

Understanding ADA Requirements

Decoding the ADA laws are a bit tricky. Most people go right to section 606 of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, look at the diagram and read the section (below). However, careful reading will reveal additional important information that much be met. The diagram is a quick reference for some important dimensions, so do not forget to reference Sections 305 (clear floor), Section 306 (knee clearance), Section 308 (reach), and Section 309 (height).

606 Lavatories and Sinks

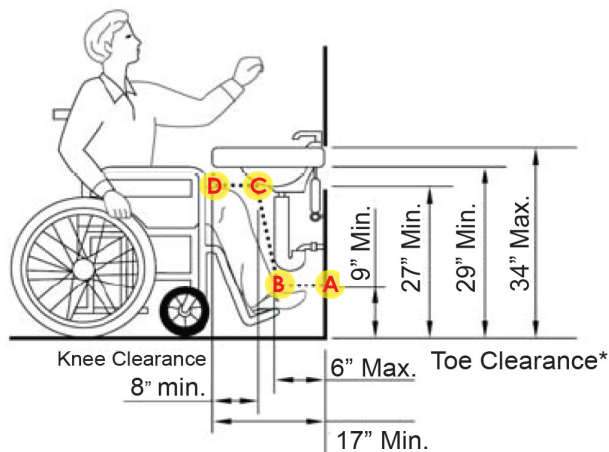
606.1 General. Lavatories and sinks shall comply with 606.

Advisory 606.1 General. If soap and towel dispensers are provided, they must be located within the reach ranges specified in 308. Locate soap and towel dispensers so that they are conveniently usable by a person at the accessible lavatory.

606.2 Clear Floor Space. A clear floor space complying with 305, positioned for a forward approach, and knee and toe clearance complying with 306 shall be provided.

EXCEPTIONS: 1. The dip of the overflow shall not be considered in determining knee and toe clearances.

606.3 Height. Lavatories and sinks shall be installed with the front of the higher of the rim or counter surface 34 inches (865 mm) maximum above the finish floor.



Note:

While the minimum counter is 17", the maximum usable countertop for ADA is 25". This does not mean that a larger top cannot be made ADA compliant. It means that anything required for accessibility, (soap dispenser, faucet, towel rack) must be located in that range and must also conform to Section 308 reach.

Determining sink and vanity location should be done in this step order:

1. Identify the 48" clear floor space that must reach under the accessible counter. This space must reach in a minimum 17" and a maximum 25" under the counter. Again, the counter can be bigger than these dimensions, but all accessible items must then fall into that "reach zone."
2. From the back of the countertop, where the clear floor space reaches under the counter top, the reach zone and toe clearance are now defined. From that point, there must be minimum 9" clearance **A** and a maximum 6" **B** clearance from the wall or line defined by the clear floor space (which is not necessarily the wall, but often is.)
3. From point **B**, a point should be plotted with a 3" x 18" slope to point **C**. This is a set slope. A common mistake is not understanding step 1 and step 2 and just using the 8" minimum and running that point to **B**. This actually cuts into the knee clearance and is wrong. The 3" x 18" slope must be observed and the remaining space to point **D** is now a set dimension. The points must be plotted in order, **A** to **B** to **C** to **D**. **8" is the minimum and only seen on a 17" accessible top (17" minus 6" (toe space) minus 3" (slope for knee clearance) = 8"). If the accessible space is 18", then 9" would become the minimum for that top if the 48" clearance reached to the wall (18" - 6" - 3" = 9").**

Understanding ADA Requirements

How does this relate specifically to sinks? It is important to realize that sinks are not ADA certified. It is the responsibility of the fabricator and installer to use compliant products specified by the architect, and fabricate and install them correctly. Understanding these steps will help to ensure compliance.

Below is a review of the important sections to know as written in the guidelines.

Section 305 -Clear Floor
Section 308 -Reach

Section 306 -Knee Clearance
Section 309 -Height

305 Clear Floor or Ground Space

305.3 Size. The clear floor or ground space shall be 30 inches (760 mm) minimum by 48 inches (1220 mm) minimum.

Figure 305.3 Clear Floor or Ground Space

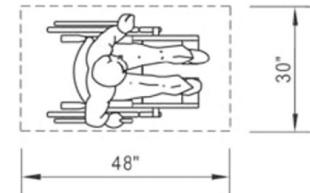


Figure 305.3 Clear Floor or Ground Space

305.4 Knee and Toe Clearance. Unless otherwise specified, clear floor or ground space shall be permitted to include knee and toe clearance complying with 306.

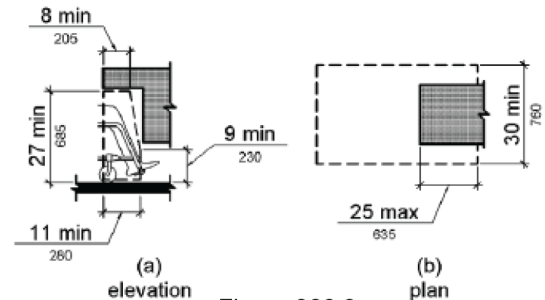


Figure 306.3
Knee Clearance

306.3 Knee Clearance.

306.3.1 General. Space under an element between 9 inches (230 mm) and 27 inches (685 mm) above the finish floor or ground shall be considered knee clearance and shall comply with 306.3.

306.3.2 Maximum Depth. Knee clearance shall extend 25 inches (635 mm) maximum under an element at 9 inches (230 mm) above the finish floor or ground.

306.3.3 Minimum Required Depth. Where knee clearance is required under an element as part of a clear floor space, the knee clearance shall be 11 inches (280 mm) deep minimum at 9 inches (230 mm) above the finish floor or ground, and 8 inches (205 mm) deep minimum at 27 inches (685 mm) above the finish floor or ground.

306.3.4 Clearance Reduction. Between 9 inches (230 mm) and 27 inches (685 mm) above the finish floor or ground, the knee clearance shall be permitted to reduce at a rate of 1 inch (25 mm) in depth for each 6 inches (150 mm) in height.

306.3.5 Width. Knee clearance shall be 30 inches (760 mm) wide minimum.

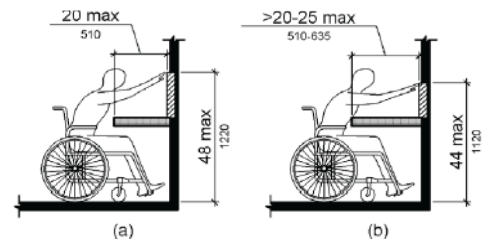


Figure 308.2.2 Obstructed High Forward Reach

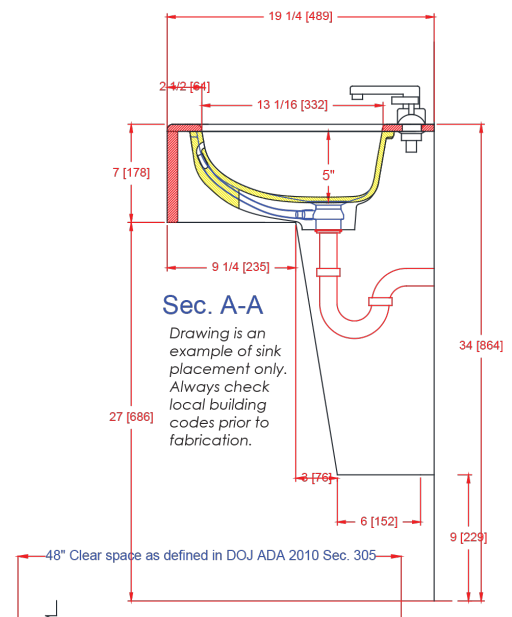
308.2 Forward Reach.

308.2.2 Obstructed High Reach. Where a high forward reach is over an obstruction, the clear floor space shall extend beneath the element for a distance not less than the required reach depth over the obstruction. The high forward reach shall be 48 inches (1220 mm) maximum where the reach depth is 20 inches (510 mm) maximum. Where the reach depth exceeds 20 inches (510 mm), the high forward reach shall be 44 inches (1120 mm) maximum and the reach depth shall be 25 inches (635 mm) maximum.

309.3 Height. Operable parts shall be placed within one or more of the reach ranges specified in 308.

606.4 Faucets. Controls for faucets shall comply with 309. Hand-operated metering faucets shall remain open for 10 seconds minimum.

For further information or questions, access the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design at www.ada.gov, or contact: Gemstone at 877-233-7893 or 520-954-1700



New 1613-HVO Vanity placement example