

People who have arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations may also have difficulty with moving, standing or sitting.

It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Tips on how to interact with people with physical disabilities

Using words	
Don't say	Say
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the cripple• crippled• lame• physically challenged• confined to a wheelchair• wheelchair bound	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a person who with a disability• a person with a physical disability• a person with arthritis• a person who uses a wheelchair (or a walker or a scooter)

- Speak normally and directly to your customer. Don't speak to the person who is with them.
- People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Be patient. People will tell you what they need.
- Don't touch assistive devices, including wheelchairs, unless it's an emergency.
- Tell the person about accessible features in the surrounding area (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).
- Remove obstacles and rearrange furniture so they have clear passage.