

# Guidelines for Accessible Fitness Equipment

## What is Accessible Fitness Equipment?

Accessible equipment must enable both individuals with and without disabilities to benefit from a full body cardiovascular and resistance based workout using the same piece of equipment.

The Activity Alliance in the UK have developed an accreditation system for fitness equipment. They developed the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) Accredited equipment list to ensure that fitness equipment meets specific design standards and to ensure it is fully inclusive.

Cara endorses the accredited inclusive and accessible fitness equipment list developed by the Activity Alliance in the UK. There are over 100 pieces of equipment on this list spanning 18 different manufacturers which meet the design standards set out to ensure that each piece is accessible for everyone. The items of equipment on this list have been product tested by and in consultation with people with disabilities and also approved by experienced industry experts.

For a complete up to date list of IFI accredited suppliers and accessible fitness equipment please contact: [info@caracentre.ie](mailto:info@caracentre.ie)

The table at Appendix 1 shows a list of suppliers in Ireland for the more common types of accessible equipment.



## Examples of how gym equipment can be made accessible

Changes that can be made	Benefit of using	Who will this benefit
Large display screen	Makes reading the console easier	People with vision impairments
High contrast	Helps to differentiate objects from their back ground	People with vision impairments
Adjustable	Allows equipment to be adjusted or modified to allow ease of access and use	People with physical disabilities and limited mobility
Raised buttons (Bump on's)	Gives a user a better opportunity to use the activity consoles on the gym equipment	People with vision impairments
Induction loop	Drowns out background noise for an individual that uses a hearing device	People that use a hearing device
Gripping aids	Gripping aids allow an individual to get better hand grip or hold on a piece of equipment	People with limited hand grip function or mobility

## Rowing Machines

### Accessible rowing machine

An adaptive seat allows people with many types of disabilities to use the rowing machine. Different versions of the adaptive seat are available. Higher support seats will provide more support to people that need more core or high level support. The adaptive seat in pictures 1 & 2 can be used by everyone, picture 3 is an adaptive seat which offers increased support to a person with a spinal cord injury.



Concept 2 rowing machine



1



2



3

## Exercise Bikes

### Accessible exercise bike

This bike should have a large display screen, high contrast handles, adjustable sliding seat and no barrier to step over to get on the bike.



Standard exercise bike



Accessible exercise bike

## Treadmills

### Accessible treadmill

Accessible treadmills have an adjustable step, very slow start speed, high contrast markings at the edge of running strip and large display screens with raised buttons for easier navigation.

### Adapted treadmills

The Invictus Active Trainer is the ideal solution for gyms and leisure centres as an alternative piece of aerobic machinery for wheelchair users. The Invictus Trainer allows a wheelchair user to remain in their wheelchair while working out.



Standard treadmill



Accessible treadmill



Invictus  
Trainer

Adapted treadmill

For more information click on the following:

<http://www.invictusactive.com/inclusive-fitness-solution/>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I\\_NNhCWbpws](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_NNhCWbpws)

## Resistance Machines

### Accessible resistance machines

Accessible resistance machines have a seat that can swivel out of the way and has high contrast handles, levers and buttons.



Standard resistance machine

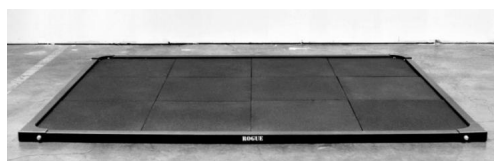


Accessible resistance machines

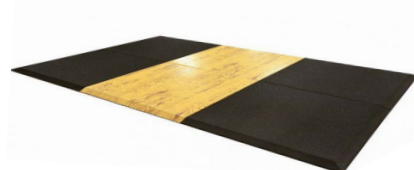
## Weights Platform

### Accessible weights platform

An accessible platform has a bevelled edge for wheelchair users.



Standard weights platform



Accessible weights platform

## Weights Bench

### Accessible weights bench

A wider bench will provide a person with reduced core strength or reduced balance greater support and stability when doing free weights. The bench can also be coupled with a velcro strap to add extra stability.



Standard weights bench



Accessible weights bench



## Gripping Aids

Active Hands manufacture a range of gripping solutions and equipment for use in the gym. They are suitable for those who are just starting out to those who are training at a Paralympic level. The gripping aids are made to be tough enough to withstand the hardest work out.

Active Hands gripping aids can give you access to a range of equipment.

**General purpose aids** are great for getting a firm grip on equipment such as:

- Free weights
- Most bars or gym machines
- Rowing machines
- Hand bike style gym machines



For more information visit: <http://www.activehands.com>

[Click here to watch the Active Hands Disability Gym Workout YouTube video](#)

Cara have developed a number of other resources that will assist you in making your fitness facility more accessible.

- Accessibility Guidelines for Leisure Centres
- Improving Accessibility of your Fitness Facility – A gym layout
- Fit for All Movement Plan
- A Guide to Developing a Disability Inclusion Policy
- Inclusion Officer Role Description

For more information please visit the resources section of the Cara website:

[www.caracentre.ie](http://www.caracentre.ie)

Cara also provides Inclusive Fitness Training. The training is specifically designed to help increase the confidence and awareness of fitness managers, fitness professionals and all front line staff to work with people with disabilities.

To find out more about the training, email [training@caracentre.ie](mailto:training@caracentre.ie) or click on our website at [www.caracentre.ie](http://www.caracentre.ie)

## Appendix

Company Name	Brand of Equipment Supplied	Website	Telephone Number
Art of Fitness	Indigo Fitness / Leisurelines	<a href="http://www.artoffitness.ie">www.artoffitness.ie</a>	01 667 0185
Expert leisure Supplies	Free Motion and SportArt	<a href="http://www.expertleisure.ie">http://www.expertleisure.ie</a>	01 401 9774
MCSport	Precor and Concept 2	<a href="http://www.mcsport.ie">http://www.mcsport.ie</a>	01 293 0005
Podium for Sport	Matrix and Leisurelines	<a href="http://podium4sport.com">http://podium4sport.com</a>	01 685 3288
TTFitness	Technogym Fitness	<a href="http://www.ttfitness.ie">http://www.ttfitness.ie</a>	042 966 7666
Fittr	Life Fitness and Cybex	<a href="http://www.fittr.ie">http://www.fittr.ie</a>	01 531 0190
Pulse Fitness Ireland	Pulse Fitness	<a href="http://www.pulsefitnessireland.com">http://www.pulsefitnessireland.com</a>	041 980 2600
Fitdist	TRX Equipment	<a href="http://www.fitdist.com">www.fitdist.com</a>	01 807 5407
Aqualine	Pool Hoists and Supplies	<a href="http://www.aqualine.ie/swimming">http://www.aqualine.ie/swimming</a>	01 462 7532

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