



DISCOUNTS AND TRAVEL SCHEMES FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION SHEET

This information sheet includes guidance on the concessions and discounts available for disabled travellers on public transport. We've also included information and links regarding accessible travel schemes on public transport.

Please note that all prices, discounts and links were correct at the time of writing, but may have altered since.



USEFUL RESOURCES

Here are a few organisations with travel resources you might find useful:

- Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) – search for information on our Travel Hub by region, level of injury, mode of transport, and more:
www.spinal.co.uk/travel-hub/
- Scope
- Citizens Advice Bureau – search in your local area or see their national guide to transport concessions.
- Transport for all – an organisation led by and supporting disabled people
- Carers UK – supporting the carer community
- Government support – help with cost of transport



carersUK
making life better for carers

APPS / JOURNEY PLANNING TOOLS

The following websites, apps and journey planning tools can help you locate disabled concessions travel information, including the type of assistance available:

- [National Rail](#)
- [Disabled Persons Railcard](#)
- [Concessionary Travel Scheme \(National Rail\)](#)
- [Offers and savings \(National Rail\)](#)
- [TfL Go \(step-free journey planning for London\)](#)
- [Trainline](#) (allows Railcard discount to be applied)

- [National Express](#) - bus / coach travel
- [Coach card](#) (National Express)

- [Citymapper](#) (accessibility features)
- [Blue Badge scheme](#) – for access to disabled parking
- [Google Maps](#)
- Local service provider websites – for bus, taxi and community transport; usually found through council websites.

TOP TIP!

The companion/carer add-on for passes (bus, rail, taxis, ferries) usually give the biggest extra saving, so always check that first if you have care support or are a carer.



SUMMARY LIST OF AVAILABLE CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT TYPE:

RAIL

Common Discount 1/3 off + 1/3 off companion (Railcard)

BUSES

- Regional passes (see regional links)
- free off-peak or free anytime (Scotland/NI)
- www.gov.uk/apply-for-disabled-bus-pass

TRAMS

- often free or reduced via local passes (check with service provider)

FERRIES

- discounts/companion concessions (check with service provider)

TAXIS

- no extra charge for wheelchair users or assistance dogs

COACH

- National Express; a Disabled Coachcard gives you 1/3 off your travel, all year round

ROAD/CAR

- for discounted tolls and bridges

For companion/carer concessions and discounts, check individual service providers or Carers UK.

HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT DISCOUNTS FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT?

Northern Ireland

Check accessible transport

If you're travelling by ferry, it's best to use the service provider's information; search for your ferry company's accessible travel pages.

Scotland

Check accessible transport and Scotland's National Entitlement Card (NEC - Scotland's national Smartcard)

Wales

Check accessible transport and find discounts in the travel portal for concessionary travel.

England

Check the GOV.UK website for accessible transport

If you're travelling by ferry, it's best to use the service provider's information; search for your ferry company's accessible travel pages.



REGIONAL / LOCAL TRANSPORT

To identify concession schemes for bus, tram and taxi travel in your local area, start with your Local Authority or local council website.

For trains, search National Rail or the service provider in your area.

Most concessions (bus/tram/taxi passes/Freedom Pass/Freedom equivalents, companion add-ons) are owned and updated by councils. That means it's best to check with your local council for concessions that are most suitable for you. Insert links to SIA information sheets - bus and taxi and tram

When you're searching online for local or regional travel concessions, these are some of the most effective search terms you could try:

- "disabled bus pass [city/council name]"
- "freedom pass eligibility" (for London boroughs only)
- "companion travel concession [region]"

London

If you're travelling in and around London...

- [Find accessibility support on Transport for London \(TfL\)](#)
- [Apply for a Freedom Pass](#)

DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

TRAIN (Rail)

Booking tickets in advance is always the cheaper option! Remember, your carer or supporting companion may also travel at a reduced rate.

For information on national rail policy and railcard information, visit [National Rail](#) and see the SIA [information sheet on train travel](#).



Disabled Persons Railcard

- 1/3 off rail fares in Great Britain
- 1/3 off for 1 companion/carer travelling with the railcard holder
- Pay £20/year or £54/3-years (up-front cost)
- Can be used digitally via the Railcard app

Other rail concessions

- [Concessions](#)
- [Offers and savings](#)
- Discounts for days out, when travelling on rail services www.daysoutguide.co.uk

days out guide
in association with  National Rail





London-only rail concession

- Freedom Pass travel for most public transport within London zones
- Free on most National Rail, tube, overground, Elizabeth Line, DLR and bus.
- Some people can also have 1/3 rail discount added to their Freedom Pass for certain commuter routes (borough dependent).
- NB: Freedom Pass does not currently provide companion discounts. It's advisable to always travel with a carer card / companion card to support any requests for companion discounts. In some situations, and depending on your mode of travel for the entire journey, you may be better off using the Disabled Persons Railcard to get the 1/3 off for both yourself and your companion.



Passenger assistance

Although this is not a discount service, we do recommend it for travellers with disabilities so have included it here.

- Passenger Assist (National Rail)
- Pre-booked ramp and staff support for boarding, transfers, and station navigation.

📍 Where to check:

- [National Rail](#) – use the 'help and assistance' tab – and then click 'assisted travel' for more accessibility information.
- [Transport accessibility - Transport for London](#)

DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

BUS

England

- Disabled Persons' Bus Pass
- Free off-peak bus travel nationwide.
- Off-peak times are typically 9:30am–11pm weekdays and all day at weekends (though this can vary slightly by council).

London

- Free bus travel covered by Freedom Pass

Scotland

- National Entitlement Card (NEC)
- Free bus travel anytime, nationwide in Scotland.
- You can apply for a companion add-on if eligible (includes some people with spinal cord injury who need support)

Wales

- Disabled Concessionary Travel Card
- Free off-peak bus travel.
- Companion element can be added for some eligible users.

Northern Ireland

- Disabled SmartPass
- Free bus and rail travel in Northern Ireland.
- Companion pass sometimes available, depending on eligibility.

Carer policy by law

- On buses, a wheelchair user must not be charged extra for using an accessible space.
- Assistance dogs travel free of charge.

Where to check:

- Local council website (apply for passes and companion via council).

DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

COACH TRAVEL (national journeys within the UK)

Disabled Persons Coachcard (National Express)

- 1/3 off standard and fully flexible coach fares
- 1/3 off for 1 travelling companion/carer on the same booking
- £15 annually

Free travel for assistance dogs (legal requirement across coach operators).

No extra charge for carrying wheelchairs/mobility equipment on coaches (legal protection under the Equality Act 2010).

Scotland: National Entitlement Card is available for many disabilities, including wheelchair users and people unable to walk 200 metres independently.

NOTE: There is no universal free national coach travel pass in England, Wales or Scotland, so the Coachcard and companion discount is the main national saving for coaches.



DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

TAXI / PRIVATE HIRE (including wheelchair-accessible taxis)

Legal protections (required by law)

- Taxi/private hire drivers cannot charge extra for:
- a wheelchair user
- storing mobility aids
- an assistance dog
- Assistance dogs must be carried, free of charge, unless the driver has an official medical exemption certificate.



Discounts (not required by law, but available in many areas)

Regional or local taxi discount schemes sometimes exist but vary widely:

- e.g. council-linked taxi card schemes
- community voucher systems
- disability travel wallets

Carer considerations for people with spinal cord injury

- Carer should travel in the taxi free of charge if they use the companion element on the user's taxi card scheme (if available locally — not a national scheme).

Where to check:

- Local council “taxi card” or “transport support for disabled people” web pages.



DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

TRAMS

Tram travel is often free or discounted if the user holds a regional disability travel pass.

This varies region by region; examples include:

- Manchester Metrolink → free or reduced with qualifying pass
- Sheffield Supertram
- Nottingham Express Transit
- Many Scottish island travel schemes include tram and bus companion concessions.

Legal assistance policy

- Wheelchair space must be provided with no extra charge.
- Assistance dogs must be allowed to travel, free of charge.

Where to check:

- Your local tram operator's website.
- Your local council's website, for disability travel pass details.



DISCOUNTS AND CONCESSIONS BY TRANSPORT MODE

FERRIES

- Scotland: The National Entitlement Card offers access to many public services, including free or reduced ferry + companion fares via NEC companion add-on (especially islands).
- Wales/NI: Some companion or reduced fare elements but not universal.
- Assistance dogs must travel free by law.
- Wheelchairs/essential equipment must be carried at no extra charge.

Where to check:

- Your ferry operator's website.
- [Transport Scotland/travel NEC companion guidance](#)

COMMUNITY / CARE SUPPORT TRANSPORT

This isn't a universal discount but is a local / regional service provided in many areas. Community transport schemes tend to be:

- subsidised
- door-to-door
- for people who can't easily access standard public transport
- Hospital transport services
- available if you're clinically eligible, booked via your NHS provider

Where to check:

- Local council transport support pages.
- NHS hospital transport information.
- See SIA's information sheet on community transport for more details.

For more information, visit our [Travel Hub](#) or contact us at:

Spinal Injuries Association, SIA House, 2 Trueman Place, Oldbrook, Milton Keynes, MK6 2HH

e: travel@spinal.co.uk t: 0800 980 0501 (freephone support line: Monday - Friday 10.00am-4.00pm)