

Wheelchair Maintenance

This is something that people do not think about a great deal but if you do not look after your wheelchair there is a chance it could break and possibly leave you stranded.

Below are some wheelchair maintenance tips. These relate to manually propelled wheelchairs but there will be some overlap with powered chairs.

Tyres

Keeping tyres up to the correct pressure is essential to keep brakes working correctly. Obviously if you have solid tyres this is not an option. If you have inflatable tyres keeping them at the correct pressure will help with the rolling resistance and will also help to keep brakes working effectively.

It is also worth keeping a spare inner tube and tyre levers, either in a bag or keep a spare in the car. A manual hand pump will allow you to put some pressure in the tyre but keeping a small compressor in the car will allow you to inflate the tyre to the correct pressure.

Usually tyres will have a recommended tyre pressure range stamped on the sidewall so if you keep within these limits it will be safe.

Front Castors

Front castors often get clogged up with hair and various other bits of grease and debris so keeping this kind of dirt from your castors can prolong the life of the bearings. Although the bearings are sealed, if there is debris around the bearing it can stop the wheels rolling efficiently.

To keep the castors clean, you can use a small flat headed screwdriver to remove the debris.

You can also clean out the front castors by using a pair of tweezers or something similar. You can use pointed tweezers to pick out strands of hair one at a time, which will take a bit of time but will also let you get every bit out.

If you are going to do any wheelchair maintenance in the house, I suggest you put an old towel or something down as you will be surprised how much dirt will come from your chair.

This does not cover power chairs, but a lot of the principles are the same.

General Maintenance

Look over your wheelchair to make sure that it is in a good condition: upholstery is not worn or torn, seat belts are present and functioning, and the wheelchair is clean. Check the frame of your chair for any signs of wear, rust or loose connections.