

# Travel Tips for plane travel



*This tip sheet has been developed by the Down Syndrome Advisory Group.*

*The Down Syndrome Advisory Network is made up of people with Down syndrome from across Australia who provide advice to Down Syndrome Australia.*

*The network wrote these tips to help people with Down syndrome be prepared and ready for travelling on a plane.*

*Everybody has different support needs and different preferences so it's about knowing what works for you and planning the right preparation and support.*

## Booking your travel

- Always let the airline know if you need any special assistance or have any food allergies
- Ask for help from your family, friends or supporters if you need it. This might be to help you with bookings, contacting the airline, or to help with taking you to or picking you up from the airport.
- You can pick which seat you are going to sit in when you book your flight, but sometimes this might cost more.



## Getting ready to travel

- Write down all of the information you need or have someone else write it down for you. You might include your itinerary (list of dates, times, locations of your trip), your flight times, the name and addresses of your hotel, and phone numbers of people you want to contact. Keep this in a safe place.
- Bring along information you have about health conditions that you have.
- Write a list of the things that you might need while you are away. This might include your medication, glasses, an iPad charger or your favourite pyjamas. Check the list when you pack.
- Remember not to pack any sharp items, like nail scissors or pocket knives, in your carry on luggage as these are not allowed to be carried on to the plane
- Put your name and contact details on your belongings just in case something gets lost.
- Take things with you to help you relax during the trip. For example, a favourite book or a movie on an iPad might be helpful.
- On the day you travel make sure to set an alarm (if it's an early flight) and give yourself plenty of time to get to the airport.

## At the airport and boarding the plane:

- Every person has to go through security screening. This involves walking through the security scanner. If the alarm goes off, you may be asked to take off your shoes or empty your pockets and try again. If it goes off again then the security staff may use a wand to see what is setting off the alarm. Try to relax and listen to what the security staff are telling you to do.
- A boarding pass has information on it like the flight number and your seat number. When you get your boarding pass, check to make sure you understand it. Ask someone for help if you need it.
- Put your boarding pass somewhere safe as you will need it to get on the plane.
- Airline staff can give extra help to people with disabilities when you are boarding the plane or getting off. Ask for help if you need it. You can board early if you want to avoid the crowds.



## On the plane

- Try to relax – imagine you are at home or doing your favourite activity.
- Sometimes being on a plane can make your ears hurt. Chewing gum or lollies helps to pop your ears.
- You might want to pack ear plugs in case there is noise, such as a crying baby.
- Toilets on planes are small. Try to use the toilets at the airport before you leave or when you arrive at your destination.
- Remember to drink plenty of water and try to stretch.

## Support person

Some airlines offer a fare reduction for the support person if they are required to travel with the person. Contact the airline you are travelling with to find out if they offer this.

## Other helpful information can be found at:

<https://smartraveller.gov.au/Pages/travelling-with-a-disability.aspx>

<https://www.casa.gov.au/safety-management/standard-page/travellers-disability>