

Disability Awareness & Accessibility

Guidance for Bus Passengers using Wheelchairs, Buggies and Mobility Scooters

National Express is committed to making its scheduled bus services accessible to as many people as possible and ensuring all passengers can travel safely and comfortably. A count undertaken in June 2014 indicated that on average 1500 journeys a week are undertaken by wheelchair users. However at busy times it must be recognized there may be a number of potential passengers wishing to use the specific areas of the bus set aside for wheelchair, buggy or mobility scooter use and therefore it may not be possible to travel on the vehicle of choice. We always encourage all our passengers to consider the needs of other passengers and make the appropriate adjustments.

Wheelchair and/or disabled users have priority over everyone else for the use of the wheelchair space, since this is the only space in which they can travel safely. If someone in a wheelchair wishes to board and the wheelchair space is occupied by standing passengers or buggies, standing passengers will be asked by the driver to move and make room and buggy users will be asked to fold the buggies and put them in the luggage space or keep them by their side.

All new buses built since 31 December 2000 must comply with strict safety criteria to allow a wheelchair user to board the bus. All buses in the UK must be wheelchair compliant by 2017.

All of our buses can already accommodate a wheelchair and we are continuing to invest in new buses so that all our vehicles will continue to be fully accessible ahead of the 2017 deadline.

Our accessible buses can potentially accommodate;

1. A “standard reference wheelchair” which has a maximum width of 700mm, a length of 1200mm, sitting height of 1350mm and footrest of 150mm. If your wheelchair exceeds these dimensions, the bus will not be able to carry you safely. Electric wheelchairs are classed in the same way as manual wheelchairs, although batteries must be covered.
OR
2. A Class 2 Mobility Scooter which has a maximum width of 600mm, a length of 1000mm and a turning radius not exceeding 1200mm. The weight of the passenger and the mobility scooter must not exceed 300kg.
OR
3. A maximum of 2 unfolded buggies.

Specific rules apply to each of these categories and are set out below;

Guidance for wheelchair users travelling by bus

1. All buses which can accommodate wheelchairs carry a sign on the near side corner of the front of the bus and/or a sign on the near side of the bus close to the front doors – see below.
2. If a wheelchair user wishes to board the bus and the bay is already occupied, our drivers will ask passengers to move to allow the passenger using the wheelchair to board. However, the driver cannot compel passengers to move if they refuse to do so. If this occurs then unfortunately we will be unable to accommodate the wheelchair user on that service.

3. We will always attempt to park at bus stops to allow wheelchairs to board / alight from the bus easily. Drivers will deploy ramps on request for wheelchair users and the bus will 'kneel' where appropriate.
4. When on board, please ensure you park your wheelchair in such a way that you do not obstruct the aisle.
 - Wheelchair users should park the rear of their wheelchair against the back-rest.
 - Brakes must be applied.
 - Travelling sideways is not permitted.
5. Wheelchairs must be occupied at all time when inside the bay. Empty wheelchairs must be folded and stored in the luggage rack.



Illustration of the wheelchair sign shown on our wheelchair accessible buses.

Guidance for buggy users travelling by bus

1. Subject to space being available National Express buses can carry up to two small unfolded buggies on low floor buses within the designated area **but only when it is not required by a passenger in a wheelchair or approved mobility scooter (passengers in wheelchairs have absolute priority).**
2. Buggy users are required to co-operate in allowing proper use of the designated wheelchair space by vacating this space if it is required by a customer in a wheelchair (or, if no wheelchair user is travelling, a disabled buggy or approved mobility scooter) including repositioning small prams, folding any buggies and storing them in the luggage space.
3. We always encourage all our passengers to consider the needs of other passengers and make the appropriate adjustments.
4. Prams and buggies must not block the aisle of the vehicle at any time.
5. A sign detailing the maximum number of pushchairs that can be accommodated on our buses is clearly displayed both on the outside of the vehicle (near the doors) and on the drivers cab.
6. We will always attempt to park at bus stops to allow pushchairs to board the bus easily.
7. When on board, please ensure you park your buggy in such a way that you do not obstruct the aisle. Buggies must be parked inside the bay with the brakes on. Do not overload the handles with shopping as this can cause the pushchair to tip over.
8. Unfolded buggies must be occupied at all time when inside the bay. Empty buggies must be folded and stored in the luggage rack.
9. Please ensure children are strapped in and secured in their buggy at all times; whilst boarding, alighting and travelling on the bus.



Illustration of the buggy sign shown on our buses.

Guidance for Mobility Scooters travelling by bus

There is no legal requirement for bus operators to carry mobility scooters. However National Express has adopted the CPT Code for the use and acceptance of Mobility Scooters. The key features of the code are summarised below but potential users should study and follow

Full details of the scheme are set out in the [full code, the CPT Code for the Use and Acceptance of Mobility Scooters on Low Floor Buses leaflet \(PDF\)](#).

1. All users of mobility scooters MUST obtain a personalised 'Permit to Travel' prior to attempting to board a bus.
Mobility Scooters will not be carried on any NX bus under any circumstances without this 'permit to travel' For details of how to obtain a permit, including the required training, please contact:
Tel. 0121 254 7211 or email busmobility@nationalexpress.com
2. Once on Board, passengers should put their mobility scooter in the designated wheelchair space, reversed up to the backrest. The scooter motor must be switched off and the scooter parked in gear to avoid movement.
3. The passenger must remain on the mobility scooter once it is parked, using the handrails provided to assist with safety and stability.

Guidance for Oxygen Users

Passengers are allowed to board our buses with oxygen bottles where they are provided for personal health reasons as long as proper precautions are in place. The oxygen bottle should be secured in a padded cover and attached to a wheelchair or electric scooter which would ensure that is secure should a collision occur.

Guidance for Users of Walking Aids (For example Rollators)

After you have boarded the bus please fold the 'walking aid' and stow securely or hold it. For safety reasons it is not permitted to sit on the walking aid whilst the bus is in motion.

Extract from Conditions of Carriage

ACCESSIBILITY

- 10.1 We want to make travel on our bus services easier for everyone, and especially for people with special needs, including customers with disabilities and those with young children or pushchairs.
- 10.2 All vehicles have a low entrance step which enables pushchairs to be wheeled straight on without being folded down (subject to available space) and there is also space allocated on vehicles for one wheelchair.
- 10.3 The wheelchair space is suitable for a “standard reference wheelchair” which has a maximum width of 700mm and a length of 1200mm. Electric wheelchairs will be treated the same as other wheelchairs, but there are some types of wheelchair which are not safe for carriage on our vehicles due to their size or weight.
- 10.4 If the wheelchair space is occupied by a wheelchair then unfortunately it will not be possible to allow a further wheelchair customer to board.
- 10.5 Subject to space being available National Express buses can carry up to two small unfolded buggies on low floor buses within the designated area but only when it is not required by a passenger in a wheelchair or approved mobility scooter (passengers in wheelchairs have absolute priority).
- 10.6 Buggy users are required to co-operate in allowing proper use of the designated wheelchair space by vacating this space if it is required by a customer in a wheelchair (or, if no wheelchair user is travelling, a disabled buggy or approved mobility scooter) including repositioning small prams, folding any buggies and storing them in the luggage space.
- 10.7 Wheelchair customers are requested to apply the restraint system on the wheelchair to ensure they are safely positioned.
- 10.8 Vehicles are fitted with ramps to improve access and it is the driver’s duty to deploy this where it is safe to do so. There will be some stops where this will not be safe and the driver may have to stop further along the road.
- 10.9 Similarly, there will be some stops where a wheelchair customer may not be able to board due to inconsiderate parking or the road layout.
- 10.10 Most vehicles have a kneeling system and if a disabled customer wishes to use it our driver will make it available, where it is safe to do so.
- 10.11 The Company will not be liable for any loss of or for any damage caused to wheelchairs or other mobility equipment or assistive devices except where caused by its negligence or that of its staff or agents. In the event of the Company being so liable, such liability shall in respect of any one claim be limited to the cost of replacement or repair of the equipment or devices lost or damaged.
- 10.12 More information about access to our buses is set out in the Company’s Disability and Accessibility Policy.

Updated June 2015 (Wheelchair Priority)

