

## So, You Use a Wheelchair to Get Around?

You are not alone – millions of people do. Why is it, then, that you must still face obstacles that hinder your mobility every day? Sometimes you must encounter high curbs and gravel roads, steep inclines and icy sidewalks.

Yes, our society has come a long way in trying to increase accessibility for people with disabilities, wheelchair users still find themselves in potentially dangerous situations because the environment is not always wheelchair-friendly.

The Wheelchair Skills Program (WSP) was developed as a result of these safety and performance issues.

For more information, see:  
[www.wheelchairskillsprogram.ca](http://www.wheelchairskillsprogram.ca)

# Wheelchair Skills Program



## What is the Wheelchair Skills Program (WSP)?

The WSP includes the Wheelchair Skills Test (WST) and the Wheelchair Skills Training Program (WSTP). It is used to test and train wheelchair users and/or their caregivers and clinicians.

## What is the Wheelchair Skills Test (WST)?

The WST is a test of wheelchair skills. It consists of 18 skill groups. These tasks are divided into three levels of difficulty: Indoor, Community, and Advanced. Some of the tasks are simple, such as applying and releasing the wheelchair brakes. Others are more complex, such as performing a wheelie while descending a high curb.

## Why Should I Take the WST?

If you are a new wheelchair user, taking the WST can point out areas where you may need specific training so that you can learn to overcome particular obstacles with your wheelchair. As your rehabilitation goes on, you can take the test again to see how much you have improved at handling your wheelchair.

## What is the Wheelchair Skills Training Program (WSTP)?

The WSTP is a training program that uses methods based on the rehabilitation, wheelchair, and motor-skills literature to teach wheelchair skills. The skills that it teaches are the same skills that are tested in the WST.

Evidence has shown that learning wheelchair skills in a formal setting is better than learning through trial and error, and that improvement in wheelchair skills can be retained. The WSTP can help you become more confident in handling your wheelchair, so that you will have the skills you need to get around in your environment. The WSTP has been shown to be a practical, safe, and effective way to improve wheelchair skills performance and knowledge.

## Skill Groups of the WSP

- Breaks
- Armrests
- Footrests
- Rolling
- Turns in place
- Moving turns
- Sideways maneuvering
- Reaching
- Increase rolling resistance
- Transfers
- Fold/unfold wheelchair
- Doors
- Obstacles
- Cross-slope
- Pot-holes
- Inclines
- Level changes
- Wheelies on level terrain