



Motoring

Having a car can be a real lifeline for a lot of people with disabilities. This factsheet explores some of the ways a disabled person can get a car, how they ensure that it is the most suitable car for them, and what rights the disabled driver has.

Some of the subjects covered are:

- Financial help to getting a car
- Driving licences
- Driving assessments and adaptations
- Insurance
- Useful Organisations

Financial Help

Many disabled people are on low incomes, which makes it difficult for them to afford a car, which, in turn, makes it harder for them to get the mobility a job might require. In order to break this vicious circle, there is a state funded scheme accessed through the **Mobility Component of Disabled Living Allowance** (DLA). The Mobility Component is not means tested or taxed, and should not be taken into account as income for other benefits.

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for the Mobility Component you must have needed help with mobility for the previous three months, and these needs must be likely to continue for another six months. You must be normally resident, i.e. spent six out of the last twelve months in the UK, and you must be between the ages of 5 and 65. There are two different rates of the Mobility component: a higher rate and a lower rate.

For the **higher rate** you must satisfy one of the following conditions:

- Due to physical disability you are either 'unable to walk' or 'virtually unable to walk'. If you use artificial aids, your ability to walk will be judged by how you manage when using these aids. If you can walk with the use of an aid you are likely to fail the test.

- Experiencing severe discomfort or exertion which could endanger your life can be counted as 'virtually unable to walk'.
- You have no legs or feet, or both legs have been amputated by or above the ankles, you should qualify automatically. How you get along with your prostheses does not affect this.
- You have both visual and hearing impairment, where the loss of vision is assessed at 100% and the loss of hearing at 80%.

If you have a **learning disability**, you have to show that you:

- have impaired intelligence and social functioning; and
- have severe behavioural problems; and
- qualify for the higher rate of the Care Component.

For the **lower rate** you must satisfy the following:

- You are able to walk, but because of a mental or physical disability, you require guidance or supervision from another person when you are walking outdoors

Rates:

The mobility components of DLA are paid weekly and the two rates are:

Higher - £42.30 Lower - £16.05

The Motability Scheme

Motability is a charity set up on the initiative of the government and designed to help people use their higher rate mobility component to buy or hire a car.

For the motorist there are 3 different types of scheme to choose between:

- A three year Contract Hire Scheme to lease a new car.
- A four, or five year, Hire Purchase Scheme to buy a new car.
- A two, three, four, or five year, Hire Purchase Scheme to buy a used car.

Driving Licence

Whether you are applying for a licence for the first time, or need to change your licence after you have become disabled you have to contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

As a new applicant you need forms D1 and D750 (available at the post office), and if you have a current licence you must write and explain the extent of your disability.

Assessment by an assessment centre is necessary to decide what adaptations you need to enable you to drive.

The DVLA will assess your ability to drive based on a 'medical-in-confidence' form. You might be asked to attend an examination, but with all the adaptations available today, most people get their licence. For more information contact DVLA on: **0870 240 0009**
www.dvla.gov.uk

Blue Badge

The Blue badge Scheme replaces the Orange Badge and provides a national scheme of parking concessions for people with disabilities.

It allows the holder to park free of charge on metered street parking, to be exempt from time limits, and to park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours.

All concessions are subject to local regulations and in certain town centres (e.g. central London) the scheme does not apply, although there may be local concessions.

You can apply for a Blue Badge through your local Social Services or call for more information on:
020 7944 2914

Also see Blue Badge Parking guide for major cities in the UK and a guide for London

Tel: 0870 4445435
www.parkingforbluebadges.com

In order to access the Motability schemes you must be receiving the higher rate of the DLA mobility component and in most cases you must be receiving your allowance for the full length of the Agreement. However, if your award is shorter than the length of the agreement you may still be eligible.

Equipment & Adaptations

Motability also administers their own Charitable Fund as well as some government grants that can help pay for adaptations or any other costs involved with getting a car.

The Charitable Fund can be granted towards:

- Advance payments on cars
- Adaptations
- Driving Lessons (the applicant must be participating in a Motability Scheme)

For more information on the Motability schemes contact Motability on:

Tel: 01279 635 666

Minicom: 01279 632 273

Fax: 01279 632 000

www.motability.co.uk

Choosing the Right Car

Before you go out and buy or hire a car, think carefully of your needs and what type of car might be appropriate for you. You can visit some of the dealers near where you live, look at the manufacturers' websites or literature, and talk to friends and neighbours who drive.

There are about 3,500 Motability Accredited dealers in the UK. Each has at least one Motability specialist; you can ask them to advise on which car best suits your personal circumstances.

The most important factors are safety and access. You should think about the door width and sill and boot height of the car/whether you need 2,3,4, or 5 doors, or an estate car/whether there is enough space to carry a wheelchair with you. Check the driving position

and make sure the hand and foot controls are suitable and easy to use. Think about whether you would prefer automatic or manual gears and if you would be more comfortable with air conditioning.

You are entitled to test drive any of the cars that you are considering applying for. If you are not going to be the driver of the car, you should take a test drive as a passenger.

To find a Motability Accredited dealer in your area, contact Motability on **01279 635 666** or look on www.motability.co.uk for this information.

Mobility Centres

To get further information and advice you can also go to a Mobility Centre.

The Centres offer professional, high quality information, training and assessment services to enable people to make informed choices about their mobility needs, this includes advice on choice of vehicle, driving tuition, and fitting of car adaptations. Please note that the centres do charge for some of these services, but the information services are always free.

Below is an address list of centres around the UK:

Derby Regional Mobility Centre.

Kingsway Hospital, Kingsway, Derby DE22 3LZ

Tel: 01332 371 929

E-mail: info@drmc.uk.com

Website: www.drmc.uk.com

Cornwall Mobility Centre.

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

Tel: 01872 254 920

E-mail: mobility@rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk

Website: www.cornwallmobilitycentre.co.uk

Kilverstone Mobility Assessment Centre.

2 Napier Place, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3RL.

Tel: 01842 753 029

E-mail: mail@kmacmobil.org.uk

Website: www.kmacmobil.org.uk

Ricability

This is an organisation that provides information booklets on various issues to think about when looking for a suitable car.

Titles include:

'The Ins and Outs of Choosing a Car'

'Getting a Wheelchair into a Car'

'Car Controls'

'People Lifters'

The booklets are free of charge. If you want to obtain one contact:

Ricability

30 Angel Gate
City Road

London EC1V 2PT

Tel: **020 7427 2460**

Fax: **020 7427 2468**

Textphone

020 7427 2469

e-mail:

mail@ricability.org.uk

Website:

www.ricability.org.uk

Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service (MAVIS).

'O' Wing, Macadam Ave., Old Wokingham Road, Crowthorne, Berks RG45 6XD.

Tel: 01344 661 000

E-mail: mavis@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.dft.gov.uk/access/mavis

Mobility Centre.

Regional Neurological Rehabilitation Centre, Hunters Road, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE2 4NR.

Tel: 0191 219 5694

E-mail:

mobilitycentrenewcastle@nap.nhs.uk

Website: www.nap.nhs.uk/snrs

Mobility Service of the Disabled Living Centre.

The Vassal Centre, Gill Ave., Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2QQ.

Tel: 0117 965 9353

E-mail: mobserv@dlcbristol.org

Website: www.dlcbristol.org

North Wales Disabled Drivers Assessments Centre.

Glan Clwyd Hospital, Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire LL18 5UJ.

Tel: 01745 584 858

E-mail: alexbarra@btconnect.com

Northern Ireland Mobility Centre.

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

Tel: 028 9029 7880

E-mail: mobility@disabilityaction.org

Website: www.disabilityaction.org

Oxford Driving Assessment Service.

Mary Marlborough Centre, Windmill Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LD

Tel: 01865 767777

E-mail: louise@oxfordmobilitycentre.org

Queen Elizabeth's Foundation Mobility Centre.

Damson Way, Fountain Drive, Carshalton, Surrey SM5 4NR

Tel: 020 8770 1151

E-mail: info@mobility-qe.org

Website:

www.qefd.org/mobilitycentre

Regional Driving Assessment Centre.

West Heath Hospital, Rednal Road, Birmingham B38 8HR

Tel: 0121 627 8228

Scottish Driving Assessment Service.

Astley Ainslie Hospital, 133 Grange Loan, Edinburgh EH9 2HL

Tel: 0131 537 9192

E-mail:

marlenemackenzie@pct.scot.nhs.uk

South Wales Disabled Drivers Assessment Centre.

Rookwood Hospital, Fairwater Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2YN

Tel: 029 2055 5130

E-mail: helen@wddac.co.uk

William Merrit Disabled Living and Mobility Centre.

St. Mary's Hospital, Green Hill Road, Armley, Leeds LS12 3QE

Tel: 0113 305 5288

E-mail: mobility.service@nhs.net

Website: www.williammerritleeds.org

Wrightington Mobility Centre.

Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, Lancashire WN6 9EP

Tel: 01257 256 409

E-mail: mobility.centre@alwpct.nhs.uk

Insurance

A lot of new disabled drivers worry about insurance. It is true that some of the conventional insurance companies can be a bit difficult when dealing with disabled customers. However there is no reason to worry, plenty of insurance companies either specialise in insuring people with disabilities or make it their mission to provide good service to all customers.

Below is a list of companies that provide a service to people with disabilities:

Chard Insurance Service

Insurance of vehicles carrying wheelchair users and disabled drivers.

15 Holyrood Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 2 AH **Tel: 01460 61373**

En Route Insurance Consultants

Insurance company run by disabled people to benefit disabled people.

Grove Mills, Cranbrook Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4AS **Tel: 0800 783 7245**

E-mail: info@enroute.co.uk

Website: www.enrouteinsurance.co.uk

Fish Insurance.

Insurance advisors specialising in services for disabled people.

3-4 Riversway Business Village, Navigation Way, Preston, Lancashire PR2 2YP **Tel: 01772 724442**

E-mail: keepmobile@fishinsurance.co.uk

Website: www.fishadministration.co.uk

J&M Insurance Services

Insurance company specialising in charity & disabled persons insurance.

14-16 Guilford Street, London WC1N 1DX

Tel: 020 7446 7666

E-mail: enquiries@jmi.co.uk

Website: www.jmi.co.uk

Mobility Plus

Motor insurance for disabled people.

PO Box 5, Civic Drive, Ipswich, IP1 2ED **Tel: 0800 854 813**

Exemption from VED (or 'Road Tax').

In some cases, disabled drivers can be exempt from VED commonly known as 'Road Tax'.

You are entitled to an exemption if you either:

Receive the higher rate of the mobility component of the

DLA **or**

you receive the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement

For more information on how to apply for the VED Exemption certificate there are two different contact numbers:

If you receive the mobility component of DLA **Tel: 08457 123456** Hearing Impaired 0345 224433

If you receive War Pensioners Mobility Supplement:

Tel: 0800 169 2277 Hearing Impaired 0800 1693458

Congestion Charge & Blue Badge Drivers

If you have a Blue Badge you do not need to pay the London Congestion Charge.

However you do need to register with Transport for London and make a one-off payment of £10 to cover administration. You can register up to two vehicles for the discount.

To find out how to register contact Transport for London on:
Congestion Charging,
PO Box 2985
Coventry CV7 8ZR
T: 0845 900 1234
www.cclondon.com

If you do not pay road tax there is no need to register.

The Disability Foundation
RNOH, Brockley Hill
Stanmore, Middlesex,
HA7 4LP
Tel: 020 8954 7373
Fax: 020 8954 7414
Minicom: 020 8954 7413
info@tdf.org.uk
www.tdf.org.uk



Useful Organisations

Disabled Drivers Association.

Campaigns for greater independence through enhancement of mobility for drivers, passengers, wheelchair users and anyone who uses a mobility aid.
National Headquarters, Ashwellthorpe, Norwich NR16 1EX **Tel: 0870 770 3333**
email: ddahq@aol.com
web: www.dda.org.uk

Disabled Drivers' Motor Club.

Provides help and advice on motoring and mobility problems. Aims to protect the interest and welfare of disabled drivers.
Cottingham Way, Thrapston,
Northhamptonshire NN14 4PL **Tel: 01832 734724**
email: info@ddmc.org.uk
web: www.ddmc.org.uk

Disabled Motorists Federation.

Umbrella organisation for independent disabled motorists clubs, providing them with support and information. Also helps new clubs to start up.
145 Knoulberry Road, Blackfell, Washington, Tyne and Wear, NE37 1JN **Tel: 0191 416 3172**

National Association of Blue Badge Holders.

Aims to promote better use of the Blue Badge, prevent fraudulent use and strengthen disabled people rights in regard to monetary assistance and access.
18 Spruce Drive, Brandon, IP27 0UU **Tel: 01842 812459**
email: admin@bluebadge.org
web: www.bluebadge.org

The Disabled Motorcyclists Association.

The DMA provides practical help and support to all those who ride a motorbike, scooter, moped, trike or are considering riding for the first time.
Clyde Business Centre, Clyde Street, Ashton under Lyne, Tameside, OL7 0NQ **Tel: 0161 214 8314**
email: general@thedma.org.uk
web: www.thedma.org.uk