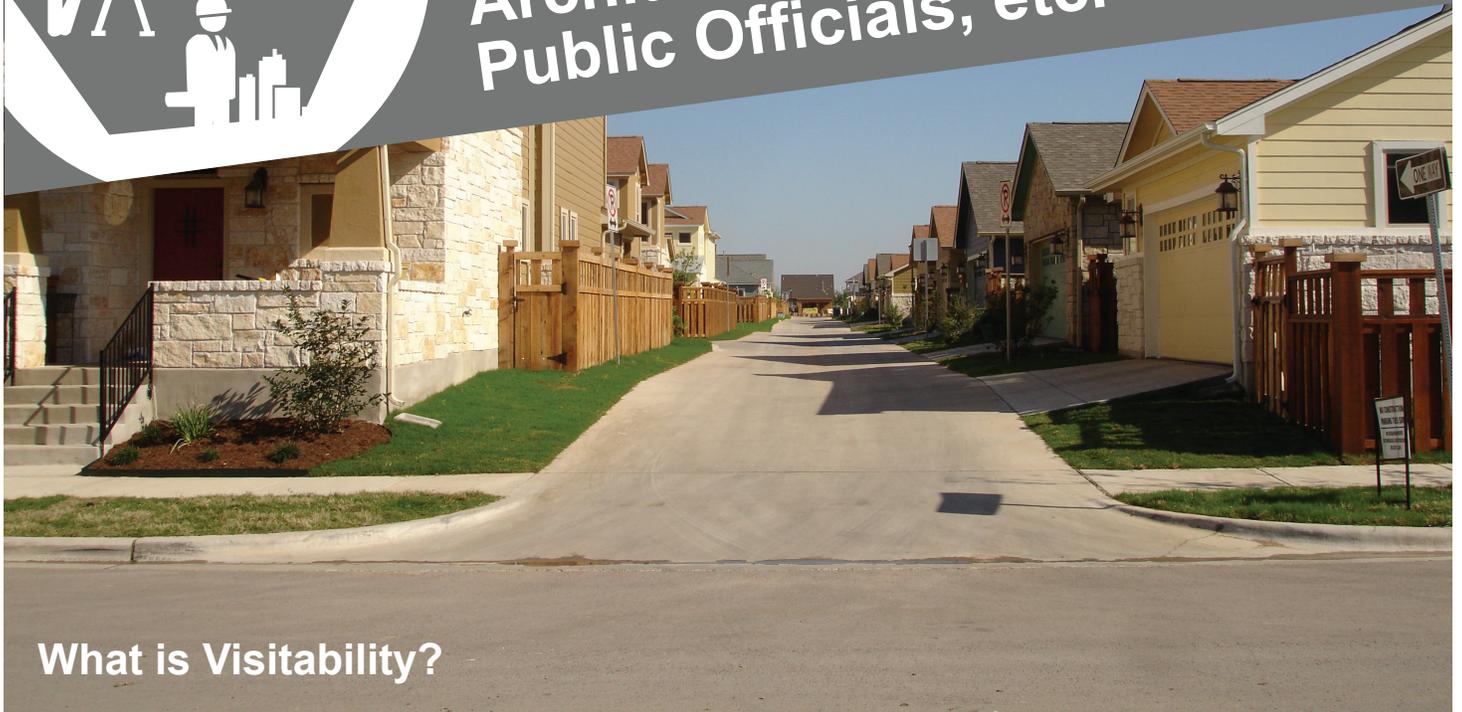




Visitable Homes for
**Architects, Builders, Planners,
Public Officials, etc.**



What is Visitability?

Visitability represents a highly focused strategy in the continuing evolution of accessible housing policy and practice in the United States. It is an affordable and sustainable approach for integrating basic accessibility features as a routine construction practice in all newly built 1-3 family homes.

As it was originally conceived, visitability seeks to make homes more accessible by having them meet only three conditions:

- **One zero-step entrance at the front, side or rear of the home;**
- **32 inch wide clearances at doorways and hallways with at least 36 inches of clear width;**
- **And, at least an accessible half bath on the main floor.**

These features are considered the most essential for a person with mobility impairments to visit or live in a home, at least temporarily.

ICC Type C Units

The ICC/ANSI A117.1 Standard on Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities is the consensus standard in the U.S. for defining the details of accessible construction and is referenced by most building codes in the country. The committee that promulgates the Standard developed a new section with technical design criteria for Visitability. Referred to as Type C units, the section can be referenced by visitability laws and programs, thus promoting uniformity in applications and aiding in their interpretation.

The Type C units contain technical criteria for six features: no-step entrances, wider doorways, access to a half-bath on the main floor, reinforcement in bathroom walls for future grab bar installation, maneuvering space in food preparation facilities if provided on the floor served by the zero step entrance, and light switches and electrical outlets within comfortable reach for all.

For more information on Type C units:

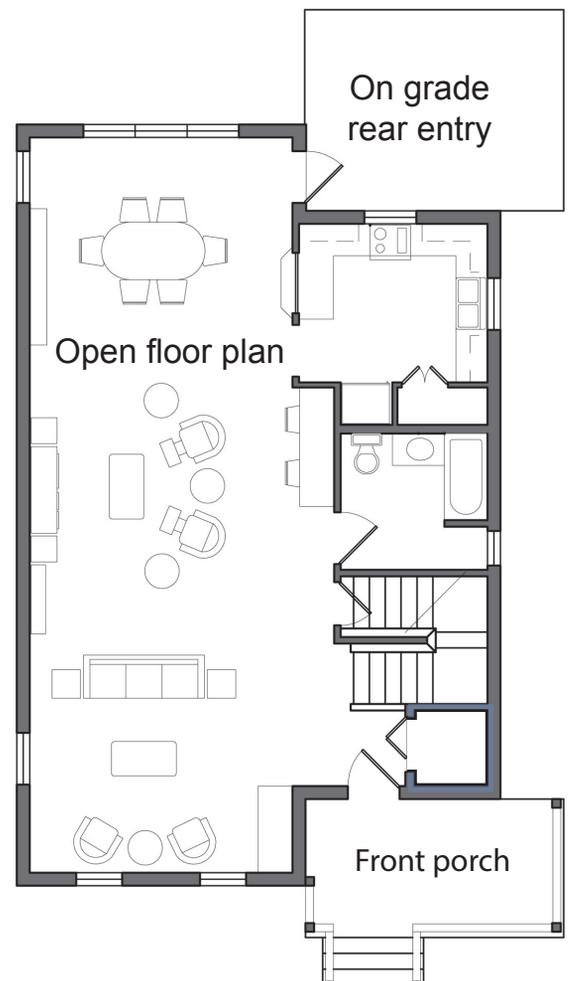
<https://law.resource.org/pub/us/code/ibr/ansi.a117.1.2009.html>

Example Design

This is an example of a single-family home design that includes visitable features. It has an on-grade rear entry and patio, a front porch accessible from the interior, an open plan, and a first floor bathroom. The bathroom has a 36-inch door and enough space for convenient wheelchair use.



ELEVATION OF A VISITABLE HOME



PLAN OF A VISITABLE HOME

Additional Examples



NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

This photo shows a mews, a feature that promotes friendship formation. But, without accessibility from houses to the mews, residents with mobility limitations cannot benefit from this feature.



A HIGH-END VISITABLE SUBURBAN HOME

This photo shows a high-end visitable suburban home with a zero-step front entry. When compared to homes with lengthy ramps in their front yards, this house style fits well in the suburban neighborhood.



AN AFFORDABLE VISITABLE SUBURBAN HOME

This photo shows an affordable visitable suburban home with a zero-step front entry.

Key Resources:

- **AARP's Increasing Home Access: Designing for Visitability (AARP)** examines the different types of visitability initiatives and evaluates their potential for improving the prospects for aging independently in one's home and community.
- **Inclusive Housing: A Pattern Book (W.W. Norton & Company)**
- **Visit-ability: an Approach to Universal Design in Housing (IDeA Center)**

Visit: <http://udeworld.com/visitability-initiative.html> for free full versions of these and other reports.

Inclusive Housing: A Pattern Book is available for purchase on Amazon.com.

Want to learn more and earn AIA/CE credits?

The IDeA Center's online courses and publications are for everyone: advocates, builders and contractors, planners, architects, occupational and physical therapists, and policymakers. Our expert staff will give anyone interested in inclusive places, products, and systems the foundation needed to recognize, understand, appreciate, apply, and advocate for Universal Design in their homes, offices, and communities. The courses and publications address the knowledge bases relevant to solving many design problems using case studies to demonstrate the value of Universal Design.

Current Course List:

www.udeworld.com/training/continuing-education.html

Defining Universal Design

Practicing Universal Design

Design for Human Performance

Design for Health, Wellness, & Social Participation

UD and Public Accommodations

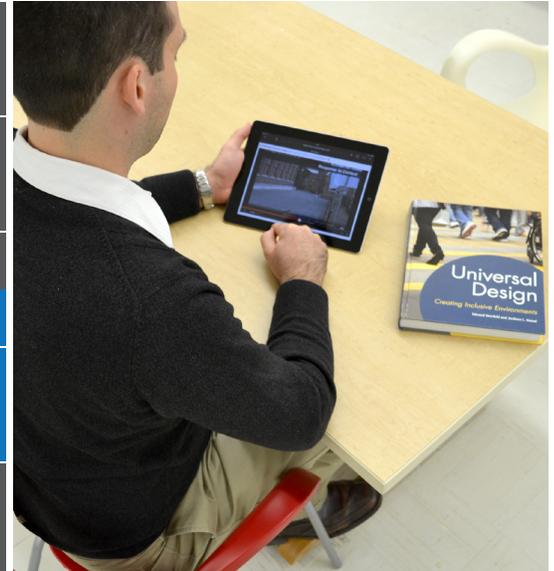
UD and Housing 1: Policy and Trends

UD and Housing 2: Design Applications

UD and Home Modifications

UD and Interior Environments

UD and Public Transportation



For more information, please contact us by any of the means listed below.



Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access

University at Buffalo | School of Architecture and Planning

Dedicated to making environments and products more usable, safer, and healthier. Since 1984, the IDeA Center has been a leading site for research, development, training, and dissemination activities related to Universal Design.

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