

Family cars



The information contained in this guide is correct at the time of going to print (December 2012). It will be reviewed every two years. See our website for any changes since printing.

Ricability is a charity that researches and publishes independent information on products and services for older and disabled people.

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Family cars

A guide for families of disabled children

This is a guide to choosing a car for families of children with disabilities. In it we identify the issues affecting disabled children and their families when choosing and using a car and look at relevant standard features and specialist equipment.

In the first section we give you general guidance on choosing a family car. In the following sections we look at some specific issues affecting disabled children and their families:

- getting in and out (see page 7)
- supporting posture (see page 9)
- challenging behaviour (see page 12)
- transporting equipment (see page 15).

We go on to discuss legal and financial matters and list some relevant equipment suppliers. In the final section we list organisations which may be able to help with funding, support and advice.

Information and advice in this booklet comes from consultation with disabled people, parents and other experts. We have also used *Top 10 family car buying tips July 2012* from the Which? website (www.which.co.uk).

This booklet gives you information and advice to get the right equipment to meet most needs. For highly specialised needs talk to relevant healthcare professionals (such as therapists or nurse specialists) or get advice from an independent Mobility Centre (see pages 25–27). You can also see our guides *Choosing a car*, *Getting in and out of a car*, *Getting a wheelchair into a car* and *Wheelchair accessible vehicles* (see page 31).

Use the *Find a car* feature on our website www.ricability.org.uk to search for a car using door, seat and boot measurements.

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● **Young drivers** The usual minimum age for driving cars is 17. But if you receive the higher rate of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance, you can drive at 16 (see page 16).

Choosing a family car

Many of the things you need to think about when choosing a car for the family of a disabled child are the same as when choosing any family car.

Choosing a car always involves an element of compromise. You may not be able to get everything you want or need for the price you can afford.

TYPE

The right car for you and your family is one that has room for all of you and anything else you need to carry and where it is easy to get you and your equipment in and out.

Hatchbacks are better than saloons if you have a buggy or something else that needs to go in the boot. They usually have lower sills and wider openings. If you have a lot to carry, get an estate, as it will have an even bigger boot.



Fold-up rear seats

For carrying lots of people in comfort you need an MPV (Multi-Purpose Vehicle). These have more space in the back. Seven seat MPVs have a third row in the back. In more compact seven-seaters, these seats can be folded away into the boot floor (you don't get much space for luggage with the seats up). These fold-up seats may not be big enough for large children and may become uncomfortable on long journeys.

You will certainly need the extra row of seats if you have more than two children who need child seats, as you will not be able to fit three child seats next to each other.

GETTING IN AND OUT

Fitting a child seat and lifting a child in and out is easier if the door is high and wide and opens at a wide angle. Some cars have sliding doors in the back, which is especially useful in car parks.

SAFETY

Everybody in the car needs to be seated comfortably and securely. In the case of children younger than 12 or under 135cm (about 4'5") tall, this means they must have a suitable child seat. Children need different seats depending on what they weigh:

- *babies up to 13kg (about 2 stone)* 'Group 0' and 'Group 0+' backward-facing seats
- *babies and children between 9 and 18kg (1.5–3 stone)* 'Group I' forward or backward-facing seats
- *children from 15 to 25kg (2.5–4 stone)* 'Group II' forward-facing car seats (booster seats)
- *children above 22kg (3.5 stone) – 'Group III' booster cushions*

Some seats cover more than one group and can be used as your child grows. Check on the seat label for the group or groups covered.

Group 0 and I seats are attached to the car seat using the existing seat belt or using the ISOFIX system. ISOFIX seats are easier to put into the car because they just clip into anchor points mounted in the car. Most new cars have ISOFIX

anchor points, but not all do, so you must check this before you get the seat.

Backward-facing seats must not be used in a seat that has an airbag. If you want to use one of these seats in the front of the car, check the airbag can be switched off.

Smaller children in forward-facing seats will also need the airbag switched off.



This car has an on-off switch for the passenger airbag

Multimac three and four child car seats can be fitted to the rear seats of most cars. They take children up to 12 years (36kg), and a baby seat is also available. See page 23 for contact details



FEATURES

Many standard features and extras can make driving with children easier and more comfortable. Look out for the following:

■ **Adjustable seats**

Many cars have adjustable seats in the front, but some also have them in the back. If the back seats can slide back and forwards, it makes it easier for your back seat passengers to get in and out and to get themselves comfortable.

■ **Raised back seats** ('Stadium seats')

In some MPVs the back seats are higher than the front seats. This allows the back seat passengers to see over the seats in

front, which is more pleasant and can help against car-sickness.

■ **Storage**

Look for roomy door pockets and clever storage solutions like lockers in the roof lining or the floor.

■ **Entertainment**

Music, video and video games can help keep children happy on long journeys. Some cars have built-in DVD players in the back, or you can get your own and fix it to the headrest of the front seat (they usually come with straps for this). Check there are 12v power points in the back.

■ **Tinted windows**

Tinted windows in the back can give extra privacy.

Travel tips

It's always wise to make preparations when you are travelling by car. This is especially true if you have a disabled child, who may have specific needs for comfort, feeding, safety etc.

- Make sure you have enough warm and dry clothes in case you have to make a stop somewhere in bad weather.
- Pack any food and medical supplies you may need, even if your journey takes longer than expected. Make sure you have enough water.
- Check your mobile phone and any medical devices are fully charged.
- The AA gives advice on what you should check before setting off and the supplies you should carry in your car (www.theaa.com/motoring_advice/seasonal/index.html).

Children with physical disabilities

GETTING IN AND OUT

A number of conditions can make it harder to get in and out of a car from those affecting balance and coordination to those making it hard to move around. Children may need just a little support while getting in and out or they may need to be physically lifted or hoisted.

■ Children who need a little help

Children who just need a little support might find a low stool helps them climb up into the car.

If they are getting themselves in and out, this will be easier with a lower seat – they have less far to climb.

■ Wheelchair users

Transferring from a wheelchair is easier if the seat is about the same height as the wheelchair.

■ Lifting

However, if you are lifting a child in and out of the car, you may prefer a higher seat, as you won't have to bend down so far. Don't forget, though, that the child seat will add height, especially if it has high sides.

Wide and high door openings also make this much easier.

To search for cars with the right seat height and door measurements, see the *Find a car* database on our website www.ricability.org.uk.



Equipment that makes getting in and out easier includes:

- Transfer boards for sliding between the car seat and a wheelchair. The car seat needs to be the same height as the wheelchair.
- Swivelling seats which turn to face out of the car. Some come out on runners and lower to help with transferring from a wheelchair.
- Wheelchair systems, where the car seat attaches to a special wheelchair base. The seats on these systems are not very supportive so they will not be suitable for all children. The wheelchair bases are also not suitable for travelling distances.
- Hoists. A range of hoists is available, which are usually fitted to the car to help lift someone in and out. Hoists may not be suitable for all children. A child that is prone to spasms will be difficult to hoist safely and the sling can cause damage to the skin through shearing. Some people have also told us that they find hoisting undignified and that it takes too long – especially when it's raining.

For more information and advice, including information on products and suppliers, see our guide *Getting in and out of a car*.



Adult using a transfer board



Turny swivel seat from Autoadapt



Carony Kids from Autoadapt



Topslider from Autoadapt

Tip

You will probably have the car for some years, so think about the future. Is your child still growing? Is their condition changing? Will you still be able to get them in and out the same way in three years?

Children usually grow quite quickly to the age of about 13 (for girls) or 14 (for boys). They normally double their weight in the six years up to puberty. Growth starts to slow at that age, and has normally almost stopped by around 16 (for girls) or 17 (for boys).

SUPPORTING POSTURE

Good postural support is important for many physically disabled children. It keeps them safe and comfortable, promotes good hand function and lets them look around and interact with the environment. It is particularly important when travelling in a car because of the forces from accelerating, braking and cornering.

For some babies and small children, standard child car seats (see page 5) provide enough postural support. Some children, however, will need more specialist seating.

- A seat which can be tilted backwards, especially if it has a good head support, can help maintain an upright posture.
- Side prompts give extra support to the trunk and head. Some seats also have adjustable padding to help ensure a good fit.
- Adjustable seat length and back height help ensure a good fit, which supports good posture.
- A pommel helps guard against the child's legs coming together or crossing.
- Footrests can help some children maintain an upright posture by giving them something to push against.
- A tray allows the child to support themselves with their forearms.

You can also get specialist child car seats that swivel or slide out to help with getting in and out.



Carrot car seat from JCM



Britax Traveller Plus

Name	Group	Weight range (kg)	Forward/backward facing	ISOFIX	Tilt	Posture support	Swivel	Price (£)	Supplier
Britax Baby Safe Sleeper	0	0-10	F/B	n	n	y	n	n/a	Windmill Special Needs
Brio Zento	0-II	0-25	B	n	y	y	n	n/a	Windmill Special Needs
BeSafe Izi Combi x3	0+-I	0-18	F/B	option	y	n	n	290	In Car Safety Centre
BeSafe Izi Comfort	I	9-18	F	option	y	y	n	914	BeSafe
JCM Mini Carro	I	9-18	F	option	n	y	option	n/a	JCM
Recaro Polaric	I	9-18	B	option	y	n	n	from 230	In Car Safety Centre
Axiss	I	9-18	F	n	y	y	y	n/a	Windmill Special Needs
AX Kid Kidzofix/ Kidzone	I-II	9-25	F/B	option	y	n	n	325-365	In Car Safety Centre
Britax 2 Way Elite Hip Spica	I-II	9-25	F/B	n	y	y	n	220	In Car Safety Centre
Britax Elite	I-II	9-25	F	n	y	y	n	n/a	Windmill Special Needs
Britax Hi-Way II	I-II	9-25	B	n	n	n	n	250	In Car Safety Centre
Maxi-Cosi Mobi	I-II	9-25	B	n	y	n	n	275	In Car Safety Centre
Recaro Expert	I-II	9-22	F	n	y	y	option	668	Tendercare
Otto Bock Lars (2 sizes)	I-III	9-35	F	n	y	y	option	n/a	Otto Bock
OY Klippan Triofix	I-III	9-36	F/B	y	n	n	n	399	In Car Safety Centre
Recaro Sport Reha	I-III	9-36	F	option	y	y	option	750	Tendercare
Panda Easyfit (4 sizes)	I-III	9-36	F	option	n	y	y	2,053	R82
Snugseat Spring (2 sizes)	I-III	0-50	F	n	n	y	n	915	Tendercare
JCM Carrot 3	I-III+	15-36	F	option	n	y	option		JCM
Timy (4 sizes)	I-III+	0-49	F	n	y	y	y	1,350	Joncare/Windmill Special Needs
Britax Traveller Plus	II-III	15-36	F	n	option	y	n	600	In Car Safety Centre
Recaro Monza Reha	II-III	15-36	F	option	y	y	option	from 125	Tendercare
Recaro Start 2.0	II-III	15-36	F	option	y	y	option	from 195	In Car Safety Centre
Safeguard Star Plus	II-III	15-36	F	n	n	y	n	300	In Car Safety
Joncare Starlight (2 sizes)	II-III	9-36	F	n	y	y	n	n/a	Joncare
Unisafety	II-III	9-36	F	n	y	y	n	759	Joncare
Unisafety Swing	II-III	9-25	F	n	y	y	y	759	Joncare
Burnett Moulded Support	II-III+	0-50+	F	n	n	y	n	n/a	Joncare
Activate Monterey	III	20-35	F	n	y	y	n	599	Activate

● The table opposite shows available specialist child car seats with information about features, prices and suppliers. Some equipment will also be available second hand. All specialist suppliers are listed on page 23 and second hand sources are listed on page 24.

Accessories

A range of accessories is available, including spare cushions and covers, padded chest prompts and headrest speakers. See the suppliers on page 23.

Older children may be more comfortable on the adult car seat as long as it gives them enough support and they can wear the seat belt safely (remember children under 135cm tall must use an appropriate child car seat). If they need support to sit upright, there are a number of harnesses that attach to the seat. Always use the car seat belt too.

For information on available harnesses see the table on page 13.



Five-point harness from Crelling



WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

A wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) allows a wheelchair user to travel in their chair. This means they can get the benefit of their own supportive seating system, and that they don't have to transfer or be transferred into the car. For more on these, see our guide *Wheelchair accessible vehicles*.



Children with learning disabilities

Children who behave disruptively can be distressing or even dangerous in the car. They may distract the driver's attention by making a lot of noise or with other behaviour. Some children may undo their seat belt and move around inside the car, or even attempt to get out.

- Make sure the child is comfortable and feels secure. Different children have different triggers and comforters, so you will know best what works for your child.
- If your child needs attention or reassurance while you are driving, then they may be better in the front, though in some cases this will just be more distracting. Some children like to travel in the third row where they can have more space.
- Child locks on the back doors prevent the child from opening the door from the inside. Some children may learn to operate the lock themselves so double check it is still on.
- There are locking covers you can fit to the seat belt buckle to stop the child from being able to undo the belt or you can get a full harness with a locking buckle. Mostly these work by simply needing strength and dexterity to open but there are some with magnetic or mechanical keys if your child is particularly strong or ingenious.



Security harness

- Remap (see page 30) have developed a screen to put between the back seats to stop children from disturbing each other.

Warning

If you are using a locking seat buckle, you should carry a seat belt cutter in the car in case of emergencies. You should also display an explanatory sticker for emergency services or other rescuers.

 The table below shows available specialist child car seats with information about features, prices and suppliers. Some equipment will also be available secondhand. All specialist suppliers are listed on page 23 and secondhand sources are listed on page 24.

Name	Age range	Notes	Secure buckle	Price (£)	Supplier
Bestvest	5-adult	Fits to seatbelt	n	85	Bestvest
Careva Harness System	5-adult (3 sizes)	Adaptable strap system, fixes to car seat or 2 part child seat	opt	n/a	Autoadapt
Crelling Model 13 Harness	2½-adult (2 sizes)	Use on single seats only	opt	83–122	Crelling
Crelling Model 19A Harness	9-adult	Use on single seats only	opt	69–79	Crelling
Crelling Model 22 Harness	4-adult (2 sizes)	Single or double seats. Fit harness before entering vehicle	n	82–93	Crelling
Crelling Model 27 Harness	2½-adult (3 sizes)	Single or double seats	opt	70–98	Crelling
Crelling Model 28 Harness	4-adult	Single or double seats. Can be used with booster seat	opt	94–103	Crelling
Crelling Model 29 Harness	2½-adult (2 sizes)	Use with bench seats	n	62–70	Crelling
Crelling Model 31 Harness	3-adult (2 sizes)	Single or double seats	yes	126–134	Crelling
Crelling Model 32 Harness	3-adult (2 sizes)	Single seats only	yes	126–134	Crelling
Crossit	2½-adult	One size fits all	n	n/a	Autoadapt
Cummerbund	5-adult	Broad soft belt attaches around car seat	n	37.5	In Car Safety Centre
E-Z-On Harness	15-36kg (3 sizes)	For child lying on back seat	n	168	In Car Safety Centre
Harness	5-adult	5 point harness	n	175	In Car Safety Centre
Unisafety Easy Travel Magnet Harness	2½-adult (5 sizes)	Magnetic fastening waistcoat. Fit harness before entering vehicle	opt	410	Windmill Special Needs

Medical needs

Medical issues that can affect a child's safety or comfort in the car include:

■ Epilepsy

If your child has frequent seizures, you may want them in the front so you can get to them in a hurry if you need to. If you need to administer medication to control a seizure, plan ahead: make sure you know where it is, and that you can reach and administer it comfortably and safely in the car.

■ Reflux/choking

If your child experiences frequent episodes of reflux and/or choking, you may want to have them in the front.

■ Splinting

Splinting after orthopaedic surgery can make it difficult for a child to travel in a car seat, especially if they have a hip spica cast. Steps charity (see page 30) have a useful parent's guide to caring for a child with one of these casts, which includes a section on car travel. If you see a nurse specialist before leaving the hospital, they may have useful advice too.

■ Incontinence

If your child is incontinent, their pad may be more likely to leak in the car, especially on long journeys. Many child seats have removable covers so they can be washed if necessary (some even come with spare covers). You can get protective covers that

go on top of a child car seat and you can put a protective pad under the seat to protect the car's upholstery.

To keep an eye on a child sitting in the back, you can attach an additional mirror to the windscreen or rear-view mirror.

Tips

Your journey may take longer than expected, so plan ahead.

- Carry an emergency medical kit in the car, with any equipment or medications you may need in an emergency.
- If your child is tube fed, make sure you have plenty of feed.
- Make sure any device batteries are fully charged.

Equipment



Wheelchair in boot

If you have to travel with bulky equipment because of your child's disability, you will obviously need to be sure there is room in the car and that the equipment can be stored securely and safely. Heavy and bulky equipment should not be transported in the passenger cabin unless it is secured to prevent it from moving around in an accident. Equipment you may be transporting includes:

- wheelchair/therapeutic seating
- standing/lying frame
- walking frame/cycle etc
- toilet/shower seat
- medical equipment including feeding pumps, suction machines, ventilators and oxygen cylinders.

Ramps, hoists and lifts

You can use a ramp, hoist or lift to help get mobility equipment into the car. Our guide *Getting a wheelchair into a car* gives more information on this. If you are going to get a hoist or lift installed you should speak to the installer before buying the car if you can. They will be able to tell you what cars the hoist can be fitted to.

You can check the boot sizes of cars using our online *Find a car* database.

Medical equipment

Medical equipment including feeding pumps, ventilators attached to tracheostomies and oxygen cylinders need to be transported carefully. You will have to think about how you can transfer them in and out of the car, and how you can secure them when you are underway.

- Feeding pumps can be temporarily disconnected if necessary while you transfer the child in and out of the car. They're also quite light, so they are not difficult to secure.
- You may not be able to disconnect a ventilator even temporarily; you need to be able to put the child into their seat and stow the ventilator afterwards.
- You may be able to wedge a ventilator into the footwell or under the seat. If not, it will have to be secured with a seat belt. An adaptation company may be able to fit a suitable strap (see our *Mobility address list*).
- Oxygen cylinders also need to be properly secured. The oxygen supplier will provide you with a warning sticker, which must be displayed on the outside of the car. You need to tell your insurance company.

Usually you are only eligible for a blue badge (see page 17) from the age of three, but a child who is dependent on medical equipment or who might need emergency medical treatment can apply before then.

The law

YOUNG PEOPLE, YOUNG DRIVERS

- The usual minimum age for driving cars is 17. But if you receive the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (see page 18), you can get a provisional driving licence for a car at age 16.
- It is a good idea to take advice about this.
- Go to a Mobility centre (see page 25–27), or visit a Get Going Live event (see page 29).

VEHICLE EXCISE DUTY (ROAD TAX)

You don't have to pay road tax if you get the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance.

You can also get this exemption for a child who gets the Higher Rate Mobility Component. The vehicle needs to be registered in the name of a nominated driver. You sign to say that the vehicle will only be used for the disabled person's benefit. Anyone can drive it as long as they are insured.

To claim, get an exemption certificate from the Disability Living Allowance Unit of the Department for Work and Pensions (08457 123 456). You can then get your free tax disc at post offices which issue road tax, or by post. If the dealer is registering your new vehicle for you, let them have your certificate. Renewals can be made online.

Motability vehicles (see page 18) don't need a certificate – the tax disc is arranged by Motability.

INSURANCE

Under the Equalities Act, insurers are not allowed to refuse disabled drivers insurance or charge extra because of their disability without justifying evidence. Premiums must be based on a reasonable assessment of risk. You may have to pay more to cover any extra cost of repairing an adapted vehicle.

As with all insurance, shop around to get the best deal. If you feel you are being charged more for your policy than other drivers in similar circumstances, ask the insurance company for details of why they consider you to be a greater risk.

Mobility Centres and organisations of disabled drivers have lists of specialist insurance companies. We know of the following companies which specialise in insurance services for disabled people:

■ Chartwell	0845 260 7051
■ En-route	0800 783 7245
■ First Senior	01582 840067
■ Fish	0800 012 6329
■ Lockton	020 7933 0000
■ Premier Care	01476 591104

BLUE BADGE SCHEME



The Blue Badge Scheme offers parking concessions for disabled people with severe walking difficulties. The scheme also applies to registered blind people, people with severe upper limb disabilities in both arms who regularly drive a car and children under three with a medical condition that makes them dependent on heavy or bulky equipment or means they may need emergency medical treatment.

You can use designated disabled parking bays in car parks and on the street, park for up to three hours on single and double yellow lines and often park for free in local authority car parks and bays (check first, as some local authorities charge). In Central London, parking is only in designated bays.

The scheme is administered by local authorities, which deal with applications and issue badges.

For more information contact your local authority or go to www.gov.uk/driving-if-disabled/driving-with-disabilities or www.dft.gov.uk/topics/access/blue-badge

Finance

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

The Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is an allowance paid to all disabled people to help with extra costs. It is made up of a care component and a mobility component. A lower or higher rate of each is paid, depending on how much help you need. DLA also works as a gateway to other services (eg Blue Badges, the Motability scheme).

From April 2013 DLA will be replaced by the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for new claimants aged 16 or over. If you already get the DLA, you will be reassessed to determine the level of payment you will receive under the PIP but this process will not start until October 2013.

There are currently no plans to change the DLA for people under 16. You will need to be assessed for PIP when you turn 16.

MOTABILITY



Tel 0845 456 4566

Textphone 0845 675 0009

www.motability.co.uk

If you receive the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the DLA, you are eligible for the Motability Scheme. The allowance goes towards the cost of a car, scooter or powered wheelchair.

You can use the mobility allowance to lease a new car from Motability for three years (five years for a wheelchair

accessible vehicle). Maintenance and servicing costs, insurance for two drivers (up to two additional drivers can be added for a fee) and RAC breakdown assistance are included. There is a mileage allowance of 20,000 miles per year (additional miles are charged at 5p per mile).

You can choose a model from any of the main manufacturers. If you choose one that is more expensive than is covered by the mobility allowance, you make an advance payment with your own money (the amount varies, depending on the car). Motability offers over 450 cars which require no advance payment.

Adaptations

The Motability Scheme will also cover, or contribute to, the cost of adaptations (such as hoists or swivel seats). Motability has a list of available adaptations, with costs attached (many are free). They operate a Managed Adaptations Programme which can make the process both easier and cheaper. You can only make use of this programme when you are ordering your new car.

If you want to fit your own adaptations during your lease, or fit something not available through the programme, you will have to fund this yourself. Motability administer a number of funds (see Grants) which may be able to help. Any adaptations must be supplied and fitted by a Motability Adaptations Partner.

Grants

Motability administer the government Specialised Vehicle Funds as well as having their own charitable fund.

If you are considering the Motability Scheme you can apply for a grant for things like adaptations, advance payments on more expensive vehicles and driving lessons (for people under 25). You have to provide details of your circumstances, which will be checked. Motability can only help towards the least expensive solution that meets your needs. They will assess your needs and make suitable recommendations.

OTHER SOURCES OF FINANCE Charities

Some charities give grants to individuals.

■ Mobility Centres (see page 25–27), local authority Occupational Therapists and local libraries may be able to help you find grant-giving organisations, such as the Round Table, Rotary or Lions Club and other local charities.

■ **Turn2us** provides a free service to help you find financial support in the form of welfare benefits, grants and other help tailored to your circumstances.

Tel 0808 802 2000 (8–8 Mon-Fri)
www.turn2us.org.uk

■ Try your appropriate disability group such as Scope, the MS Society or the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, who may know of sources of help.

■ There are a number of charities and trusts that exist to help fund equipment for disabled children. They each have their own criteria for funding and their

own application process. They don't usually fund anything that could be funded from a statutory source. Contact them to find out how to apply. The ones we know of are:

The ACT Foundation

Provide grants towards the costs of adaptations and equipment.

The Grants Manager
61 Thames Street
Windsor SL4 1QW

Tel 01753 753900

Fax 01753 753901

Email info@theactfoundation.co.uk
www.theactfoundation.co.uk

Caudwell Children

Provide funding for children with special needs for specialised equipment, treatment, therapy and holidays.

Minton Hollins Building
Shelton Old Road
Stoke on Trent ST4 7RY

Tel 0845 300 1348

Email applications@caudwellchildren.com
www.caudwellchildren.com

Cerebra

Supports children under 16 years who have a brain injury, neurological disorder, mental disability or developmental problem. They provide grants for a range of equipment or resources that will improve the quality of the child's life.

Cerebra (Parent Support)
FREEPOST SWC3360
Carmarthen SA31 1ZY

Tel 0800 328 1159

Email info@cerebra.org.uk
www.cerebra.org.uk

Children Today Charitable Trust

Raises funds to provide special equipment for children and young people with disabilities throughout the UK. Their aim is to ensure that every disabled child and young person fulfils their potential and leads an active childhood.

The Moorings, Rowton Bridge
Christleton, Chester CH3 7AE

Tel 01244 335622

Fax 01244 335473

Email info@childrentoday.org.uk

www.childrentoday.org.uk

Family Action

Small grants available for medical treatment, services, facilities or equipment for those who are sick or physically disabled. Assistance is primarily targeted at families and individuals on low incomes, particularly those living on benefits.

501–505 Kingsland Road

London E8 4AU

Tel 020 7254 6251 (2pm to 4pm on
Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday only)

www.family-action.org.uk

The Family Fund

Helps families with severely disabled children aged 17 and under, whose household income is less than £28,000 a year. They may be able to contribute towards the cost of adapting a car or with driving lessons. They do not usually help with the cost of buying a car.

Unit 4, Alpha Court, Monks Cross Drive
Huntingdon, York YO32 9WN

Tel 0845 130 4542

Fax 01904 652625

Textphone 01904 658085

Email info@familyfund.org.uk

Web: www.familyfund.org.uk

Lifeline 4 Kids

Provides essential equipment to help improve the quality of life for children (0–18 years) with disabilities and special needs. They also help children from low-income families with essential smaller items such as shoes, clothing, bedding and specialist toys.

215 West End Lane

West Hampstead

London

NW6 1XJ

Tel 020 7794 1661

www.lifeline4kids.org

Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children

Grants for essential equipment for disabled children. Newlife don't means test, but due to limited funds they do take a view of the whole circumstances of the family.

Hemlock Way

Cannock

WS11 7GF

Tel 01543 462 777

Fax 01543 468 999

www.newlifecharity.co.uk

The Nihal Armstrong Trust

Small charity providing children with cerebral palsy with essential pieces of equipment or specific services that their local authority does not provide. The grants are for equipment items under £2000.

111 Chatsworth Road

London

NW2 4BH

Tel 020 8459 6527

Email info@nihalarmstrongtrust.org.uk

www.nihalarmstrongtrust.org.uk

The sfgroup charity

Helps severely disabled people of all ages by paying for specific items or services to improve their quality of life.

Tel 07711 985 758

Email brenda.yong@sfcharity.co.uk

www.sfcharity.co.uk

Variety Club, The Children's Charity

Works to help improve the lives of sick, disabled and disadvantaged children and young people up to the age of 19 years across the UK, providing basic items that will improve the lives of individual children.

Variety House

93 Bayham Street

London

NW1 0AG

Tel 020 7428 8100

Email info@variety.org.uk

www.varietyclub.org.uk

VAT

You do not pay VAT on products designed and sold specifically for disabled people. This means all adaptations, installation, repair and maintenance are zero rated.

What kind of adaptations count?

- Those which make it possible for the disabled person to get in and out of the vehicle, such as a swivel seat.
- Those which enable a wheelchair to be carried in the vehicle, such as a hoist. Trailers or racks would not count as they are not vehicle adaptations.

Adaptations have to be permanent – which means in practice that they have to be welded or bolted on. The supplier of the vehicle has to be satisfied that the disabled person qualifies, and you will have to sign a form declaring your disability.

Wheelchair and stretcher users

Additionally, if the disabled person uses a wheelchair or stretcher you may not have to pay VAT on the price of the car or for its repair or maintenance.

To qualify the disabled person must:

- be a permanent and full time wheelchair user or
- need to be carried in a stretcher.

The car must

- have been designed or substantially and permanently adapted for the person who normally uses a wheelchair or stretcher
- carry no more than 12 people
- be for domestic or personal use.

Vehicles owned and run by businesses do not qualify. However you can use a qualifying adapted vehicle for work if it is incidental to its main private use.

VAT relief applies only to new cars, so if you are buying a car with the intention of having adaptations fitted, it may be worth your while to consider buying a new car rather than a secondhand one as you will not have to pay VAT on the car.

More information: VAT Notice 701/7
VAT relief for people with disabilities from HMRC national advice service

Tel 0845 010 9000

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Important

- You must buy and adapt the car at the same time – you cannot get a VAT refund for adaptations made later.
- Alterations made to a car before it is registered have to have type approval. In practice this means that it is only legal to fit these adaptations after registration. You have to register the car, have it adapted and then pay for it.
- Talk to the firm who is adapting your car – they will be able to make appropriate arrangements.

Equipment suppliers

Here we list the suppliers who sell specialist products for disabled children. Contact them for more information about their products. For adaptations to vehicles, you can also talk to a local installer. We also publish a *Mobility address list*, where you will find a complete list of adaptation companies in the UK.

Autoadapt

Tel 0121 333 5170

Email contact@autoadapt.co.uk

www.autoadapt.co.uk

BeSafe UK

Tel 01606 814 638

Email sales@hts.no

www.besafechildcarseat.co.uk

Crelling Harnesses

Tel 01253 852298

Fax 01253 821780

Email info@crelling.com

www.crelling.com

Fledglings

Tel 0845 458 1124

Email enquiries@fledglings.org.uk

www.fledglings.org.uk

In Car Safety

Tel 01908 220909

Email info@incarsafetycentre.co.uk

www.incarsafetycentre.co.uk

JCM Seating

Tel 01733 405830

www.jcmseating.co.uk

Joncare

Tel 01235 523 353

www.joncare.co.uk

Multimac

Tel 0121 4422007

Fax 0121 4422057

Email info@multimac.co.uk

www.multimac.co.uk

Otto Bock

Tel 01784 744 900

Email bockuk@ottobock.com

www.ottobock.co.uk

R82

Tel 0121 561 2222

Email R82uk@R82.com

www.r82-uk.co.uk

Tendercare

Tel 01903 726161

Fax 01903 734083

Email sales@tendercareltd.com

www.tendercareltd.com

Windmill Special Needs

Tel 0161 345 5361

Email mick@windmillsspecialneeds.co.uk

www.windmillsspecialneeds.co.uk

BUYING SECONDHAND

You can buy adapted vehicles and equipment secondhand. Anything you buy secondhand may be affected by safety and reliability issues. With car seats it is especially important to be sure the seat has not been damaged (if a seat has been involved in an accident, it may be damaged in a way you can't see). For secondhand vehicles, the seller may have had an inspection carried out and/or offer a warranty. If not, you may want to think about carrying out your own inspection.

Classified advertisements

The following websites carry listings for adapted vehicles and equipment.

Autotrader

www.autotrader.co.uk

Disability Equipment Register

www.disabilityequipment.org.uk

Disability Now

www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/classifieds

Disabled Gear

www.disabledgear.com

ebay

www.ebay.co.uk

Mobility Choice Motoring

www.mobilitychoicemotoring.co.uk

Preloved

www.preloved.co.uk



Mobility Choice Motoring



Disabled Gear

Useful organisations

MOBILITY CENTRES



There are 16 Mobility Centres in the UK. They give practical and independent advice and assessment to disabled drivers and passengers. They will assess your ability to drive, advise you about cars that might suit you and about any adaptations you may need. They are well informed on motoring and disability issues generally. Each centre has expert and friendly staff who are likely to have met and solved similar problems before. They are non commercial and impartial.

An assessment for a driver referring him or herself will cost from £50 to £130 (depending on the centre). In Scotland assessment is free if you are referred by a GP. Costs for assessment as a passenger are lower – generally around £20–£50. Motability customers may qualify for a free assessment under the Managed Adaptation Programme.

Mobility Centres are accredited by the Forum of Mobility Centres and have certain minimum standards. For more information on the centres contact:

The Forum of Mobility Centres
c/o Providence Chapel, Warehorne
Ashford, Kent TN26 2JX
Tel: 0800 559 3636
Email mobility@rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk
www.mobility-centres.org.uk

Key to services

The centres vary in size and in the services they offer. This key tells you what services are available at each centre:

- I** free information service
- D** advice on choosing a vehicle, driving it, driving controls and learning to drive
- P** assessment and advice about getting in and out of vehicles, loading of wheelchairs and other equipment
- W** advice on selecting and using a wheelchair or scooter
- T** driving tuition for new drivers, people returning to driving and those who will be using different controls
- A** fitting adaptations for drivers or passengers

ENGLAND

Bristol

Living
The Vassall Centre
Gill Avenue
Fishponds
Bristol
BS16 2QQ
Tel 0117 965 9353
Fax 0117 965 3652
Email mobserv@thisisliving.org.uk
www.thisisliving.org.uk
Services **IDPWT**

Cornwall

Cornwall Mobility Centre
Tehidy House,
Royal Cornwall Hospital
Truro TR1 3LJ

Satellite centres Exeter, Holsworthy,
Liskeard, Plymouth

Tel 01872 254920

Fax 01872 254921

Email enquiries@cornwallmobilitycentre.
co.uk

www.cornwallmobilitycentre.co.uk

Services IDP W T A

Derbyshire

Derby DrivAbility
Kingsway Hospital, Kingsway
Derby DE22 3LZ

Tel 01332 371929

Fax 01332 382377

Email driving@derbyhospitals.nhs.uk
www.derbydrivability.com

Services ID P T

Hampshire

Leornain House, Kent Road
Portswood, Southampton SO17 2LJ

Tel 023 8051 2222

Email enquiries@wessexdriveability.org.uk
www.wessexdriveability.org.uk

Services I P

Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Action on Disability (HAD)
The Woodside Centre, The Commons
Welwyn Garden City AL7 4DD

Satellite centre Dunstable

Tel 01707 324581

Fax 01707 371297

Email driving@hadnet.org.uk
www.hadnet.org.uk

Services ID P W T

Kent

South East DriveAbility
Kent Community Health NHS Trust
St Lawrence Avenue, Allington ME16 0LL

Satellite centres Hailsham, Herne Bay

Tel 01622 606 900

Fax 01622 606 901

Email wk-pct.sedriveability@nhs.net
[www.kentcht.nhs.uk/get-involved/
south-east-drive-ability](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/get-involved/south-east-drive-ability)

Services ID P T

Lancashire

Wrightington Mobility Centre
Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane
Appley Bridge, Lancs WN6 9EP

Satellite centre Tyldsley (Manchester)

Tel 01257 256409

Fax 01257 256538

Email mobilitycentre@bridgewater.nhs.uk

Services ID P T

Norfolk

East Anglian DriveAbility
2 Napier Place, Thetford IP24 3RL

Satellite centres Coggeshall, Spalding

Tel 01842 753029

Fax 01842 755950

Email mail@eastangliandriveability.org.uk
www.eastangliandriveability.org.uk

Services ID P W T

North East

North East Drive Mobility,
Walkergate Park Centre for
Neurorehabilitation and Neuro-psychiatry
Benfield Road, Newcastle NE6 4QD

Satellite centre Penrith

Tel 0191 287 5090

Email northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk
www.ntw.nhs.uk

Services ID P

Surrey

QEF Mobility Services
 Damson Way, Fountain Drive
 Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR

Tel 020 8770 1151

Fax 020 8770 1211

Email mobility@qef.org.uk
 www.qefd.org

Services IDPWT

West Midlands

Regional Driving Assessment Centre
 Unit 11, Network Park
 Duddeston Mill Road, Birmingham B8 1AU

Satellite centres Cannock, Hull,
 Northampton, Oxford

Tel 0845 337 1540

Fax 0121 333 4568

Email info@rdac.co.uk
 www.rdac.co.uk

Services IDPT

West Yorkshire

The William Merritt Centre
 St Mary's Hospital, Green Hill Road
 Armley, Leeds LS12 3QE

Tel 0113 305 5288

Fax 0113 231 9291

Email mobility.service@nhs.net
 www.williammerrittleeds.org

Services IDPW

NORTHERN IRELAND

Disability Action, Portside Business Park
 189 Airport Road, Belfast BT3 9ED

Satellite centres Ballymena, Dungannon,
 Londonderry, Newry

Tel 028 9029 7880

Fax 028 9029 7881

Email mobilitycentre@disabilityaction.org
 www.disabilityaction.org

Services IDPT

SCOTLAND

Scottish Driving Assessment Service
 Astley Ainslie Hospital
 133 Grange Loan

Edinburgh
 EH9 2HL

Satellite centre Mobile Driving
 Assessment Service

Tel 0131 537 9192

Fax 0131 537 9193

Email marlene.mackenzie@nhslothian.scot.
 nhs.uk

Services IDP

WALES

North Wales Mobility and Driving
 Assessment Service

Disability Resources Centre

Glan Clwyd Hospital

Bodelwyddan

Denbighshire

LL18 5UJ

Satellite centre Newtown

Tel 01745 584 858

Fax 01745 582 762

Email mobilityinfo@btconnect.com
 www.wmdas.co.uk

Services IDPWTA

South Wales Mobility and Driving
 Assessment Service

Rookwood Hospital

Fairwater Road

Llandaff

Cardiff

CF5 2YN

Satellite centre Pembroke

Tel 029 2055 5130

Fax 029 2055 5130

Email helen@wddac.co.uk
 www.wmdas.co.uk

Services IDP

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Assist UK



National network of centres offering advice on independent living equipment. Your local centre can advise about wheelchairs and accessories.

Tel 0161 238 8776

Email general.info@assist-uk.org
www.assist-uk.org

Blue Badge Network

Has information, news and ideas relating to parking concessions in particular and disability issues in general.

11 Parson's Street, Dudley DY1 1JJ

Tel 01384 257001

Fax 01384 257317

Email headoffice@bluebadgenetwork.org.uk

www.bluebadgenetwork.org.uk

Contact a Family



A UK charity providing information and advice to parents with disabled children. They provide a freephone helpline offering information and advice on a wide range of issues including benefits, education, accessing services, finding medical information and linking with other parents to share experiences. They produce detailed guides on a range of issues, an informative website and training courses to parents and children's centres.

209–211 City Road

London EC1V 1JN

Tel 0808 808 3555

Email info@cafamily.org.uk
www.cafamily.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation



Advice and information on disability equipment. They have a database of products and suppliers.

380–384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU

Tel 0845 130 9177

(weekdays 10am to 4pm)

www.dlf.org.uk

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Disability Now

A monthly online newspaper published by Scope with reviews by disabled people and classified advertisements.

www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Drivers Medical Group

DVLA, Swansea SA99 1TU

Tel 0300 790 6806

Fax 0845 850 0095

Email eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/medical.aspx

www.gov.uk/driving-if-disabled

Northern Ireland

Driver and Vehicle Agency Drivers

Medical Section

County Hall, Castlerock Road

Coleraine BT51 3TB

Tel 0845 402 4000

Email dvlni@doeni.gov.uk

www.dvani.gov.uk

Disabled Motoring UK



The campaigning charity for disabled motorists. They run the Baywatch campaign against parking abuse and represent disabled people's needs at a national level. Membership, £20 per year (£30 for joint members), includes a monthly magazine, advice service and member benefits.

Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX

Tel 01508 489449

Email info@disabledmotoring.org

www.disabledmotoring.org

Fledglings



A charity which helps parents and carers of disabled children to find solutions to practical problems of everyday living.

Wenden Court, Station Approach

Wendens Ambo CB11 4LB

Tel 0845 458 1124

Email enquiries@fledglings.org.uk

www.fledglings.org.uk

Get Going Live



Free one day events where young people can see try out equipment and adaptations, including test driving adapted vehicles. Aimed at 15 and 16 year olds who will be getting their provisional driving licence early. Organised by DMUK and Mobility Choice

Tel 0845 241 0390

Fax 01344 750026

Email choice@gtnet.gov.uk

www.getgoingnow.org

GOV.UK

A website providing information about public services. They have useful sections on motoring and on disability.

www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities

MERU



If you can't find the disability equipment you need, then MERU may be able to help either by giving you advice on where to buy equipment, or by designing and building it for you in their workshops.

MERU also manufactures a small range of ready-made items including Splat, Knobz, Bugzi and TravelChair.

MERU also manufactures a small range of ready-made items including Splat, Knobz, Bugzi and TravelChair.

Unit 2 Eclipse Estate

30 West Hill

Epsom KT19 8JD

Tel 01372 725 203

Fax 01472 743 159

Email info@meru.org.uk

www.meru.org.uk

Mobility Roadshows



Have a wide range of adapted cars and mobility products to see and try.

Manufacturers and organisations are on hand to give advice and demonstrations. Roadshows are free.

Mobility Choice

Tel 0845 241 0390

Fax 01344 750026

Email choice@gtnet.gov.uk

www.mobilityroadshow.co.uk

Motability One Big Day



Motability run these regional events for customers or people interested in the scheme – you can see and try cars and adaptations.

Tel 0800 953 4002

www.motability.co.uk/onebigday

Remap



A voluntary organisation of engineers who invent, design and make devices or carry out adaptations to help disabled people to be more independent or to enjoy leisure activities.

England, Wales and NI

D9 Chaucer Business Park

Kemsing

Kent

TN15 6YU

Tel 0845 130 0456

Fax 0845 130 0789

Email info@remap.org.uk

www.remap.org.uk

Remap Scotland

The website has a useful map showing the locations of local groups.

Forgue House

Forgue

Huntly

AB54 6DA

Tel 01466 730 736

Email remap-scotland@btconnect.com

www.remap-scotland.org

Service Call



A service that allows disabled people to use petrol stations and other services that are difficult to access. You carry an infrared transmitter (£14.95 inc p&p), which you use to signal that you need assistance at participating outlets, which include thousands of petrol stations, banks, supermarkets, shops and others.

Tel 0800 458 3008

Email info@service-call.net

www.service-call.net

Steps Charity

A small national charity supporting children and adults affected by a lower limb condition. Offers confidential advice and support, information leaflets and factsheets and an online forum.

Wright House, Crouchley Lane

Lymm WA13 0AS

Tel 01925 750271

www.steps-charity.org.uk

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Converters' Association



The trade association for companies who make and sell WAVs. WAVCA aims to improve the quality and safety of WAVs and lobbies for legislation for wheelchair passenger vehicles.

Members must:

- have been trading for at least 2 years
- offer at least 3 years warranty
- have passed safety tests on restraints and seat belts
- demonstrate a commitment to customer service.

Email enquiries@wavca.co.uk

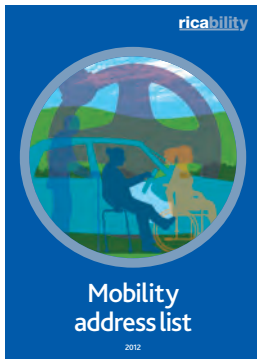
www.wavca.co.uk



Ricability guides

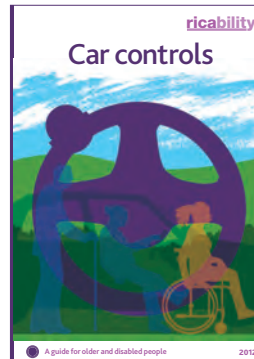
All these guides are available in print and online at www.ricability.org.uk.

Our website also has a searchable database of car measurements called *Find a car*.



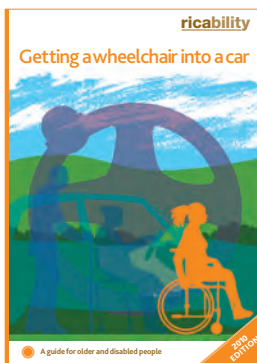
MOBILITY ADDRESS LIST

Addresses of all adaptation suppliers, fitters and converters in the UK and the services they offer



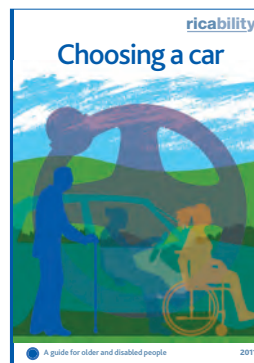
CAR CONTROLS

Information on types of adaptations and how to get them; it covers simple and more complex conversions and controls



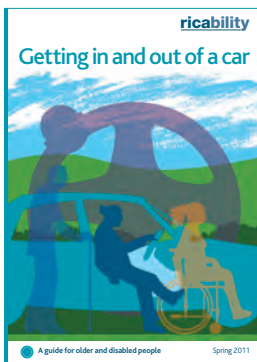
GETTING A WHEELCHAIR INTO A CAR

Equipment to help you stow or carry a wheelchair in a car, including ramps, hoists, racks and trailers



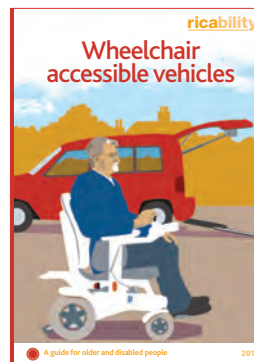
CHOOSING A CAR

Things to think about if you have a disability, details of features that may help you and ways of adapting a car to suit your needs



GETTING IN AND OUT OF A CAR

Techniques that may help as you get older; helpful equipment and details of lifting systems if you need more help



WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

Information on vehicles converted to allow you to travel in your wheelchair, as a passenger or driver

SEVEN SHORTER GUIDES

- Motoring after an amputation
- Motoring after a brain injury
- Motoring after a stroke
- Motoring with arthritis
- Motoring with cerebral palsy
- Motoring with multiple sclerosis
- Motoring with restricted growth

Motability has teamed up with leading home, pet and travel insurers

For full details of the Motability Insurance range visit www.motability.co.uk or call direct:

Motability HOME Insurance	0800 783 0061
Motability PET Insurance	0800 369 9094
Motability TRAVEL Insurance	0800 519 9957

For every policy sold, the insurance providers will pay a proportion of the premium in commission to Motability to help disabled people remain mobile.



ricability

Ricability is an independent research charity that publishes information on products and services for older and disabled people

Ricability
Unit G03 The Wenlock
50–52 Wharf Road
London N1 7EU
Tel: 020 7427 2460
Fax: 020 7427 2468
Textphone: 020 7427 2469
Email: mail@ricability.org.uk
www.ricability.org.uk



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Print: WPG

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