



Out and About

Assistive Technology to Consider when Out and About



When travelling and getting out and about, there are many things to consider, plan and take with you. As Assistive Technology Users (and people with disability), at times it can be challenging to navigate some of the barriers to undertake typical activities, like getting around and going on holidays.

Assistive technology can help make getting out and about easier. This resource provides some information, and examples of low-risk assistive technology items.

Note: The below items are examples only and there are many more assistive technology options that are available.

Low Cost and Low Risk AT and Accessories

1. Eating



If you are going to be eating outside of the home, you may choose to take your own cutlery with you to suit your needs.

Image: [Cutlery Products - mobilityshopdirect.com.au](https://mobilityshopdirect.com.au)



A cooler bag or esky can be used to carry food items but be sure to separate these from your medications. For easy identification, choose different coloured coolers or tags. For people who have low vision, choose different shaped tags, or tags with braille or tactile markings, or large print labels.

Image 1: [Decor Microsafe containers - bigw.com.au](https://bigw.com.au)

Image 2: [Sistema maxi fold insulated lunch bag - bigw.com.au](https://bigw.com.au)

2. Drinking



For drinking, you may consider taking a spill proof cup, collapsable cup, or a straw and brush set.

When choosing a water bottle, consider its weight, size and width. A strap can be used to hang the bottle over the user's shoulder or on the arm of a wheelchair, or a hand strap can be used to aid grasping the bottle.

Image 1: [FlexiGrip bottle holder - mobilitydirect.com.au](http://mobilitydirect.com.au)

Image 2: [Insulated water bottle with straw - moonbottles.com.au](http://moonbottles.com.au)

3. Navigation

A range of apps are available for smartphones that may assist with navigating and planning your route. The standard 'Maps' app that is included in the phone is often the easiest to use. Other examples of apps include Blindsquare (an app which is designed to help people with vision loss to find their way around. It will let the user know where they are in terms of the nearest intersection or business).

A reminders app can be used to remind you of when you should take your medication. When travelling, you can more easily forget your regular medication. Examples include Medisafe, and MedAdvisor.

Some devices also include GPS software, and a dedicated GPS tracker. You can use these to get directions or to prevent becoming lost or disorientated. With your consent, this can also be used by a family member, friend or support worker to assist you.

A falls detector or personal alarm are incorporated into some devices. If this is something you would find helpful, make sure you speak to your treating professional.

4. Medication

For your medications whilst travelling, a portable pill or dosette box can be used or a reminders app such as Medisafe, and MedAdvisor.



6. Vision

Handheld magnifier

If you have low vision, a small pocket-sized magnifier is easy to carry and use. This can assist with reading travel information, menus, shop labels, receipts and so on. Alternatively, a magnifier app on your phone may be used. iPhone has “Magnifier” built in as a utility or downloadable from the app store. Accessibility apps are also available via iPhone, and other phone brands.

For low light situations Battery powered magnifiers with built in lighting are even better. A portable digital magnifier has built in lighting and zoom magnification so that it can magnify to many levels in one device. This is significantly more expensive and is more versatile than a simple handheld magnifier.



Images: [Magnifiers - askned.com.au](http://askned.com.au)

Monoscope



This device is easier to carry than a pair of binoculars and can fit into your pocket or a handbag. The monocular can be used to see things in the distance including a street sign or shop notices. Various magnifications are available.

Image: [Monocular Telescope - visionaustralia.org](http://visionaustralia.org)

7. Wheelchair accessories



There are a wide range of wheelchair accessories available such as carry bags, cup and phone holders, and walking stick holders. Consider the security of your belongings if the accessory is not within your line of vision.

Image: [The Everything FFORA Set - liveeffora.com](https://www.liveeffora.com)



8. Vehicle and Transportation

Car door support handle



This multi-purpose device can be slipped into the latch loop of an open car door and provide extra support for a person transferring into a car. It has a hammer end that can be used to smash a car window if a person is trapped inside the car in an accident. A seat belt cutter is also included.

Image: [Stander Metro Car Handle - askned.com.au](http://askned.com.au)

Easy seat belt reacher



This extends the handle of your seat belt and limits the need to twist when reaching for your seat belt. It can be attached to either the passenger or driver's seat belt.

Image: [Easy seat belt reacher - pharmacyonline.com.au](http://pharmacyonline.com.au)

Concessions, Permits, and Discounts

There are a variety of concessions, permits and discounts available to consider, but these may vary depending upon your location.

Disability Parking Scheme

- An Australian Disability Parking Permit is included as part of the [Australian Disability Parking Scheme \(ADPS\)](#). This is recognised across Australia and ensures consistent eligibility criteria and national minimum parking concessions. This scheme assists in reducing the permit holder's barriers when travelling interstate. State and Territory Governments are responsible for the management of the ADPS.

National Companion Card

- [The National Companion Card](#) enables eligible people with disability and who require a support person to participate at venues and activities, to not incur the cost of a second ticket for their companion.
- States and territories are responsible for issuing Companion Cards.

Free Travel pass

- Each State and Territory has its own version of the Vision Impaired Person free travel pass for state or Territory owned public transport. In most cases this will include an accompanying guide. Where this is not included, the companion card can achieve the same thing. You need to apply in your own State or Territory for a card that is usually recognised in other States and Territories. Make sure that your card does meet the criteria of the other State or Territory by contacting the appropriate organisation.
- Be aware that you might have difficulty at unmanned ticketing gates because your pass will not open the gates in other states.
- [Other concessions of this type are also available for people with other types of disability](#). Once again this varies greatly from state to state, and you should contact the appropriate organisation in each State or Territory.

Taxi Subsidy

- In each State or Territory, a subsidy is available to make it cheaper to travel in Taxis. Generally, a percentage of the cost of the taxi ride is covered by the state government up to a set amount. The user must pay for the remaining amount.

The system used in each state varies and Western Australia is currently in the process of changing their process. You will need to double check to see if the process in your state works in another state. Note that this does not include ride sharing providers, only taxis.

- [Everything you need to know about the taxi subsidy scheme in Australia - 13cabs.com.au](http://13cabs.com.au)

Public Transport Considerations

- If you intend to take AT such as a wheelchair or guide dog on public transport, you should be familiar with the rules and policies of the service you will be using. [The Federal Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts](#) has developed transport standards which overarch the various State and Territory services. These Transport Standards are being reformed. Visit the appropriate website for information about the standards.
- Public transport companies will usually offer free software in online stores, which will allow the user to find the nearest stop, plan a trip and let you know what time the trip should start. When used on the trip, it can also let you know when your stop is coming so you can prepare to get off at the right time.



Airline Travel

- The Australian Aviation industry is covered by the same standards. However, each airline has variations on how the standards are followed. Your travel agent will be the first person to help you, however, they might not be fully aware of what support is available. For example, most of the airlines in Australia will allow you to take your guide dog into the cabin with you. Some travel agents will expect you to put your guide dog in cargo, which is not acceptable. Similar problems could occur with wheelchair, crutches and other large Assistive Technology.
- [Travelling with specific needs - Qantas](#)
- [Specific needs and assistance - Virgin Australia](#)

If you need advice about suitable low-risk (low to mid cost) AT, you can contact one of our [AT Mentors](#) who can provide advice and information to enable you to purchase item/s using your NDIS plan funding.

Contact Us

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