Best Friend Mobility

# USER'S MANUAL

**Rear Support Wheelchair**

For Sizes 2XS/XS/S/M

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


INTRODUCTION ..... 1

PRODUCT INFORMATION ..... 3

Measure Your Pet ..... 3

ASSEMBLY ..... 5

Breakdown of Pre-assembled Parts ..... 5

Assembling the Wheelchair ..... 7

WHEELCHAIR USE ..... 11

Fitting Your Pet into the Wheelchair ..... 13

Troubleshooting ..... 16

CARE AND MAINTENANCE ..... 18

CONTACT US ..... 19

**Best Friend Mobility® Rehabilitation Aids**

Dear Pet Owner and Valued Customer:

The following guidelines, along with the attached assembly and fitting instructions, will help you get the best use of your dog wheelchair.

Please read and follow the Assembly instructions before making any attempt to place your pet in the wheelchair. Should you encounter any problems with assembly and fitting, please call Best Friend Mobility directly through our hotline **(843) 492-5283**.

If you think you need a different size, we can process the exchange for you easily. Just contact us at **support@dogwheelchairscenter.com** or call our hotline.

**NOTE:** With regard to the front harness, it is possible that your pet may need to go either one size bigger or smaller than you originally thought. If for some reason the front harness does not fit, please contact us immediately so we can send you the next size according to your pet's requirement.

If your pet is fully NON-weight-bearing on its hind legs, we recommend that you gradually condition your pet to wheelchair use before prolonged periods are attempted. It generally takes about two (2) weeks for your pet to develop satisfactory foreleg strength to compensate for the non-weight bearing state of the hind legs in the wheelchair.

We suggest that you start your pet on a 10-minute exercise regimen, walking over a hard surface. We advise using a leash that is attached either to your pet's collar or to the wheelchair's front harness. Repeat twice daily for the first few days then increase to thrice daily thereafter.

Once your pet adapts to the 10-minute exercise sessions, the length of time can be extended to match your pet's stamina. For pets that are coming back to walking on their own, we recommend daily use of their wheelchair in order to get sufficient exercise. Time on the wheelchair will NOT prevent them from walking, it will instead encourage them to do so and aid in their rehabilitation.

PETS SHOULD NEVER BE LEFT UNSUPERVISED IN THEIR WHEELCHAIRS.

This is a learning process and can take time. We realize that both you and your pet are most likely unfamiliar with the use of a dog wheelchair so do not hesitate to contact us for help. Please be advised that most dogs do not intuitively know how to use a wheelchair, they will require training and practice.

Some dogs may be afraid in the beginning so it is important to give positive reinforcement when placing them in the chair, especially for the first time.

Use treats. Treats held in front of your pet will encourage it to take steps and move forward; this will teach them to ambulate while in the chair. **It may take several training sessions before a dog is able to actually use the wheelchair. It is okay and normal if your dog does not take to it right away.**

It is very important, especially with skittish animals, that they come into physical contact with the wheelchair in some way every day. This should always be coupled with positive reinforcement like praise, pets, and treats. This will help to create a positive association with the wheelchair and help the animal to eventually to love the wheelchair and be able to learn to use it. This process may take from days to months, so please don't lose hope, persistence will pay off. Contact us for any help or questions.

Thank you for purchasing a Best Friend Mobilty dog wheelchair.
Again, we love receiving feedback, stories, photos, and videos of how your pets are doing in their wheelchairs. We can feature them on our site and share your pet's stories with other pet owners.

Sincerely,

*Tim Cantrell*

Vice President
Best Friend Mobility
Phone: 843.492.5283
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The Best Friend Mobility Rear Support Wheelchair is another way of saying we've got our four-legged friend's back. With a little help from their friends, our furry pals can do more than get by; they can continue to enjoy life.

Made from lightweight aluminum non-rust alloy with all terrain pneumatic wheels, this dog wheelchair also features padded shoulder support, double-thronged adjustable neoprene shoulder harness, and a built-in adjustable double rear padded harness. Both male and female dogs will have no trouble relieving themselves comfortably even while on their Rear Support pet wheelchair.

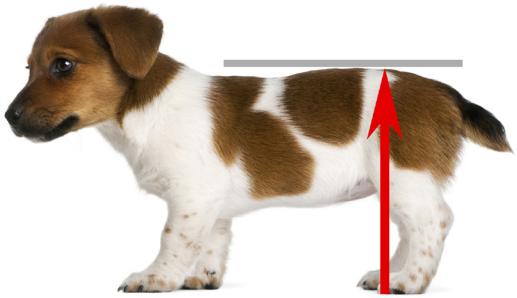
This Best Friend Mobility Rear Support wheelchair is made to fit dogs according to height. If you find that the wheelchair you received is too big or too small for your pet, again, please call us immediately so that we can make sure you have the correct size.

**MEASURE YOUR PET**

Measure your pet to confirm that you have the correct size Best Friend Mobility Rear Support Wheelchair for your pet.

The only information you truly need to get the right size is the measurement from the floor to your pet's back—at its hindquarters. It's that simple!
Depending on your pet's current capabilities and its willingness to cooperate, this can be a 1-person or 2-person job.

If your pet has very little or no rear-limb strength, one person can be the support while the other does the measuring.



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## REAR SUPPORT WHEELCHAIR SIZE CHART

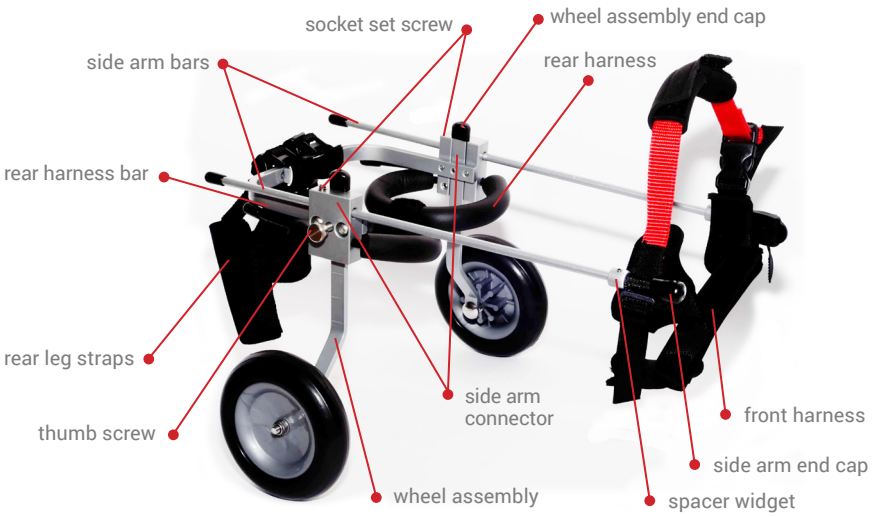
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2XS | 8” - 11” | M | 16” - 20” |
| XS | 9” - 14” | L | 20” - 26” |
| S | 13” - 17” | XL | 23” - 29” |

**Specifications:**

- Lightweight, adjustable non-rust aluminum frame
- Stainless steel hardware
- Deluxe neoprene front and rear harness for complete comfort
- Designed and tested by a canine orthopaedic surgeon
- Easy hex wrench adjustment of height, length, and width
- Great for pets needing assisted walking or full weight support (zero weight-bearing) for hind legs
- Allows pets to go to the bathroom even while in the wheelchair
- All terrain polyurethane wheels with precision-sealed ball bearings
- Easy clip-on front harness system
- Durable and easy-to-clean rear harness

**The Rear Support Wheelchair is good for:**

- Hip Dysplasia
- Arthritis
- Neurological problems such as osteomyelitis or degenerative myelopathy
- Fracture of the spine/back
- Rear limb amputation
- Ligamentous injuries such as PCL or ACL
- Thoracic or lumbar disc injuries
- Rehabilitation
- Any other condition that results in rear leg or joint pain, or weakness and discomfort from any weight-bearing activities




**Breakdown of Pre-Assembled Parts and Tools**

All these parts come pre-assembled

A. Cart Frame Assembly

B. Left and Right Wheel Assemblies

C. Rear Leg Straps

D. Front Harness

E. Hex Wrench

**Assembling the Wheelchair**

Your best Friend Mobility Rear Support Wheelchair is shipped partially assembled. All that's left to do is to insert the left and right wheel assemblies the corresponding side arm connector and make some adjustments.

Before you start assembly, make sure you can tell the wheelchair frame's right side up. To determine this, with the frame's rear against you, the side arm bars will be positioned noticeably higher. Mark it with a piece of tape if needed.

For shipping purposes, the side arm bar screws may have been loosened to allow for easier packing. Turn the wheelchair frame right side down and move each side arm bar so that the back end cap is one and a half inches off from the side arm connector. Use the hex wrench to lightly tighten the screw on top of the side arm connector. This is also how you will adjust the side arm bars later as you start the fitting process.

1. To attach the left and right wheel assemblies

1.1 Remove rubber end cap from the end of the right wheel assembly (B).

1.2 Loosen the thumbscrew on the right side arm connector in the cart frame assembly (A).

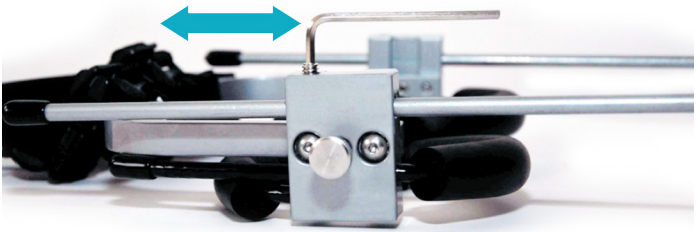
1.3 Insert right wheel assembly through the side arm connector. Keeping the side with the divots facing out. This will help you make height adjustment easier.

1.4 Adjust to desired height and tighten thumbscrew. Return rubber end cap.

1.5 Repeat steps 1.1 to 1.4 to install the left wheel assembly to the left side arm connector.

**NOTE: When adjusting height, check your pet from various angles especially from the side. Make sure your pet's back is level.**

2. To adjust length



2.1 Loosen socket set screws on the top portion of the side arm connector.

2.2 Adjust length by pulling or pushing the side arm.

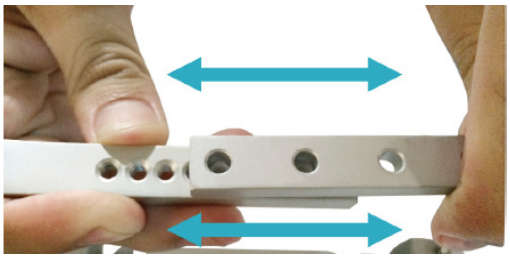
2.3 Repeat on other side arm. Make sure to align both sides.

2.4 Tighten socket set screws.

**NOTE: Check the length of the wheelchair's side arms. While your pet is standing still and with its forelegs legs straight, the side arms should end right behind the forelegs or up to the point of shoulder.**

3. To adjust width

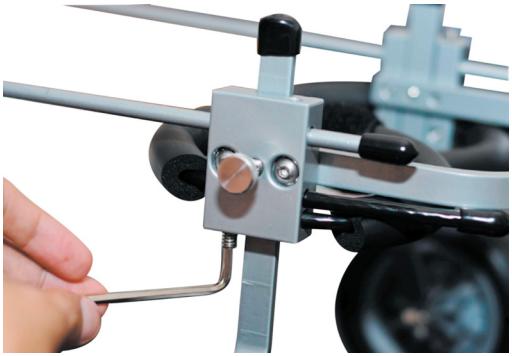
3.1 Loosen and remove sucker button head cap screws on the rear harness bar using the hex wrench.



3.2 Move the rear harness bars to desired width. Make sure that at least two holes on the right rear harness bar are aligned to two holes on the left rear harness bar.

3.3 Return socket button head cap screws on aligned holes and tighten with the hex wrench.

4. To adjust the rear harness



4.1 Loosen the hex screw located at the bottom of the side arm connector.

4.2 Push in the attached black cables to loosen the rear harness or pull in to make it tighter.

4.3 Retighten the screws.

**You are done with the assembly!**

If your pet's hind legs are completely non-weight bearing and will need the use of the leg straps, the forelegs will require some conditioning time; it will need additional strength in order to compensate for weight the hind legs and for added comfort while in the Best Friend Mobility Rear Support Wheelchair. Please allow about two weeks for full strengthening of the forelegs before using the pet wheelchair for prolonged periods.

Again, to develop foreleg strength, we recommend 10-minute exercise sessions, with your pet walking over a hard surface. Begin with two 10-minute exercise sessions a day for the first few days and go up to three times daily afterwards. When your pet adapts to the 10-minute exercise sessions, you can extend the time to conform to your pet's stamina.

Is your pet is too weak to stay on its forelegs while in the Best Friend Mobility Rear Support wheelchair due to being inactive or overweight? Attaching a leash on your pet's collar or to the wheelchair's front harness will help encourage your pet to walk or move and eventually work up to completing the conditioning regimen.

If your pet's forelegs do not display enough strength within a few weeks, it may need something other than what Best Friend Mobility wheelchair can provide. Observe if your pet is always trying to lie down or is still unable to hold its own weight after a couple of weeks. These are signs that its forelegs aren't strong enough—and not improving—to use a wheelchair.

Your pet may initially move backward instead of forward once in the Best Friend Mobility wheelchair. No need to worry. Your pet is "backing out" due to unfamiliarity. He or she will eventually settle down, become familiar and comfortable, and start moving forward with some assurance and encouragement.

Get your pet and its Best Friend Mobility wheelchair wet! Best Friend Mobility wheelchairs are made mostly of aluminum and will not rust. If the wheelchair is used at the beach and in salt water, just give it a thorough rinse to get the sand, salt water, and dirt off the moving parts; otherwise, getting the unit wet will not damage it.

If the wheel traction of your pet's wheelchair is poor, you may want to check the tire pressure. Remember to keep the pressure slightly below the required PSI. Make sure that the wheels can spin freely.

If the wheels track to one side more than the other, it may simply be due to how your pet naturally walks. You may notice your pet's gait more due to the new wheelchair, however, he or she will get used to the Rear Support wheelchair and be able to compensate in due time. Also, check both sides to make sure that your pet is centered on the wheelchair and adjust the straps if necessary.

**DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PET ALONE IN THE CART!**

1. Put the front harness (D) on your pet

1.1 Loosen the straps of the front harness (D) around the side arms and detach from cart frame assembly (A). Lower the front of the wheel chair (side arms); let it rest on the ground.

1.2 Unclip the front harness' leg strap (red strap)

1.3 Position the front harness (D) on your pet. Guide your pet's head through the black straps, these two are to go below the neck, in front of the forelegs; and over the back and shoulder area.

1.4 The front harness' red strap should be positioned at the bottom. It will go behind the forelegs and across the bottom chest to clip and lock on the other side.

1.5 Adjust the front harness so that it fits your pet snuggly yet comfortably.

2. Put your pet into the rear harness

2.1 Position the wheelchair behind your pet.

2.2 Guide your pet's hind legs to the rear harness. Lift your pet's rear and gently guide the hind legs down into the rear harness.

2.3 Adjust the lift of the rear harness to a comfortable weight-bearing position for your pet.

2.4 Once your pet is properly situated in the rear harness, you can re-attach the front harness to the cart frame by slipping its loops through the side arms up to the spacer widget. Adjust the tightness of the straps as needed.

3. Using the rear leg straps.

3.1 For pets that are completely non-weight-bearing on its hind legs, use the leg straps to protect his or her hocks and keep them from dragging.

3.2 Press the cord lock and pull on cord to loosen the leg strap.

3.3 Insert each leg to a corresponding rear leg strap.

3.4 Adjust to a comfortable tightness

3.5 Attach leg straps to the rear harness bar. Make sure that legs can rest at a comfortable angle.

**NOTES ON FIT**

**Checking Correct Height Setting**

• For pets **without the use** of their hind legs: while standing still on a level surface, the height of the wheelchair should be set so that the shoulders and hips are even.

Please note that when your pet is walking or running, their backs will not stay even due to their movement.

• For pets **with the use** of one or both its hind legs, the wheelchair height needs to be set so that their paws are able to lightly graze the ground and provide them with enough traction to push off with the rear paws.

Often, pets experiencing weakness in their rear legs are affected on one side more than the other. While on their wheelchair, one paw might knuckle over and lead them to depend on the stronger leg more often or lean on that side of the wheelchair. This is something to watch out for so that it can be corrected and countered. A paw that gets knuckled over can be protected by a bootie. And while we cannot stop some pets from favoring their stronger leg, we can help them avoid leaning against the wheelchair and possibly injuring themselves. Do this by placing a piece of foam or a folded towel to act as padding between the leg and the side they are leaning against.

The two side arms of the Rear Support Wheelchair's frame should be parallel to your pet's back and generally, a couple of inches below the top of his or her back. The wheelchair's height may vary depending on your pet's build (e.g. shoulders being lower than the hip). When the harnesses are positioned properly on the side arms, according to your pet's length, the forelegs should in no way rub against them while your pet is walking.

The front harness should rest comfortably under your pet's forelegs. The rear harness should also be adjusted with comfort in mind. Do not raise the rear harness to an angle that is unnatural for your pet.

Make sure to have the front harness' front strap sit slightly above the center of the chest. Never allow it to press against the throat of rest below the center of the chest; such placement may be harmful to your pet. Adjust all straps so that they are comfortably snug; do not overtighten.

The Best Friend Mobility Rear Support Wheelchair is fully adjustable. With just a few adjustments, you can ensure proper fit and make it a safe vehicle for your pet. Avoiding misuse and common errors will allow your pet to quickly start enjoying the use of this mobility aid.

| PROBLEM | SOLUTION |
|---|---|
| The wheelchair tips backward. | • Make sure that the frame's side arm height is a couple of inches below your pet's back. Adjust the side arm height by lowering or raising frame height through the side arm connector and wheel assemblies.<br><br>• Check the front harness. Make sure that it is centered across your pet's chest. Adjust the straps and see if this keeps the wheel chair from tipping. |
| Your pet loses breath while moving using wheelchair. | • Check the front harness. If it is positioned too high, it will press against your pet's throat when walking. Adjust front harness height so that your pet can breathe freely especially while moving. |
| Pet's hind legs not comfortably resting on the rear harness and harness does not extend beyond pet's rear. | • The angle of the harness is too high. Adjust harness height so that your pet's legs are at a comfortable and natural height. |

| PROBLEM | SOLUTION |
| --- | --- |
| Your pet takes shorter strides. | • A too low front harness is the usual culprit. Adjust height so as not to hamper your pet's natural stride. |
| The wheelchair's side arm bars are pointing downward. | • Your straps may not be evenly distributed.<br>1. Loosen the lower girth strap (red strap)<br>2. Tighten the top girth strap enough to hold the side arm bars parallel to the ground.<br>3. Re-tighten the lower girth strap enough so that both straps are snug but comfortable. |
| The wheelchair's side arm bars are pointing upward. | • Same problem as above, uneven distribution of the straps this time favoring the opposite side.<br>1. Loosen the top girth strap.<br>2. Tighten the lower girth strap (red strap) to pull the side arm bars down parallel to the ground.<br>3. Re-tighten top girth strap. Make sure both straps are snug but comfortable. |

Keep the Best Friend Mobility wheelchair clean. Your pet will surely appreciate it and ride with pride. Wipe down aluminum surfaces with warm, soapy water using a soft cloth such as a microfiber or cotton rag. Rinse and dry.

Check the bolts and screws frequently; retighten if loose. Adjust or tighten loose straps as well.

Remember to hose or wipe down tires to keep them from tracking dirt.

Wash the sling, harness, and straps in cool, soapy water and hang them to dry. Opting for a perfume-free detergent will help your pet avoid skin irritation. You may want to try odor neutralizers (homemade or store-bought) to counter any smell that may remain in the harness.

If you find that you have further questions regarding the use of the Best Friend Mobility wheelchair, please contact us at:

**Best Friend Mobility**
**10838 Kings Rd. Myrtle Beach, SC 29572**
**Phone: (843) 492-5283**
**Email: support@dogwheelchairscenter.com**