

RESOURCE M

Accessibility Guidelines for Tennis Facilities

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide advice and guidance in the design of new tennis facilities and the enhancement of existing tennis facilities.

All new tennis facilities and extensions or refurbishments to existing facilities should meet or exceed the standards set out in the current Building Code Regulations.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES - GENERAL

To have a 'fully accessible' centre means having more than sufficient door widths and the provision of ramps. In order for a facility to run efficiently and smoothly, knowledgeable and appropriately trained staff are required. There are a wide range of disabilities which need to be considered when managing and designing a tennis facility. These include mobility, visual, hearing and learning disabilities. Clubs should also take into consideration how the public, both players and spectators, can access the club.

PARKING

- Wheelchair parking spots should be located close to the main entrance.
- A standard wheelchair parking spot is 3.6m wide. Alternatively, you can have two standard parking spots at 2.4m wide plus 1.2m common access aisle.
- When designing new parking lots, ensure they are flat. Lowered curbs or cut aways should be provided in appropriate positions.

ACCESS FROM PARKING LOT TO FRONT DOOR

- Wheelchair access should be clearly marked with symbols.
- Access should be a clear unobstructed pathway, with a firm even surface that is non-slip.
- Consider a minimum walkway width of at least 1.5m or 2m, to allow for the passing of wheelchairs.
- Provide for both stepped and ramp access.
- Automatic doors are preferred for main entrance access.

ACCESS WITHIN FACILITY

- Entrance doors should have a clear width of at least 1200mm. This is to accommodate sports wheelchairs.
- The threshold should not be above the floor surface and attention should be given to wells and gratings, as these may impede movement/wheelchair mobility.
- Consider incorporating a low-level reception desk or a bar hatch system in the reception area.
- Reduce the strength of door closers. Lighter doors also benefit young children and the elderly.
- Consideration should be given to access onto the indoor and outdoor courts. This should incorporate suitable access from the clubhouse and for wheelchairs.

ON-COURT PLAYER ACCESSIBILITY

- Secure area for the storage of wheelchairs (both standard and tennis).
- Is there adequate space between court net posts for tennis wheelchair access?
- Is the distance from the baseline to the back stop long enough? Recommended dimension is 6.4m.
- Is there enough room between courts for a tennis wheelchair?
- Is there enough access around the court to allow players to change ends easily?





Photo Credit: @2018 Tennis Canada

MOBILITY PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED BY WHEELCHAIR AND SEMI-AMBULANT USERS ARE:

- Inaccessible toilet and changing facilities.
- Corridors and doorways that are too narrow or obstructed.
- Changes in level, i.e. steep ramps, curbs.

VISUAL PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED ARE:

- Poor use of colour contrast, which could hinder location and comprehension.
- Poor illumination due to low level lighting, glare and reflection.
- Poor signage – consider incorporating Braille.

HEARING PROBLEMS THAT MAY BE ENCOUNTERED ARE:

- Insufficient information, which results in restricted independence.
- Poor staff communication.

People with learning disabilities may have a combination of other impairments such as mobility or visual. It is therefore recommended that as well as the above points, you should consider the following:

- Avoid too many colour schemes and clever signs which could cause confusion.
- Use signage, layout and lighting of the building to clearly identify routes and public areas.
- Trained staff that are easily recognizable.

WC AND CHANGING FACILITIES:

- Provision of changing facilities should cater for both the individual/independent user and small groups during public sessions. Ideally a separate wheelchair toilet stall should be incorporated.
- Consider the proximity of the changing areas to the activities within the building. Storage areas for items such as wheelchairs, etc., are a useful addition.
- Showers, toilets and cubicles (if provided) should allow for easy transfer from a wheelchair. This includes close proximity and the provision of shower benches.
- There should not be any step up or down into the shower compartment. Shower heads, soap dispensers, etc., should all be located within easy reach when seated (approx. 1.3m).

EMERGENCY EXIT ROUTES AND PROCEDURES (INDOOR CENTRES, ITIS, ETC.):

- The incorporation of suitable emergency exits/routes including elevators and stairs is advised.

This document is based on the LTA G4-Accessibility Guidelines. Tennis Canada would like to thank and acknowledge the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and their ongoing leadership and efforts in making tennis accessible for everyone.

For further questions regarding facility accessibility, please contact Tennis Canada at coveredcourts@tenniscanada.com

