

Travel Resources for Individuals with SCI

About this guide

Dr. Shane Stone crafted this guide to facilitate travel for individuals with SCI. It is a curated list of resources and websites, assembled into one comprehensive document. This is optimized for mobile devices and laptops (allowing continued updates), while also offering QR codes and URLs for those who prefer a hard copy. While exhaustive, this guide acknowledges that it may not encompass every aspect of travel for individuals with SCI. Nonetheless, it serves as an invaluable starting point on the journey.

Table of Contents

The guide opens with 2 key resources:

- 1) A summary and link to the Air Carrier Access Act
- 2) A link to the American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) SCI Traveler Guide

It is followed by lists and tables of other valuable information including:

- Travel-Friendly Equipment
- Travel Companies
- Podcasts on Travel
- Websites to understand plane accessibility
- Accessibility Organizations
- General Recommendations to assist in packing and preparation

Of note, all text that is colored [BLUE](#) is a link to a website



QR Code for a digital version of Guide

Know your rights

The Air Carrier Access Act prohibits discrimination based on disability in air travel ([Summary Page](#)).



- It defines the rights of passengers and the obligations of airlines under this law
- This rule applies to all flights within the United States of America (USA) and foreign flights to and from the USA
- Call (800)778-4838 for disability-related air travel service problems

The SCI Traveler Guide

The American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) created an [SCI Traveler Guide](#) to act as a comprehensive guide to help individuals with SCI participate in domestic and international travel.



- It includes information on your rights, preparing for travel, travel-friendly equipment, travel-friendly locations, and booking travel
- It is recommended to review this document as it is even more comprehensive than this guide



Travel-Friendly Equipment

(Some of these are covered in the ASIA SCI Traveler Guide)

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Website</u>
Travel Shower Chair	https://www.nuprodx.com/
Portable Transfer Board	https://www.etac.com
Inflatable Air Wedge	https://www.travelwedge.com
Transfer Sling	https://www.adapts.org/
Wheelmate (App for finding accessible bathrooms and parking)	https://www.coloplast.com/products/bladder-bowel/wheelmate/

Travel Companies

(In addition to those in the ASIA SCI Traveler Guide)

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Specialty</u>	<u>Website</u>
Seable	Vision impairments	https://seable.co.uk/
Planet Abled	All disabilities: Travel in India and South East Asia (plans to expand)	https://planetabled.com/
Tapooz Travel	Mobility impairments: have a list of destinations on the website	https://www.tapooztravel.com/
Incredible Memories	Travel agency for any destination (has preferred vendors)	https://incrediblememoriestravel.com

Podcasts on Travel

Podcast	Episode Description	Link
ASIA SCI Perspectives*	Discussion with one of the authors of the ASIA Guide	https://rss.com/podcasts/sci-science-perspectives/835856/
Bladder Buzz*	Traveling with SCI (Psychologist and OT discuss travel)	https://bladderbuzzpodcast.buzzsprout.com/1290071/8541091
Wheelchair Nerds*	Preparing to travel: Part 1 (therapist, a travel agent with a disability, and an individual with SCI discuss)	https://hub.permobil.com/wheelchair-nerds-ep-10
Wheelchair Nerds*	Preparing to travel: Part 2 (same cast as above)	https://hub.permobil.com/wheelchair-nerds-ep-11
Wheelchair Nerds*	Troubleshooting (Same cast as above)	https://hub.permobil.com/wheelchair-nerds-ep-12

*Can be found wherever you listen to podcasts- Apple, Spotify, etc.

Websites to understand plane accessibility

Resource	Description	Website
Seat Guru	Allows you to search your flight to assess cabin & seats	https://www.seatguru.com/findseatmap/findseatmap.php
Seat Expert	Search by airline to find your plane to assess cabin & seats	http://seatexpert.com/
Aerolopa	Detailed schematic of the passenger cabin that's drawn to scale	https://www.aerolopa.com/
United Airlines	United app has unique tool for wheelchair users	https://mobilitymgmt.com/numoti-on-united-spinal-collaborate-with-united-airlines-on-wheelchair-fit-tool/

Accessibility Organizations

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Website</u>
United Spinal	Advocacy Organization's Airline travel guides	https://unitedspinal.org/accessible-air-travel/
Wheel the World	Book hotels and find experiences with all the accessibility details you need	https://wheeltheworld.com/
Wheelchair Traveling	Help find accessible travel all over the world	https://wheelchairtraveling.com/
Travelers Aid	List of major air, rail and bus carriers within North America and cruise lines with links to specific information they provide for travelers requiring special assistance.	https://www.travelersaid.org/other-resources/disability-resources/
Open Doors	non-profit organization working enhance accessibility to people with disabilities in travel, tourism and transportation.	https://opendoorsnfp.org/

General Recommendations:

Packing:

- Bring your adaptive equipment that travels easily (i.e., utensils, plate guard, gait belt, etc.)
- Medical equipment does not count as a carry-on item
- Travel with zip ties, an Allen wrench, and duct tape to troubleshoot issues with your wheelchair while traveling

Airport Preparation:

- Contact [TSA cares](#) 48 hours before travel to facilitate arrival and navigation of airport security—Phone Number: (855)787- 2227
- Take photos and videos of your wheelchair (or other checked equipment) before giving it to the airplane staff
 - If you have to make a complaint about damage after a flight, make the complaint to the airline and the [Department of Transportation](#)
 - A Complaints Resolution Official (CRO) must be available 24/7 in person or by phone to address any issues related to travelers with disabilities



Flight Preparation:

- According to the Air Carrier Access Act, you get complimentary seat selection to maximize comfort and ease of flying (within your cabin, not to an upgraded fare)
 - Check seat sizes beforehand to see if your wheelchair cushion will fit (see sites like Seat Guru or Expert above)
- You can always pre board
- Planes have a closet for manual wheelchairs to be stored on the plane
 - If the plane has >100 seats without a closet then it can be seat-strapped
- Reduce your risk of developing Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT aka blood clots) by wearing compression garments on the flight
 - Talk to your doctor about briefly using preventative medicine for flights >8 hours
- Check the accessibility of the airplane bathroom beforehand
 - It may be easier to place an indwelling catheter for a flight rather than attempting intermittent catheterization