
Advice and information for wheelchair users at stations and on trains

Introduction

This booklet is designed to help wheelchair users meet their needs whilst travelling. This includes information on what to do pre, during and post travelling and important points of contact to take note of. This includes how to get in touch with the train operating company beforehand to prepare for your journey, important information to take note of during your journey and what to do when you arrive at your final destination.

It should also be noted that these guidance notes do not deal with mobility scooters. Research on mobility scooters is being planned.





Before travelling

The easiest way to ensure a comfortable and safe journey is to simply book [Passenger Assistance](#) in advance.

Passenger Assistance is a service provided by train companies to disabled passengers and others who require assistance with any part of their train journey. Staff can help you plan your journey, book tickets and make reservations; they can also assist you at stations and on board trains (where staff are available), with anything from changing platforms to finding your seat.

Passenger Assistance is free and available to anyone who needs assistance due to a disability, temporary impairment or older age. No railcard is required.

Details of how you can book passenger assistance are shown to the right.

1. **Call National Rail Enquiries** – dedicated operators will help you understand the best way to reach your station by accessible public transport, and they will connect you to the correct train company Passenger Assistance team for your route. **Telephone:** 08457 48 49 50* **Textphone (for deaf people):** 0845 60 50 600

**Calls to this number from landlines are charged at the local rate and may be recorded.*

2. **Contact the train operating company** responsible for the first leg of your journey directly – see our list of train companies' assistance numbers on the ATOC 'arranging-assistance' web page.
3. **Online** via the ATOC disabled person's railcard website at <http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/travelling-by-rail/arranging-assistance> look for the 'book assistance online' link on the home page.
4. **In person** at certain staffed train stations.

Using Passenger Assistance helps to ensure that staff are notified and will be able to provide help, that there is a space on the desired train, and that they are ready to meet you at any interchange stations and your final destination.

Where available, train staff will also assist you if you need a wheelchair space and make sure other customers do not block the area with their luggage; they can help with food and refreshments from the buffet, or simply alert you when your station is coming up.

You can also be guided off the train,

through the arrival or interchange station and assisted with your onward travel arrangements.

If you have any special requirements, such as several pieces of luggage or if you have a large wheelchair, you should tell us in advance.

If you want to plan a journey yourself there are some useful resources available. Did you know that you can get detailed information about the layout and accessibility of every station in mainland Britain? Useful links are given below. Read on to find out more tips for planning your journey by train.

[Install the National Rail Enquiries mobile phone app](#)

[Avoid the barriers at stations](#)

[Avoid the barriers on trains and platforms](#)

[Find accessible information](#)

[Explore train station layouts and accessibility online](#)

[Contact details for train company travel assistance teams](#)

[Print your tickets at home](#)

[Get a disabled persons railcard](#)

[View a map that shows which stations have step-free access](#)

[Travelling with an assistance dog](#)

[Plan your bus and train journey with Travelline](#)

[Provide feedback or, if necessary, make a complaint](#)

Most trains can accommodate wheelchairs that are within the dimensions prescribed in government regulations covering public transport (700mm wide, 1200mm long). There are a small number of older trains that can only currently carry wheelchairs that have a maximum width of 670mm.

The maximum combined weight of a person and their wheelchair that can be conveyed is limited by: the capabilities of the individual member of staff assisting the passenger and the stated maximum safe working load of the ramp (between 230kg and 300kg).

For further information please visit the ATOC disabled persons railcard website at <http://www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk/travelling-by-rail/wheelchairs-scooters>

You may have other requirements that may need additional considerations – here again booking in advance will help us fulfil your needs.

Arriving at the station

Stations can be busy and complicated places – please give yourself enough time to become familiar with the layout and where you need to get to. You should go to the station reception or other pre-advised point to contact the staff who will help you. If you have prebooked via Passenger Assistance you should make sure that you are in good time for your train.

When the staff first meet you, it is important to explain any particular needs you may have, for example, if you are travelling with a large amount of luggage.

Please don't proceed to the platform until you have informed station staff of your assistance requirements and confirmed with them when and where you will be assisted onto the train.

Getting to the platform and the train

Staff will take you and your luggage to the boarding point before putting the ramp into position. If you need help from your companion(s) at this stage and throughout the process, it is important to make this clear to staff from the start. Staff will advise you if your luggage needs to be loaded separately.

If for any reason staff need to leave you on the platform and return later to help you board, you will be informed when they (or another staff member) are expected to return.

If your wheelchair has brakes that could be secured while waiting on the platform, (particularly if there is a slight slope) please use them and then release them before use.

Some wheelchairs may be too big to take on a train. Some train operators may make advance enquiries to check that they can carry your wheelchair. This information will help staff to better understand how you would

like to be assisted as the design and features of your wheelchair could affect the use on a ramp, particularly if the wheelchair appears unusual to them.

Boarding the train

You should wait for the station staff to put the ramp in position and discuss with them how it will be used.

Station staff will always aim to help you to board forwards and alight backwards so that you are always facing the train. This is the safest way to avoid you falling out of your wheelchair. Remove any bags that could affect the stability of your wheelchair whilst on the ramp – staff will assist you to get the bags safely on the train. Inform staff if for any reason you have any concerns about using the ramp.

You should be aware of your own and/or your wheelchair's weight.

If boarding or alighting unaided, please consider the speed at which you board and alight so as not to collide with other passengers or obstacles.

Please encourage your companion(s) to allow station staff to carry out boarding or alighting, as they have been properly trained.

On the train

The vast majority of journeys where assistance is required are delivered successfully; however you could remind staff to call ahead to the destination station to meet you.

Where provided, you can use the buttons in the wheelchair spaces to call for assistance. If there are no such facilities you should request that whoever assists you onto the train informs you who to contact.

Where assistance fails, or a staff member cannot be found, ask other passengers to find someone to help you.

Alighting from the train

You should be met by a member of staff when your train arrives at your destination station, or if it is a terminus, shortly afterwards.

It is unsafe to block the train door with your wheelchair, leg, cane, etc.

Do be aware of the risk of falling out of your wheelchair if alighting forwards. Also, it could be dangerous if your footrests hit the ground before the front wheels get there.

Never attempt to alight without the assistance of station or train staff.

List of train companies' assistance numbers

Abellio Greater Anglia

Telephone - 08000 282 878
Textphone - 0845 606 7245

Arriva Trains Wales

Telephone – 08453 003 005
Textphone - 0845 758 5469

c2c

Telephone – 01702 357 640
Textphone - 01702 357 640

Chiltern Railways

Telephone – 08456 005 165
Textphone - 08457 078 051

CrossCountry

Telephone – 0844 811 0125
Textphone - 0844 811 0126

East Coast

Telephone – 08457 225 225
Text relay service - 18001 08457 225 225

East Midlands Trains

Telephone – 08457 125 678
Textphone - 08457 078 051

First Capital Connect

Telephone – 0800 058 2844
Textphone - 0800 975 1052

First Great Western

Telephone – 08001 971 329
Textphone - 08002 949 209

First Transpennine Express

Telephone – 0800 107 2149
Textphone - 0800 107 2061

Gatwick Express

Telephone – 0800 138 0225

Grand Central

Telephone – 0844 811 0072
Textphone - 0845 305 6815

Heathrow Express

Telephone – 0845 600 1515

Hull Trains

Telephone – 08450 710 222
Textphone - 08456 786 967

Island Line

Telephone – 0800 528 2100
Textphone - 0800 692 0792

London Midland

Telephone – 08706 09 60 60
Textphone - 08457 07 80 51

London Overground

Telephone – 08456 014 867
Textphone - 08457 125 988

Merseyrail

Telephone – 0800 0277 347
Textphone - 0151 702 2071

Northern Rail

Telephone – 08456 008 008
Textphone - 08456 045 608

ScotRail

Telephone – 0800 912 2901
Typetalk - 18001 0800 912 2 901

Southeastern

Telephone – 08007 834 524
Textphone - 08007 834 548

South West Trains

Telephone – 0800 528 2100
Textphone - 0800 692 0792

Southern

Telephone – 0800 138 1016
Textphone - 0800 138 1018

Virgin Trains

Telephone – 08457 443 366
Textphone - 08457 443 367

PLEASE NOTE

The contact numbers are correct at time of publication.



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