



Showering

If you have difficulty showering, equipment and using particular showering techniques can be helpful. It is important that equipment is suitable for your needs and your bathroom. Equipment can be dangerous if it is unsuitable, is not used correctly or has been installed incorrectly. A combination of options may be needed to help you to find the right solution for you.

ILC Tas has a range of equipment on display which may help with showering. You can make an appointment with an occupational therapist at the centre to discuss equipment which may suit your needs. If you have a shower over a bath, ILC Tas also has an information sheet with equipment suggestions for getting into and out of the bath. You can contact ILC Tas on 1300 885 886 for further information.

Grab rails

Grab rails provide a fixed structure for you to hold for stability and support. Ensure that grab rails comply with Australian Standards and are properly installed by a qualified tradesman who will make sure that the rails are correctly attached and safe to use. Do not use towel rails as grab rails as they are not designed to take your weight. For more information about how and where to install grab rails, contact ILC Tas.

Hand held showers

Hand held showers can help you direct the water to hard to reach places and can be easier to use than fixed shower outlets if you sit to shower. Hand held showers can allow you to direct the water away from you if the water suddenly turns hot or cold. A hand held shower can be installed on a grab rail. This means that you can slide the shower head up and down and if necessary you can grasp the rail. Make sure the grab rail is designed to take your weight.



A handheld shower mounted on a grab rail

Independent Living Centre Tasmania

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Shower seating

Shower stools enable you to sit down when showering. These can help if you are unsteady or get tired whilst showering. **Shower chairs** with a backrest are also available. Most shower chairs and stools have height adjustable legs. Armrests on the shower stool or chair can help you get up and down more easily.

Taps

Tap turners are lever aids that can help you turn taps on and off. There are many styles of taps so it is important to make sure that the tap turner fits the style of tap you have.

You can replace your taps with **lever taps** or a **mixer tap**.

Replacing the tap spindles with **ceramic spindles** can often make them easier to operate. Speak to a plumber about this as they are not suitable for all home plumbing.

There are devices that can regulate the water temperature or cut the water off if it gets too hot. For more details about this and other options, contact ILC Tas.

Slip-resistant flooring

To make the floor of your shower less slippery you can use **slip resistant adhesive strips** or a **mat**. Any mat in a wet area should be used with caution. **Slip resistant paint** and other applications can make the floor less slippery. Consider the floor outside the shower as this can also get slippery.

Getting into the shower

Some shower recesses have a lip or hob to step over. If you find that stepping over is difficult, the use of equipment and techniques may help. For more details, contact ILC Tas.

Home modifications

If using your existing shower becomes too difficult, consider replacing it with a step-less shower. A **step-less shower base** fits flush with existing flooring. You can walk into a step-less shower without the need to step over a lip. A step-less shower base also enables you to use a **wheeled shower commode** if you ever need one. ILC Tas has a step-less shower on display. ILC Tas can also show you other features to make your bathroom more accessible or adaptable for your needs, now and in the future. Incorporating adaptable features enables the bathroom to be easily modified in the future. There are also several publications about this topic. For details, contact ILC Tas on 1300 885 886.



Shower Chair



Tap turner

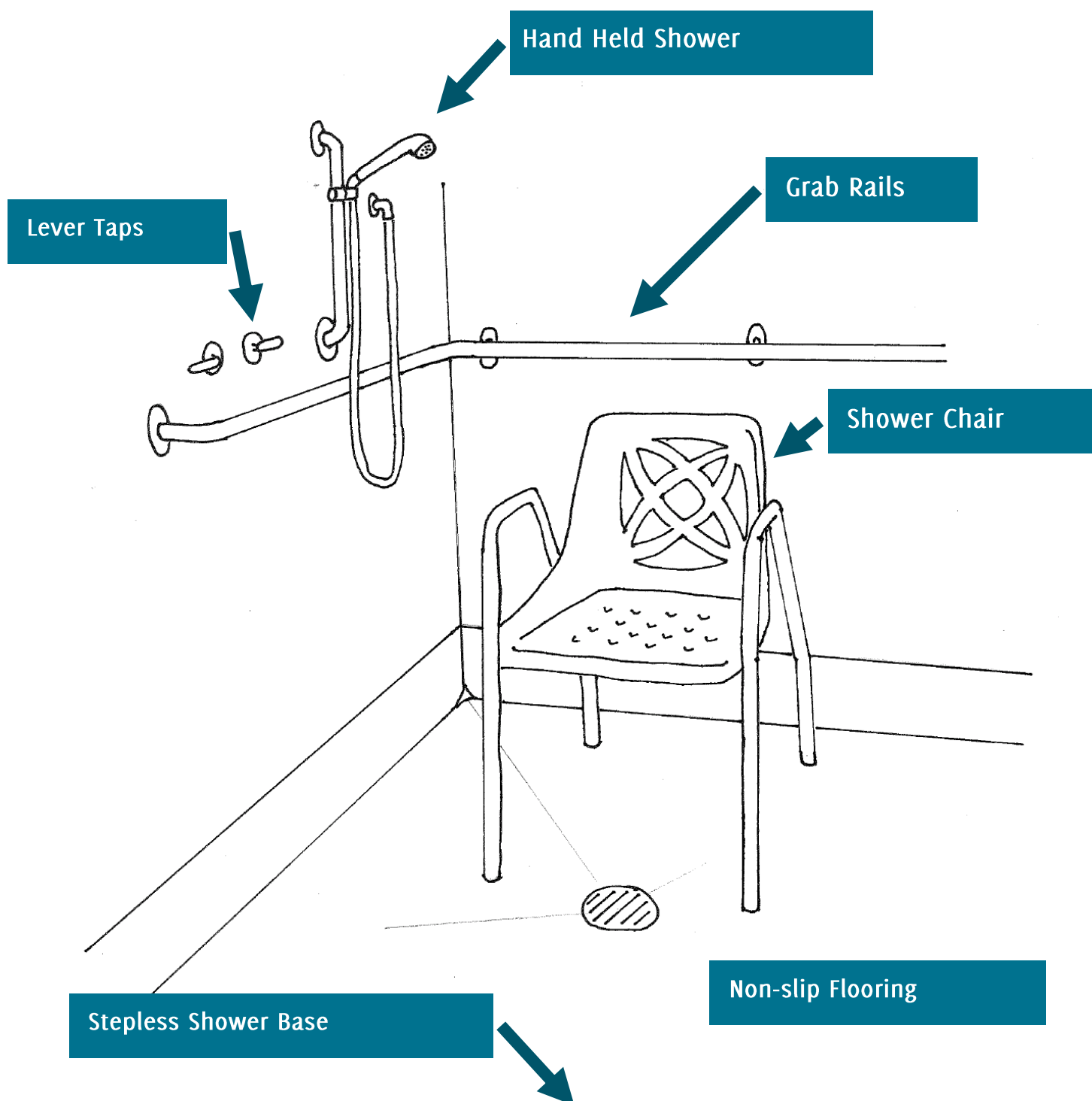


Lever taps



Mixer tap

Features to make showering easier



Bending down to wash yourself

If you have difficulty bending to wash there are aids that can help.

You can use **soap on a rope** so that you do not need to bend to pick up the soap. Alternatively, you can put soap in a stocking which you tie around your wrist or to a grab rail. Some people prefer to use liquid soap with a pump.

To wash hard to reach places such as your back, legs and feet, you can use a **long handled sponge**.

Sit on a **shower chair or stool** and rub your feet against a face-washer on the bottom of the shower, if you have difficulty bending to wash your feet. To wash between your toes, use a **toe washer**. You can buy toe washers or make your own.

To make your own toe washer, take a ruler (making sure there are no sharp edges or splinters) and wrap some dishcloth around the end. Secure the dishcloth with a rubber band. To dry your feet, replace the dishcloth with a dry one.

To see the bottom of your feet, you can use a mirror placed on the floor. Also available are magnifying makeup mirrors and mirrors with long handles.



Toe wiper

Drying yourself

If you have difficulty bending to dry your legs, wrap a towel around a **long handled reacher**.

To dry your back, try putting on a terry toweling dressing gown.

Long handled lotion applicators are also available.



Long handled reachers

Financial Assistance

In some cases, it may be possible to obtain financial assistance for equipment or home modifications. For information on financial assistance which may be available, contact ILC Tas.

Contact ILC Tas for more information



Ring 1300 885 886 to speak to a health professional.



Visit our website www.ilctas.asn.au or email ilc@ilctas.asn.au.



Make an appointment to visit the centre at 275 Wellington Street, South Launceston.



Ring us to find out when we will be in your area.

ILC Tas is a not-for-profit organisation and does not sell equipment.

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