

# Parks & Recreation Technical Bulletin ADA Accessibility in Recreation Areas

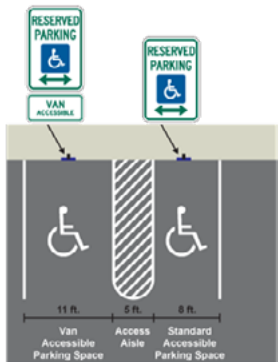
The ADA's regulations and the ADA Standards for Accessible Design, originally published in 1991, set the minimum standard for what makes a facility accessible. The updated 2010 Standards became effective in 2012, and include recreational facilities such as playgrounds, sports fields, and court sports.

**RRD has developed this technical bulletin to provide introductory information related to frequent questions and common errors most often encountered in recreation areas.**

## ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES AND ACCESS AISLES

Accessible parking spaces are required for each parking facility on a site and must be located on the shortest accessible route to an accessible entrance, relative to other spaces in the same parking facility. On sites with multiple parking facilities, the minimum number of accessible spaces must be calculated separately for each parking facility instead of on the combined total of parking spaces provided on the site. Full table of requirements at: [access-board.gov/ada/#ada-208\\_2](http://access-board.gov/ada/#ada-208_2)

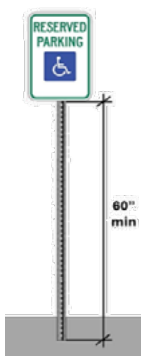
Parking Facility Total Spaces	Minimum Number of Accessible Spaces		
	Standard	Van	Total
1 to 25	0	1	1
26 to 50	1	1	2
51 to 75	2	1	3
76 to 100	3	1	4



Standard accessible parking spaces must be at least 96 inches wide and van parking spaces must be 132 inches wide. They must be marked to define the width, and have an adjacent access aisle. Van spaces provide an additional 3 feet of width to accommodate vehicles equipped with ramps or lifts. This extra space can be added to either the parking space or to the access aisle. A wider access aisle saves space since two spaces can share one aisle, but wider spaces can help prevent misuse of the access aisle as a parking space. Parking spaces and access aisles must meet ADA requirements for floor and ground surfaces with slopes not over 1:48 or 2%.

Sizing all accessible spaces and access aisles for van accessibility provides greater convenience and helps ensure that van spaces remain available for those who need them. RRD often encourages design that utilizes a pair of 8 foot accessible spaces with a shared 8 foot access aisle. Full details: [access-board.gov/ada/#ada-502](http://access-board.gov/ada/#ada-502)

Accessible routes must connect directly to access aisles. At least one accessible route within the boundary of the site originating from site arrival points must connect all accessible buildings, facilities, elements, and spaces on a site. Bollards, signs, columns, or other elements cannot be located in the access aisle or reduce the minimum clear width of accessible routes. Curb ramps, where provided, must not protrude into access aisles to accommodate wheelchair transfers, vehicle ramps, or lifts. [access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-5-parking/#accessible-routes-and-access-aisles](http://access-board.gov/ada/guides/chapter-5-parking/#accessible-routes-and-access-aisles)



Accessible spaces must be identified by signs with the International Symbol of Accessibility. The state of TN now requires the Dynamic Symbol of Accessibility on all state-owned facilities. Signs identifying van spaces must include the term "van accessible." This designation is informative and does not restrict use of such spaces to van users only. Signs must be at least 60 inches high measured to the bottom edge so that they are visible while vehicles are parked in a space. Signs can be on posts, or where feasible, on walls or suspended from ceilings (a minimum headroom clearance of 80 inches is required at signs suspended above circulation paths). ISA designations on the parking surface, even if required by a state or local government, cannot substitute for above-ground signs that remain visible at all times. Full details: [access-board.gov/ada/#ada-502\\_6](http://access-board.gov/ada/#ada-502_6)

# ADA Accessibility in Recreation Areas

## ACCESSIBILITY IN PLAY AREAS

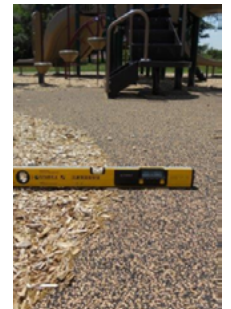
An accessible route must connect a pathway from accessible parking, into the facility, and to the main entrance of the play area. Within the play area, the clear width of the ground level accessible routes shall be 60 inches minimum and must connect all accessible elements and features of the play area within the site.

Two exceptions may be applied:

- 1) In play areas less than 1000 square feet, the clear width of accessible routes shall be permitted to be 44 inches minimum, if at least one turning space is provided where the restricted accessible route exceeds 30 feet in length; or
- 2) the clear width of accessible routes shall be permitted to be 36 inches minimum for a distance of 60 inches maximum provided that multiple reduced width segments are separated by segments that are 60 inches wide minimum and 60 inches long minimum.

Where accessible routes serve ground level play components:

- The vertical clearance shall be 80 inches high minimum.
- The running slope not steeper than 1:16 or 6.25%.
- The cross slope shall not be steeper than 1:48 or 2%.
- Openings in floor or ground surfaces shall not allow passage of a sphere more than ½ inch diameter.
- Changes in level shall be ½ inch high maximum shall be beveled with a slope not steeper than 1:2 or 50%.



Ground surfaces along accessible routes, clear floor or ground spaces, and maneuvering spaces, must comply with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F 1951-99 Standard Specification for Determination of Accessibility to Surface Systems Under and Around Playground Equipment. This standard assesses the accessibility of a surface by measuring the work an individual must exert to propel a wheelchair across the surface. Within the play area, the safety surfacing must comply with ASTM F 1292-99 or 04 -Standard Specification for Impact Attenuation of Surfacing Materials Within the Use Zone of Playground Equipment when located within the use-zone.

Composite play structures must have elevated accessible routes by ramp and/or transfer systems to connect at least 50 percent of the elevated play components. Large composite play structures with more than 20 elevated play components must have at least 25 percent of the elevated play components connected by elevated ramps. Play areas must have one of each type at ground level and 50 percent elevated must be accessible.

A detailed listing of number and types can be found here:

[access-board.gov/ada/#ada-240\\_2\\_1\\_2](https://access-board.gov/ada/#ada-240_2_1_2)

For a complete listing of accessibility requirements for Play Areas visit:

[access-board.gov/ada/#ada-1008](https://access-board.gov/ada/#ada-1008)

**To qualify for federal and state recreational grant programs administered by TDEC's Recreation Resources Division (RRD), all projects must be constructed to ADA standards.**

**RENOVATIONS:** If grant dollars are used to renovate a pavilion, dugout, bleachers, or lighting on a sports field, ADA regulations require accessible routes from ADA compliant parking spaces to the play area, sports field, or court. Resurfacing or resealing and projects that add new parking spaces constitute alterations (or additions) and must include accessible spaces meeting ADA requirements.

**NEW CONSTRUCTION:** New facilities constructed with grant dollars must meet ADA standards for accessible parking, accessible routes, and facility-specific guidelines. **For detailed information, RRD recommends the following:** [ada.gov/](https://ada.gov/) and [access-board.gov/ada/](https://access-board.gov/ada/)

TDEC - RECREATION RESOURCES DIVISION - PARKS AND RECREATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE (PARTAS)

The Division of Recreation Resources provides parks and recreation grant, planning, and technical assistance services to local governments in Tennessee. Visit [tn.gov/environment/program-areas/res-recreation-educational-services.html](https://tn.gov/environment/program-areas/res-recreation-educational-services.html)

To find the PARTAS Consultant in your area and request technical assistance start with the PARTAS MAP. Visit [tn.gov/environment/program-areas/res-recreation-educational-services/res-parks-and-recreation-technical-assistance-service.html](https://tn.gov/environment/program-areas/res-recreation-educational-services/res-parks-and-recreation-technical-assistance-service.html)