CHEAT SHEET

Powder room clearances at a glance

Room sizes, code vs. NKBA clearances and door swing, in inches and metric.

ROOM SIZE

Functional minimum	30 × 60 in (76 × 152 cm), about 12.5 sq ft
Average	about 20 sq ft (1.9 m^2), roughly 4 × 5 ft
Comfortable	25–35 sq ft (2.3–3.3 m^2)
3×5 and 3×6 layouts	15 sq ft (1.4 m^2) and 18 sq ft (1.7 m^2)
5×5 and 5×6 layouts	25 sq ft (2.3 m^2) and 30 sq ft (2.8 m^2)

CLEARANCES: CODE VS. NKBA

	CODE MINIMUM (IRC R307.1)	NKBA RECOMMENDED
In front of toilet or sink	21 in (53 cm)	30 in (76 cm)
Toilet centerline to wall or fixture	15 in (38 cm)	18 in (46 cm)
Compartment width, wall to wall	30 in (76 cm)	36 in (91 cm)
Door clear opening	Set by local code	32 in (81 cm); 24 in (61 cm) if the opening can't change

ALSO CHECK

Ceiling height. At least 6 ft 8 in (2.03 m) in the clear space in front of the toilet and sink (IRC).

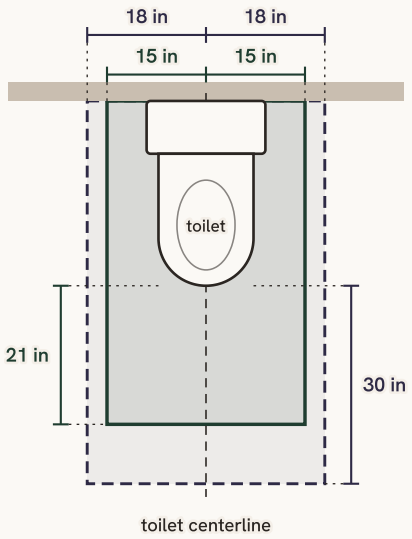
Window or fan. An operable window (3 sq ft of glass, half of it openable) or an exhaust fan: 50 cfm run intermittently, or 20 cfm continuously (2018 IRC R303.3). Some states, California for one, require the fan regardless.

IF YOU NEED ACCESSIBLE (ADA) CLEARANCES

Sink height, floor to rim	34 in (86 cm) max
Knee clearance under sink	27 in (69 cm) min
Clear floor space at the sink	30 × 48 in (76 × 122 cm)

These need meaningfully more room than the standard minimums, so plan for them before the room is framed.

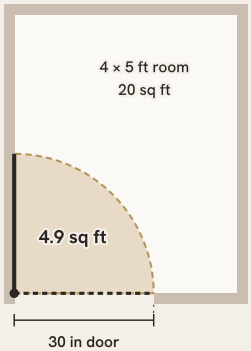
TOILET CLEAR SPACE, TOP VIEW



Code minimum: 15 in each side of the centerline, 21 in in front

NKBA recommended: 18 in each side, 30 in in front

DOOR SWING



A swinging door sweeps a quarter circle whose radius is its width: area = π × width^2 ÷ 4. A pocket door sweeps none.

24 in	3.1 sq ft	0.29 m^2
28 in	4.3 sq ft	0.40 m^2
30 in	4.9 sq ft	0.46 m^2
32 in	5.6 sq ft	0.52 m^2
36 in	7.1 sq ft	0.66 m^2

POCKET DOORS

A pocket door slides into the wall and sweeps no floor. Common frame kits fit a standard 2×4 wall, but the frame is built into the wall, so adding one to an existing room means opening it, and the pocket can't also hold pipes, wires or a vent.

Numbers are from the International Residential Code (2018), the NKBA Bathroom Planning Guidelines and the ADA, as cited in the guide, and were checked in October 2026. I'm not a licensed contractor: building codes vary by state and town, so confirm with your local building department before you build.