

# Helping a person get into and out of a car safely

Following these instructions will help you safely assist someone who has difficulty getting into and out of a car.

## Before you start

- This information is for people who are still fairly steady on their feet but may require limited assistance.
- If the person has very limited mobility, is unsteady on their feet, or is on medication that affects their balance, do not attempt to assist them on your own.

## Getting into a car

- 1 Push the car seat back as far as possible.
- 2 Open the car door fully and ensure that it cannot swing back.
- 3 Open the car door window. (The window ledge may be used to help support the person when standing.)
- 4 Bring the wheelchair or walking aid as close as possible to the car and put the brakes on.
- 5 Swing back or remove wheelchair footplates if getting up from a wheelchair.
- 6 Never let the person you are assisting hold or hug you around your neck while you are moving them.
- 7 Position your body so your backside is against the inside of the door to stop it from swinging shut.
- 8 Assist the person to stand by having them move forward from their seat and push-up using the wheelchair armrests.
- 9 Lightly support them to turn round so that the backs of their legs are touching the car seat.
- 10 Help them to gently lower themselves onto the seat. Protect their head while they do this by holding your hand above it.
- 11 Encourage the person to swing and lift their legs into the car. **If they need assistance to do this** lift one leg at a time making sure you bend your knees.



Use your body to stop the door from slamming shut.



Lightly support the person to turn around.



Slowly bring the person's legs into the car.

## Further information

Contact your nurse or health professional if you need further assistance.  
[www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au)

[www.lmrpcc.org.au](http://www.lmrpcc.org.au)

## Getting out of a car

- 1** Push the car seat back as far as possible and take away any cushions.
- 2** Open the car door window. (The window ledge may be used to help support the person when standing.)
- 3** Bring the wheelchair or walking aid as close as possible to the car and put the brakes on.
- 4** Ask the person in the car to rotate their body so that they are facing out of the car. They need to slowly swivel on their bottom and bring their legs around outside the car.
- 5** If helping to lift their legs, lift one leg at a time. Make sure you do not strain your back by bending at the knees to do this.
- 6** Position your body against the back of the door so it does not swing shut.
- 7** If required the person can hold on to the window ledge to support themselves.
- 8** Ensure both of the person's feet are firmly on the ground before they lift from the seat.
- 9** Never let the person you are assisting hold or hug you around your neck while you are helping to move them.
- 10** Ask the person to help lift themselves by using their legs and to support themselves on the window ledge to a standing position.
- 11** Protect their head while they lift by holding your hand above it.
- 12** Help the person to move towards the walking aid or wheelchair. If using a wheelchair, assist them to swivel around so the back of their legs touch the edge of the chair.
- 13** Have the person put their hands firmly on the armrests of the wheelchair before slowly lowering themselves onto the chair.
- 14** Lower footrests into place or re-attach them. Help the person to position their feet securely on the footrests.



Push back car seat. Open door fully.



Person swivels so their legs are outside the car.



Lightly support the person to turn around.