

Stairlift guidance

Installing a stairlift can be beneficial to transport a person between two (or more) levels of a home. The stairlift has a fixed track that follows the line of the stairs. It can be straight or curved, depending on the stair configuration. While stairlifts are generally quite slow, this helps to ensure a safe and comfortable ride.



Example of a stair lift.

View and try a stairlift in person

Contact the Lothian Disabled Living Centre at the SMART Centre, Astley Ainslie Hospital, Grange Loan, Edinburgh, EH9 2HL

Call: 0131 537 9177 (select option 5)

Web: www.smart.scot.nhs.uk/service/disabled-living-centre/

Suppliers

We cannot recommend specific stairlift companies. However, below are some top tips to consider:



- Choose a company with positive customer reviews and a history of a reliable service.
- You will need to seek permission from the owner of the property to fit a stairlift.
- Stairlifts should be serviced annually.
- Before installing, consideration should be given to the on-going cost of maintenance and charges.

Contact us



- If you have any questions, or would like further advice, contact the Occupational Therapy Team on [0300 3690 680](tel:03003690680) and select option 2.

Stairlift design considerations

Chair specifications



- Consider the size of the seat and footplate. You want to make sure these are comfortable, and you can easily place your feet on the footplate.
- Consider the weight of the person using the stairlift and check the weight limit of the stairlift.
- Consider the type of lap belt - a standard lap belt or full harness.
- Consider the options available to connect the arm rest or seat to the footplate. The footplate may become an obstruction to how you safely get on or off the stairlift. We recommend enquiring if there is an option to have a powered option to lower / raise the footplate.

Location and positioning



- We recommend that the stairlift covers the full flight of the stairs for your safety when getting on and off.
- How close to your front or back door is your stairs? You may need to install a hinged track which folds if the space is tight.
- You may also need to re-hang the front or back door outwards to increase space. Consider your safety if the door is to open outwards such as when answering the door. We also recommend that you check with building standards to ensure you comply with regulations.
- Will you require a seat that turns at the top of the stair or runs over and onto the top landing? Should you have a seat that turns at the top of the stair, consider if you will manage a manual turn or if you require a powered option.
- Do you currently have a handrail in place? Will this need to be removed for the stairlift to be installed? Will this impact on other users of the stairs?
- Will you need to reposition or remove a radiator to fit the stairlift?

Control options



- Consider what controls you require, especially if you have reduced hand function. You can get options for button or lever controls, and you can choose which side you would want the controls.
- Consider an option of a remote control to call the stairlift down should there be multiple users of the stairlift within the property.
- Consider options for a safety switch, that can turn off the stairlift.

Fire safety



- Please consider if a stairlift would obstruct access to the property. You can refer yourself for a fire safety visit. [Request a fire safety visit here.](#)

Safety considerations



- Consider who is in the property such as pets or young children and if they would be safe with a stairlift.
- The person using the stairlift must be able to safely manage the controls or have someone to assist them, if they have difficulties understanding the instructions and controls of the stairlift.