



DIYmodify Factsheet

CHOICES for HANDRAILS

This CHOICES Factsheet is for handrails in homes and apartments where there are only a few steps and you are finding them difficult to get up and down.

Although there are rules in the Australian Standard AS1428 for the diameter and height of handrails, houses (Class 1a or 1b) and the non-common areas of apartments (inside your apartment for example) do NOT need to comply with these.

The Livable Housing Design Guidelines has for their highest level of housing, the Platinum level, that you should have a handrail on both sides of your steps or ramp. This is so you have something to help you going up and coming down the steps. This will not always be possible to do (Look here for more information about the Livable Housing Design Guidelines:

<http://livablehousingaustralia.org.au/95/downloads.aspx>).

Most important is to make sure your handrail suits what you need best.

It is best if you can find a handrail that you find comfortable in your hand. Go and try some out in the hardware shop or notice when you find a good one and see if you can match that one.

There are no rules as to which handrail will be best although most people find a round section the most comfortable. The handrail should be easy to grip and not have any sharp edges.

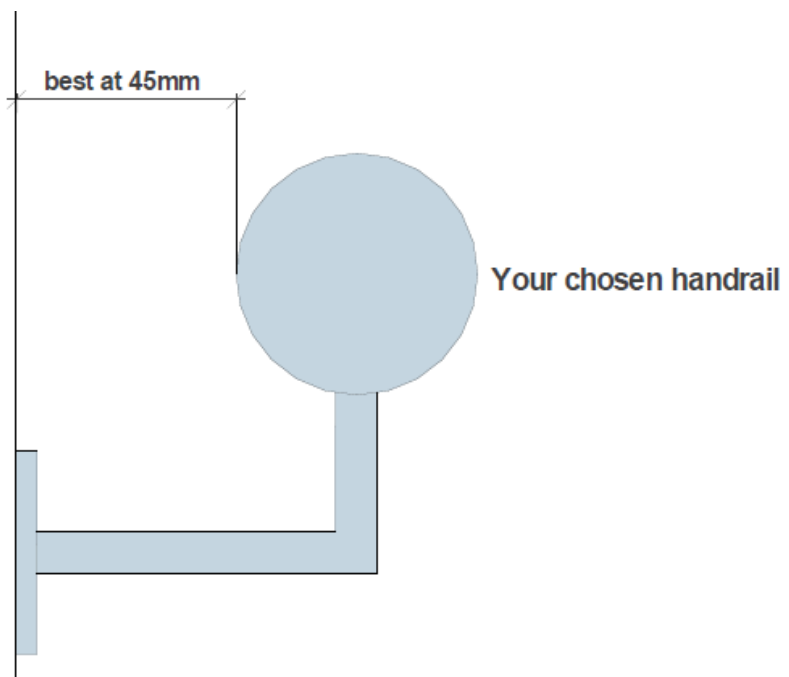
Continue the handrail past the top and bottom step so you can steady yourself there. It is suggested 300mm distance will help.

Match the material of your handrail with your home and what it looks like inside. If you have lots of wood, choose a wood handrail. If your home is more modern looking metal may be a better choice.

Generally, wood will be used inside and metal outside because metal will last longer outside.

The wood handrail can be painted or stained if inside to match the colours of your house.

There should be enough space between the wall and your handrail for you to grab hold of it. This distance should be about 45mm. There should be no object closer than 600mm around your handrail.



TIP: It is not necessary to have cues in the handrail for blind people or visually impaired people. It is always best to have the handrail smooth and continuous.

You might, however, want to paint the handrail a contrasting colour so the visually impaired person can see it more easily.

HMinfo has more information on this. For example:

[Industry Factsheet: Colour and colour contrast in the homes of elderly or visually impaired people.](#)

***This information was correct at time of printing.*