



# Leasing a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle



To explore our choice of WAVs, visit [motability.co.uk](https://www.motability.co.uk)  
or speak to one of our team on **0800 093 1000**

We are Motability Operations Ltd, a company authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.  
All Motability Scheme vehicles are leased to customers by Motability Operations Limited.

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# Welcome to the Motability Scheme

This guide is designed to help you decide if a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) is right for you.

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## What is a WAV?

A WAV is a vehicle converted so wheelchair users can travel either as a passenger or driver while remaining in their wheelchair.

The size, shape and design of a WAV varies depending on the original vehicle used and the company that converted it, but all have easy access and provide safe travel for wheelchair users.

If you are not able to transfer from your wheelchair to a standard car seat, or if your carer is no longer able to lift you, a WAV could be the answer. We have over 30,000 customers who value the independence a WAV gives them.

## Simple all-inclusive leasing

Every lease is all-inclusive, so everything listed on the right is included in the price you pay. So your only day to day running cost is fuel.

## Over 600,000 customers

In total over 600,000 customers across the country put their trust in the Motability Scheme and enjoy the options and independence the Scheme brings.



## An all-inclusive lease package

To make leasing through the Motability Scheme affordable and worry-free, all of the essentials below are included in the price.

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Insurance for three named drivers

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Servicing and maintenance

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Full RAC breakdown assistance

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Tyre and windscreen repair or replacement and MOTs

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## Plus additional benefits for WAV customers

- A dedicated WAV supplier
- Familiarisation check a month after delivery
- Annual WAV check
- Critical repairs within 72 hours
- Home repairs where possible
- Converted alternative if vehicle is out of action for more than 48 hours

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# How the Scheme works

Our standard WAV lease is for five years and comes with our all-inclusive lease package, providing all the help and support you need.

## Affordable lease packages

The Motability Scheme work with WAV suppliers to keep prices as low as possible. We arrange for the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to transfer your higher rate mobility allowance to us to pay the weekly rental. You'll need to pay an Advance Payment at the start of your lease to make up any difference between your allowance payments and the overall cost of the lease.

## Financial help

Motability is a national charity which oversees the Motability Scheme. Motability may be able to provide charitable grants towards Advance Payments, adaptations or driving lessons to support disabled people who would otherwise be unable to afford them. Visit [motability.org.uk/grants](https://www.motability.org.uk/grants) or call **0800 500 3186** to find out more.

## Set price options

There are set prices for some of the most popular conversion options. Items such as heavy duty tie-downs for heavier powered wheelchairs and privacy glass, can now be fitted to any appropriate WAV, from any supplier, at a set price.

## Nearly New WAVs

The Scheme also offers the option of Nearly New WAVs. These are available on a three year lease, in some cases are available straight away, and as you would expect, cost much less than new WAVs. You will need to check with your supplier if they have a WAV that suits your particular needs and it may mean compromising on some less important aspects, such as colour or trim.

## Alternatives to a WAV

Before we explore WAVs in more detail, it's worth noting that if you can transfer out of your wheelchair a standard car fitted with adaptations may be a better option. Transfer plates, swivel seats, person hoists and a range of adaptations that help you to stow your wheelchair or scooter, may provide the help you need.

Find out more at [motability.co.uk/adaptations](https://www.motability.co.uk/adaptations).

## Joining the Scheme

To be eligible for the Motability Scheme you need to receive one of the allowances below and have at least 12 months remaining on your award.

→ Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (ERMC of PIP)

→ Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (HRMC of DLA)

→ War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (WPMS)

→ Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)

Please note that Attendance Allowance cannot be used to lease through the Motability Scheme.

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved top with a green floral pattern and grey trousers, is seated in a wheelchair. She is positioned in the driver's seat of a car, smiling towards a man standing next to her. The man is wearing a dark grey jacket and is looking at the woman. The car's interior, including the steering wheel and dashboard, is visible. The background shows a blue wall with some white floral patterns.

## Drive from Wheelchair WAVs

If you want to drive a WAV from your wheelchair, a number of vehicle types can be converted. These often require additional driving adaptations to suit individual needs. Drive from Wheelchair WAVs cost significantly more than a standard WAV and have longer delivery times due to the bespoke nature of the changes needed. For more information visit our website at [motability.co.uk/dfw](http://motability.co.uk/dfw).

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# Choosing the right vehicle

The three steps on the opposite page will help you start your search for the right vehicle that suits your needs now and for the next few years.



## Films about WAVs

View a series of short films to help you learn more about WAVs  
[motability.co.uk/wavfilms](https://motability.co.uk/wavfilms).



## One: Consider your needs

The following pages outline the main features of a WAV, so you can start to build up a picture of the things you need to look into that can help improve your motoring experience. Some come with the conversion, others may be options you need to pay for. Customers tell us they could have avoided problems if they had spent more time researching, so it's worth looking around, even if you already think you know what type of WAV you want.

WAVs come in a range of sizes and there are a few key factors that you need to think about when considering which size WAV will be the most appropriate for your needs.

- Size and weight of your wheelchair
- Your seated height in your wheelchair
- Number of people you regularly travel with
- Amount of equipment you take on journeys



## Two: Speak to a supplier

Through the Motability Scheme you can choose from 17 dedicated WAV suppliers, all of whom offer a nationwide service and no obligation home demonstrations. As trained specialists they can discuss your needs in detail and be able to recommend potential solutions.

Speak to a number of suppliers and test drive a few vehicles before making your mind up. Also, it is important to understand what each supplier includes as standard as it may differ.



## Three: Home demonstrations

Trying out a WAV is the only way to check it meets all your needs – both as a wheelchair user and for the person driving it. Contact the WAV suppliers you think might be suitable and book a home demonstration – there's no cost involved, no obligation to order and you can have as many demonstrations from as many suppliers as you like to enable you to make the right decision.

Before the WAV supplier you select visits you at home, they will build up a picture of your needs over the phone to ensure they bring the most appropriate vehicle for you to try.

Browse our latest list of WAVs and find a WAV supplier at [motability.co.uk/wavs](https://www.motability.co.uk/wavs), or call **0800 093 1000**.

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# Types of access

All WAVs are fitted with either a ramp or a lift, with access for the wheelchair user either from the back or the side depending on the conversion.

## Ramps

A ramp is usually operated by the carer manually unfolding it. There are also automatic versions where the ramp folds and unfolds at the touch of a button.

Some manual ramps are spring-loaded to raise or lower more easily. It's important to test the angle and length of the ramp. Consider whether your carer will physically be able to operate the ramp and push you into the WAV. Some converters offer powered winches at no extra cost, so if you think this may help ask your supplier.

## Lifts

Some larger WAVs can be fitted with a lift which can help if your carer has trouble pushing your wheelchair up a ramp into the WAV. However, WAVs fitted with a lift are generally more expensive than those fitted with ramps so your Advance Payment is likely to be higher.



## Lowered floors

Most WAVs will have had their floor specially lowered to allow enough headroom for the wheelchair user. A lowered floor also means that the ramp will either be shorter or the angle less steep for easier access.

### Helpful to know:

- Powered winches are sometimes supplied at no extra cost.
- Lifts are usually operated by a remote control.
- There are a few WAVs which have access from the side of the vehicle.
- As most floors are lowered, you will need to make sure the WAV allows for enough ground clearance on your regular routes.
- When the converter lowers the floor of a WAV, the fuel tank may need to be modified or replaced, reducing its size.
- Some WAVs can be fitted with lowering suspension so the rear of a vehicle can be lowered to allow easier access.





## Accessing a WAV

Find out more about WAV accessing differences, including tips on ramps and tie-down restraints  
[motability.co.uk/wavfilms](https://www.motability.co.uk/wavfilms).

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# Travelling in comfort and safety

Travelling in a wheelchair in a WAV will feel different to a standard car seat. Most people get used to this in time but you may find this difficult at first.

## Seating arrangements

The space inside a WAV is vitally important for passengers and the things you travel with regularly such as shopping or mobility aids.

Most WAVs position the wheelchair passenger behind the front seats or towards the back of the vehicle. Some WAVs allow the wheelchair passenger to sit beside the driver.

There are lots of seating layouts available depending on the size of vehicle and your specific requirements.

We'd recommend using the WAV search tool on our website which has a layout image for each WAV available on the Scheme showing the number of seats and their approximate position in the WAV, [motability.co.uk/wavsearch](https://www.motability.co.uk/wavsearch).

## Safety and space

Most WAVs have four restraint belts that attach to the front and rear of the wheelchair. The front restraints are adjustable and usually self-locking and can be attached to the wheelchair to lock it in place. Everyone that will be helping you use the system should test this out during your demonstration. There is also a three-point seatbelt for the wheelchair passenger to use.

If your wheelchair weighs over 140kg not all restraint systems will be suitable. Your WAV supplier will explain the options.

## Helpful to know:

- Check that your position within the WAV doesn't cause difficulties seeing out of the windows or hearing passengers.
- Does the layout allow access to the wheelchair user during journeys?
- Some seats may have to be removed unless they can fold out of the way.
- You can request extra seats, these can be smaller than a standard seat and might not be suitable for long journeys or for baby or child seats.
- Air conditioning is standard on all WAVs. If the wheelchair user is sensitive to temperature, additional heating may be required.
- If your carer has limited hand mobility or dexterity some tie-downs may be easier to operate than others.



# Demonstration checklist

Here's an overview of important things to consider to make sure you get the most out of a WAV demonstration and test drive.



## How a WAV is converted

In this film key suppliers show what goes into making a WAV  
[motability.co.uk/wavfilms](http://motability.co.uk/wavfilms).



**Try more than one type of WAV.**

Comparing and trying different vehicles is important. Your WAV supplier will happily arrange demonstrations of different models until you find the one that's right for you.

**Involve the people you travel with regularly.**

Your carer must be happy helping you into the WAV, securing your wheelchair and driving the vehicle, so it is essential they attend demonstrations.

**Test the WAV where you will use it most.**

Visit places and roads you would use regularly. WAVs are bigger than standard cars, so it's important that you practise parking to make sure your vehicle suits your day-to-day life.

**Try luggage and equipment.**

If you travel with luggage or extra equipment, make sure you try stowing it in the WAV during the test drive to ensure there is enough storage space.

**Practice loading and getting in and out.**

To identify if you need extra features, such as a winch, to help get the wheelchair into position, you and your carer should practise getting in and out and loading a couple of times.

**Don't rush, take as long as you need.**

We suggest allowing 2 hours minimum to test a WAV thoroughly and make sure you are completely comfortable and understand all aspects of the vehicle.

**Ask about travel costs.**

Your WAV supplier will be able to advise how your travel may impact fuel costs and whether a petrol or diesel would be a better option.

**Consider if your needs may change during your lease.**

For example, are you likely to change your wheelchair in the next five years? Will you need additional seating for passengers who travel with you now and in the future?

**Don't feel obliged to order.**

WAV suppliers understand this is an important decision that cannot be rushed and will expect that more than one demonstration may be necessary. Only place an order once you're sure the vehicle meets all of your needs.

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# Ordering your vehicle

Once you've found the WAV that best suits your needs it's time to place your order with your supplier. This is a simple process and your WAV supplier will manage everything from start to finish.

To place your order they will need the following documents:

- Driving licences for each intended driver.
- Certificate of entitlement from either the Department for Work and Pensions, or Veterans UK.
- Proof of address (e.g. recent utility bill).
- Your Driver Fair Processing Declaration form included with this guide.

Your WAV supplier will place the order for any set price options that you choose. If you choose any other optional extras the cost of these will need to be paid directly to the supplier.

You will be asked to sign a Statement of Responsibilities and Suitability form that confirms that you understand and agree to the Scheme rules.

At this point you should make sure your supplier has explained how the Advance Payment works and when you will need to pay this. Your WAV supplier will then place your order through our online system.

The processing of your order will usually take a few days, and once it is accepted we will send you a letter confirming your order and containing your Personal Identification Number (PIN). Please keep your PIN in a safe place with your other paperwork, as this will act as your signature and acceptance of the terms and conditions of your lease agreement.

## Taking delivery of your WAV

Once your order is placed your WAV supplier will let you know a delivery date. On average it will take between 12 and 16 weeks but can be sooner. If you have ordered a Nearly New WAV it should only take a few weeks.

When your WAV is ready your supplier will deliver it to your home. They will then show you and your carer around your new WAV and will remind you how each of the conversion features work.

Your WAV supplier will support you throughout your lease, and is the first point of contact for any issues with your WAV.

### Sophie's story

New customer Sophie, shares her experiences of leasing a WAV through the Motability Scheme [motability.co.uk/wavfilms](https://www.motability.co.uk/wavfilms).



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# Ready to get started?

## Useful contacts

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### The Motability Scheme

Browse our latest list of WAVs and find a WAV supplier at [motability.co.uk/wavs](https://www.motability.co.uk/wavs)

Or call one of our team on **0800 093 1000**

If you have specialist Minicom equipment, please call our text phone **0300 037 0100**

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### Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) / Questions about your allowance

#### Department for Work and Pensions:

Disability Living Allowance: **0800 121 4600**

Personal Independence Payment: **0800 121 4433**  
[dwp.gov.uk](https://www.dwp.gov.uk)

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### Department for Communities (NI)

Disability Living Allowance: **0800 587 0912**

Personal Independence Payment: **0800 587 0932**  
[communities-ni.gov.uk](https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk)

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### War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (WPMS) or Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)

Veterans UK

**0808 191 4218** [veterans-uk.info](https://www.veterans-uk.info)

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### For independent information and advice

#### Driving Mobility

Telephone: **0800 559 3636**

[drivingmobility.org.uk](https://www.drivingmobility.org.uk)

#### Research Institute for Disabled Consumers (RiDC)

Telephone: **0207 427 2460**

[ridc.org.uk](https://www.ridc.org.uk)

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**Don't just take our word for it**

To see what our customers think visit [motability.co.uk/videos](https://www.motability.co.uk/videos).



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