

Buying Your Ticket

- Make airline reservations ASAP and provide information about needed assistance and your mobility device.
- Call the airline a week in advance of your flight to confirm needed assistance and seating accommodations.
- Submit your request** to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) for assistance with security. If your flight is within 72 hours, call TSA Cares (855) 787-2227 to request assistance.
- Check [PVA.org/AirTravel](https://www.pva.org/AirTravel) for information and helpful resources.
- Familiarize yourself with the **U.S. Department of Transportation's Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights**.

The Day Before

- Write instructions for how to safely configure your mobility device for stowage. Some airlines also have forms on their websites to provide information about transporting your device.
- Pack all medicines and essential medical equipment in your carry-on bags as checked bags can get lost.
- If you are flying within the U.S., you will likely be on an airplane without an accessible lavatory. Ensure you manage bowel and bladder needs before take-off and the night before.

At the Airport

- Arrive at the airport 2-3 hours ahead of your flight.
- At check-in, confirm that the airline has a record of any needed assistance and have your mobility device tagged so that it will be returned planeside.
- Request a seat assignment as close to the boarding door as possible to limit the use of the aisle chair and help avoid mishaps or injury. Airlines are only required to accommodate you in your class of service, so if you purchased a coach ticket, they don't have to give you a seat in first class, but they may be able to upgrade you.
- Request planeside check-in of larger medical equipment to limit the items being lost or damaged.

Going Through Security

- If you cannot stand or walk, prepare for a full patdown in your mobility device at the TSA checkpoint.
- Before the pat-down, tell TSA agents about sensitive areas and any medical equipment on your person. You can also hand the officer a TSA Notification Card, which identifies your disability and/or medical condition.
- During heavy travel periods, allow up to 2 hours to go through the screening process.
- If you are concerned about this process, the [TSA website](#) contains useful information.
- If you are a PreCheck member, proceed to the PreCheck screening aisle for assistance. Pat-downs are not usually needed unless TSA needs to perform a secondary screening.

Before Boarding the Plane

- Remove easily-removed parts, like seat cushions, side guards, and removable wheels, and carry them on the plane to decrease the chances of them being lost or damaged.
- If you use a manual wheelchair, request to stow your chair in the onboard closet to avoid damage.
- Take advantage of pre-boarding to give yourself plenty of time to get into your seat safely on the airplane.
- If your device will be stowed in cargo, ask to speak to the baggage handler and provide any needed information about how to configure your device for stowage.

Exiting the Plane

- If possible, wait until your chair is at the boarding door before transferring to the aisle chair for deplaning.
- When your equipment or chair is returned to you, inspect it thoroughly before leaving the airport. If damage is present, report it immediately to the airlines to start your claim and the maintenance process.
- If you encountered any disability-related problems as part of your travel experience, file a complaint with the airline and the **U.S. Department of Transportation** as an ACAA violation.
- Also, report your story to air-access.org so we can help make the process better for all travelers with disabilities.
- Visit PVA.org/AirTravel for more air travel information and helpful resources.