Gather ‘round the Table
Accessible Travel Checklist

Air Travel

- If you have your own wheelchair, always take it as far as you can (e.g., right up to the door of the plane). The Air Carrier Access Act gives you the right to do this in the United States, but not necessarily in other countries.
- Before letting someone else touch your power wheelchair, ask to speak to a “ramp agent” or “cargo agent” so you can explain what needs to happen with your chair. Disengage the battery or motor so it can only be pushed.
- Remind check-in desk or gate agents to tag your wheelchair tagged with a disability equipment tag and have the specs about your chair ready (weight, type of batteries, and whether the batteries or joystick are going to be removed).
- Pack all your medical equipment in a separate bag(s) from non-medical items. Airlines are not allowed to charge fees for transporting medical equipment.
- Make it clear to TSA and gate agents at every step what you can and cannot do, e.g.: “I cannot walk through the scanner,” “I can walk to my seat,” or, “I will need an aisle chair.”
- Because wheelchair users are always the last off the flight, you will need extra time to make connections between flights. Make sure travel agents know this/build it in if booking your own travel.
- Ask for a gate escort. It is quicker & easier for blind people to navigate the airport with a gate escort.
- Make sure to check in at the gate so that the gate agent knows you need an escort to your seat.
- Make sure you know where the gate desk is when seated. In case changes to your flight are announced, you may need to go to the desk.

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Ground Transportation

- Download local public transportation apps in advance: Many cities will have specific apps for their public transportation that include accessibility info, e.g., which metro lines and buses are/are not accessible.
- Investigate taxi/ride share services specific to your destination and download apps or phone numbers after you have checked to see if their vehicles have the features you need.
- Check out whether mapping apps like Google maps, Wheelmap.org, Citymapper, Route4U, other street mapping apps provide adequate information about the city you are visiting for your specific needs
- Visit the city’s tourism website. Many will have an overview of accessibility in the city and links to hotel, attraction and transportation information and apps.
- See if your hotel offers shuttle service. This not only gets you from the airport to the hotel but can be used to go to other places while staying there.
- Renting vehicles: some agencies provide hand controls, but you need to confirm 100% that they are available at your destination. Also search for “mobility van rentals” at your destination.
- Find out about train accessibility via the national rail agency’s website. Many have wheelchair ramps, but you need to reserve them 24-48 hours in advance.
- Look up the closest wheelchair and/or accessible van repair businesses to where you will be staying and save their phone numbers, so you know who to call in case of emergency.

Lodging

- If you believe you have booked an accessible room, get an email guarantee from a *person* that the *accessible* room is reserved for you. Double-check several days prior to arrival.
- If the hotel/house/room's accessibility features are not sufficiently described on the website, contact the hotel or owner and ask them to email you pictures of the features that are most important for you.
- In the case of elevators in old buildings, ask for measurements of the elevator door opening and depth and check whether your mobility device will fit.
- Use Google Street View to check for steps leading up to the entrance/inside the door. Also check how busy the street/area seem to be if noise or crowds are a concern.
- If you will be traveling without your usual DME, consider renting these items at your destination. Do a Google search for your destination + "durable medical equipment rental". Be sure to ask if they will deliver/pick up.
- For people with autism, having a quiet room may be important. Ask for a room on a higher floor, not near the elevator, and not a street view. For a vacation rental/Airbnb, ask if there are any dogs on the property (barking).
- Read the reviews on Trip Advisor. Search for "noise", "wheelchair", "accessible", and "sensory" (e.g., if strong smells are a problem). Leave your own reviews to help other travelers with disabilities!
- Ask about the size of the hotel lobby. In large, open lobbies it is harder to find the desk.
- Ask if the rooms & elevators have Braille labels. If you do not read Braille, have someone from the hotel show you which elevator buttons are your floor & ground floor. On your floor, count doors to your room.
- Have someone take you to your room to show you how to use the thermostat and TV remote. Make sure you know where the do not disturb sign is and where the stairs are in case of fire.

Other Resources

Travel Websites

- **Pantou.org** directory of accessible tourism providers for Europe
- **AccessAble.co.uk** accessibility guide to the UK and Ireland
- **Disabledaccessibletravel.com** European accessible travel
- **TravelAbleVacations.com**
- **Wheeltheworld.com**
- **Travelability.net**
- **Wheelchairtravel.org**
- **Spintheglobe.net**
- **Handilol.com** French wheelchair travel site
- **Autismtravel.com**

Blogs

- **Freewheelintravel.org** Karin's blog!
- **EverybodyInInternational.org** Lesley's blog!
- **Curbfreewithcorylee.com**

Access Passes

- **National Parks Access Pass**:
- https://www.nps.gov/subjects/accessibility/access-pass.htm
- **Accessibilitycard.org** pass for disability accommodations at theme park and other attractions (mobility, vision, autism)

Mapping Apps

- **Google Maps** directions wheelchair accessible transport and routes for cities including London, New York, Tokyo, Mexico City, Boston, and Sydney.
- **Citymapper.com**
- **Route4U.com**
- **Wheelmap.org**

Toilets!

- **Accessaloo.com**