



# Your rights to fly what you need to know

This guide is about what help the law says you can get when you travel by aeroplane anywhere in Europe.

It is for disabled people or people who find it hard to move around.

**Easy read**



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## About this guide



- This guide is for disabled people or people who find it hard to move around.



- People can find it hard to move around because of things like their age or an injury.



- This guide tells you what help you can get to travel by aeroplane anywhere in Europe.



- The law in Europe says you can get this help.



- There is a list of things you can do to get the help you need when you fly. This list is on page 17.

# 1. Things to know before you fly

## The rules about who can travel on an aeroplane



- If you are disabled or find it hard to move around, you should always be able to travel on an aeroplane unless
  - the rules about safety would be broken
  - the aeroplane is too small for you to get onto or around
  - only a certain number of disabled people can fly on that aeroplane. This can happen on some smaller planes for safety reasons.
- If you cannot fly on an aeroplane, the people you book the flight with must tell you why.



## The rules about travelling on your own on an aeroplane



- If you are disabled or find it hard to move around, you should be able to travel on an aeroplane on your own.

But you will usually need to take someone with you if

- you cannot put your seatbelt on yourself
- you cannot get out of your seat yourself
- you cannot get to an emergency exit yourself
- you need help with breathing, eating, using the toilet or taking medicine.

## Your health and medicine



- You may need to get something called **medical clearance** if going on an aeroplane could make you ill.



Medical clearance is where you have to fill in a form before you fly. This is so checks can be made to make sure your health is good enough to fly.

- You **do not** need medical clearance if your disability has always been there and always stays the same.



- You may need a letter from your doctor to show to staff at the airport. You may need to pay for this letter.



- You will need a letter if you need to keep these things with you on the aeroplane in your hand luggage
  - liquid medicine (this is medicine in a bottle or jar)
  - medical equipment (for example, oxygen to help you breathe).

## Wheelchairs and other things to help you move around



- You can take 2 things to help you move around when you travel by aeroplane. (For example, wheelchairs or walking frames.)



- You may be able to stay in your own wheelchair until you get onto the aeroplane.
- But you may not be able to take your own wheelchair onto the aeroplane. (For example, if the wheelchair is too big.)



- If this happens, you will be given another wheelchair to use for the flight. This wheelchair should be right for you.
- Your own wheelchair will be put on the aeroplane and kept safely until you get to the other end.



## Guide dogs and assistance dogs



- Check to make sure you can take your dog on the flight.
- Sometimes dogs cannot come back into the country if you have been to certain other countries. You can look at these websites for more information

[www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel)

[www.guidedogs.org.uk](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk)

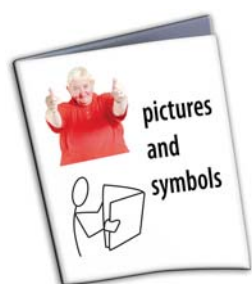


- You should not have to pay any money to take your dog on the flight.
- Your dog can sit on your lap if it is a small dog. If it is a larger dog it can sit on the floor.
- But you may need to pay some money for an extra seat for your dog if it is too large to sit on the floor.

## 2. Booking your flight

### What should happen

#### Information about your flight



- The information staff give you about your flight should be good and clear.
- Staff should try their best to give you information in other ways if you ask them to. For example, in easy words with pictures or on CD.

#### If you book your flight on a website



- It may be hard to say on the website exactly what help you need.
- You may need to phone the company you book your flight with to tell them instead. You should not have to pay for this help.

#### If you check in by computer before you go



- You should be able to say on the website what help you need. And you should be able to choose a good seat.

## 3. The airport

### Getting to the airport

#### What should happen



- There are often **help points** at the train station, bus station or car parks at the airport.
- Help points are places you can go to ask staff for help.
- Staff at the train or bus station may be able to help you get into the airport.
- You will not be able to park your car right outside the airport building. Park in the nearest car park.
- There should be parking spaces for people who have a **Blue Badge**. Some airports have spaces for people who need help but do not have a Blue Badge.

## At the airport

### What should happen



- There should be **help points** at every airport. These are places at the airport where you can ask staff for help.
- If you ask for help before you travel, airport staff should already have this information. Go to a help point or the check-in desk for your flight to get the help you need.
- Staff should have special training so they know how to help disabled people and people who find it hard to move around.
- But still tell them what help you need so they can help you in the right way.
- You should not have to pay for any help you get.

### Staff should help you



- ✓ check in
- ✓ get through security checks
- ✓ get to the toilet (but they cannot help you use the toilet).

## At the airport, there should be



- ✓ toilets that are easy to use
- ✓ clear signs to show you the way around the airport



- ✓ textphones and telephones that are lower down. This is so people in wheelchairs can reach them

- ✓ induction loops. These are things that help people to hear



- ✓ seats for disabled people or people who find it hard to move around



- ✓ easy to see flight information to tell you when your flight is ready and where you need to go.



## 4. The aeroplane

### Getting onto the aeroplane

#### What should happen



- Disabled people and people who find it hard to move around usually get on the aeroplane first.
- Staff should give you all the help you need to get onto the aeroplane.

### On the aeroplane

#### What should happen



- The seats with lots of room in front of them should be given to disabled people and people who find it hard to move around first.
- You will not be able to sit in some seats if you find it hard to move around. This is for safety reasons.

For example, you will not be able to sit in a seat if it could stop people getting out of the aeroplane in an emergency.



- If you need more than 1 seat because of your disability, you may have to pay for the extra seat. Sometimes the extra seat is cheaper.
- New aeroplanes may have better toilets and better lights and signs to show you the way around.

## Staff should help you



- ✓ get a seat that is right for you and is next to the person you are with
- ✓ get clear information about the flight.

## Getting off the aeroplane

### What should happen



- If you need help to get off the aeroplane, you will usually have to wait until other people have got off. There will then be more room to move around.

## Staff should help you



- ✓ get your bags and your things
- ✓ go through customs and immigration (these are checks that everyone has to have when they fly into a country)
- ✓ get to your next flight or the next part of your journey.



## Wheelchairs and other things to help you move around



- You should get your wheelchair or other things to help you move around back after you get off the aeroplane.
- If your wheelchair or your other things have been lost or broken, staff must give you whatever you need to help you move around until you get your things back.

## 5. What to do if you do not get the help you need

**This is help you need because you are disabled or find it hard to move around**



- Tell staff from the airline, airport or travel agent straight away if you do not get the help you need.
- If you are not happy with what they say, or if you think they have broken the law, then get in touch with us. We are the **Equality and Human Rights Commission**.
  - We can give you advice. We may be able to look into your complaint.
  - You can find out how to get in touch with us on the back page.



- If you live in Northern Ireland, get in touch with a group called the **Consumer Council for Northern Ireland**.
  - You can look on their website at [www.consumercouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumercouncil.org.uk)
  - Or you can phone them on 0845 601 6022.

## To complain about anything else to do with your travel by aeroplane



- Get in touch with a group called the Air Transport Users Council.
  - You can look on their website at [www.auc.org.uk](http://www.auc.org.uk)
  - Or you can phone them on 020 7240 6061.

## To find out more about your rights when you travel by aeroplane



- You can look on our website at [www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/airtravel)
- Or you can phone us on 1 of the phone numbers on the back page.
- There is also some information on the Department of Transport website at [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)



## A list of things to do



Here is a list of things you can do to get the help you need when you fly.

You can tick the things off when you have done them if you want.

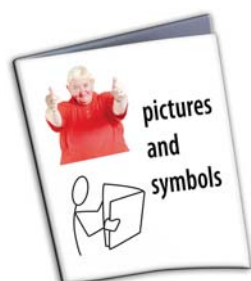
### Before you go



1. Tell the people you book your flight with what help you need. Do this at the time you book or at least 2 days before you fly. (But they should still try to help you if you tell them later than this.)

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2. Ask the people you book your flight with to put something in writing about the help you will get. This will help you complain later on if there is a problem.

☐

3. Ask the people you book your flight with for information that is easier for you to understand if you need to.

☐

4. Check with the people you book your flight with or the airline if



- it is OK for you to take the medicine or equipment you need with you on the flight

☐

- you can choose a good seat on the flight
- you can take your guide dog or assistance dog on the flight.

☐☐

5. Check what the airline's rules are about flying if you are disabled or find it hard to move around. The rules will be on the airline's website. Or ask the people you book your flight with or the airline.

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6. Look at the airport's website or get in touch with the airport to find out if it will be easy for you to use.

☐

7. Think about getting insurance for your wheelchair and other things you need to help you move around. (Airlines do not have to give you all the money back if these things get lost or broken.)

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8. If your wheelchair works with a battery, make sure it has a type of battery called a **dry cell battery**. You could also write a note about how the wheelchair works and stick it on the wheelchair.

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## At the airport



9. Go to a help point or the check-in desk to get the help you need. Make sure staff know what help you need.

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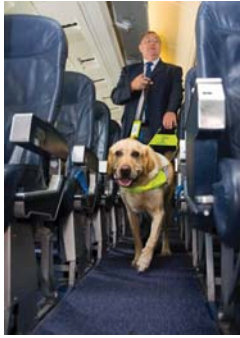
10. Ask staff at the check-in desk to help you get a good seat on the aeroplane if you have not already booked one.

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11. Ask staff for any other help you need. For example, help to check in, get to the toilet or understand information.

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## On the aeroplane



12. Tell staff on the aeroplane what seat you need.

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13. Tell staff if you need help to understand information about the flight.

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14. Tell staff if you need to get off the aeroplane quickly at the other end. For example, if you have another flight to catch.

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# Find out more about us and your rights

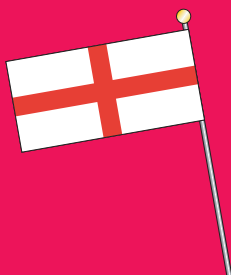


from our website  
[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)



## Telephone 1 of our helplines.

- They are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.
- On Wednesdays the helplines stay open until 8pm.



## England

- 08456 046 610
- Textphone 08456 046 620
- Fax 08456 046 630



## Wales

- 08456 048 810
- Textphone 08456 048 820
- Fax 08456 048 830



## Scotland

- 08456 045 510
- Textphone 08456 045 520
- Fax 08456 045 530