

Mobility scooters and trains

Train companies are not obliged by law to carry mobility scooters, but many will do if they meet certain criteria. Some companies run permit schemes. When you apply you'll be asked for details about the size and other features of your scooter so that the train company can check it's suitable.

Below we summarise the individual mobility scooter policies of each of train operating company as at April 2014. For more detail and to apply for a permit you will need to contact the train company direct.

National Rail Enquiries provide contact details for each train company. See their website www.nationalrail.co.uk under information for passengers with disabilities or telephone 0845 60 50 600.

Abellio Greater Anglia

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No.

During journey: Can stay on scooter, but preferably move to seat.

Priority for space: Goes to wheelchair users.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it on and off the train.

Arriva Trains Wales

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm

- Weight 300kg
- Turning radius 900mm

Permit scheme? No.

During journey: Move to a seat.

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but can't guarantee that staff will help dismantle and carry

c2c

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 250kg

Permit scheme? No. Because their station platforms vary in size, any permit would only be valid for a limited number of journeys

During journey: Can stay on scooter if parked safely, but preferably move to a seat

Priority for space: No policy. They say that enough spaces are available that there is rarely conflict

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will help to dismantle the scooter and carry it on board

c2c assume that scooters within their specified length and width restrictions will have an acceptable turning circle, and have yet to encounter a scooter which doesn't have enough climbing capability to get onto the train. They ask that passengers have the driving competence to steer their scooter on and off the train (although they do not assess this, as far as we're aware). c2c have recently undergone a review of their policy on disabled passengers.

CrossCountry

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Scooter users will be asked to move to a seat to make space for wheelchair users, but do not have to.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but can't guarantee assistance. Staff will carry items within a reasonable weight limit.

Chiltern Railways

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but staff will not assist with dismantling the scooter or carrying it on board

East Coast

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

Electric, and Diesel standard class, carriages:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 230kg

Diesel first class carriages:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 550mm
- Weight 230kg

Alternative Diesel standard class:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 620mm
- Weight 230kg

Permit scheme? No.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked, but they will move someone to first class if there's a conflict

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but 'work safe' policy means that individual staff decide whether they feel able to help dismantle and carry

East Coast use three different types of rolling stock, each of which allow for slightly different mobility scooter dimensions as shown above. Passengers will be advised at the station if they are boarding the diesel train with the alternative layout.

East Midlands

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

Mainline services:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 600mm
- Turning circle 1090mm
- Weight 300kg
- Maximum speed 4mph
- Climbing angle 8°

Local services:

- Length 1000mm
- Width 600mm
- 3 wheels
- Turning circle 1090mm
- Weight 300kg
- Maximum speed 4mph
- Climbing angle 8°

Permit scheme? Yes. Assisted Travel team ask for supporting documents showing the scooter's specifications, and may also contact the manufacturer to check their accuracy.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but staff will not assist with dismantling or carrying. Cite liability issues as the reason for this.

First Capital Connect

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? Yes, administered by Assisted Travel team.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it on and off the train. They also offer the use of a station wheelchair when getting onto the train, although passengers will still need to walk to their seat.

First Great Western

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

Most services:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg
- Turning circle 1000mm
- Climbing angle 8°

Coach G First Class HST; 166, 158 and 153 trains:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 650mm
- Weight 300kg
- Turning circle 1000mm
- Climbing angle 8°

Permit scheme? Yes. Assisted Travel team ask for documents showing scooter specifications, along with a photo. Staff from the passenger's local station may be able to have a look at the scooter to ascertain its dimensions. Permits are specific to one route only.

During journey: Cannot stay on scooter. Must move to a seat or be helped to one by a companion.

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked. Trains have two wheelchair spaces – one can be booked and one can't.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but staff will not assist with dismantling and carrying.

The specifications above show the dimensions needed to be given a scooter permit. In addition, scooters must be fitted with anti-tipping devices and a freewheel setting. They must also be able to be folded, so that they can be taken on alternative transport when necessary.

Separately from the above, First Great Western's high-speed services and 158 trains can only carry Class 2 scooters with a triangular footprint. 165 Turbo services and Heathrow Connect services can only carry scooters that will fit in the vestibule area.

First Hull

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No.

During journey: Must transfer to seat.

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed.

First TransPennine Express

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

3-wheeled scooters:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 250kg
- Turning circle 1000mm
- Climbing angle 12°

4-wheeled scooters:

- Length 1120mm
- Width 560mm
- Weight 250kg
- Turning circle 1000mm
- Climbing angle 12°

Permit scheme? Yes. Assisted Travel team ask for documents showing scooter specifications, along with a photo of the scooter and the user, and details of the user's local station. Users can come and test accessibility of local station in advance.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it on and off the train. They also offer the use of a station wheelchair when getting onto the train, although passengers will still need to walk to their seat.

Scooters must also be fitted with a freewheel setting, and there is a height limit (for the scooter and user combined) of 1350mm.

Gatwick Express (operated by Southern)

Scooters allowed: Dismantled only. Staff may assist with carrying the scooter, depending on its size.

Gatwick Express point out that Southern operate other train services from Gatwick to London which do accept mobility scooters, and which only take slightly longer.

Grand Central

Scooters allowed: Dismantled only. Staff will not assist with dismantling or carrying the scooter.

Grand Central did not respond to our telephone requests for information. The above information is based on their DPPP.

Heathrow Express

Scooters allowed: Dismantled only (because of issues securing assembled scooters). Staff will assist with dismantling the scooter and carrying it on board.

Island Line (operated by South West Trains)

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

3-wheeled:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 130kg
- Height 1350mm

4-wheeled:

- Length 1120mm
- Width 560mm
- Weight 130kg
- Height 1350mm

Permit scheme? Yes – no travel without permit. Permits can be issued online or through contacting the Assisted Travel team. Scooter specifications are required.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but can't guarantee help with dismantling and carrying the scooter.

London Midland

Scooters allowed: Dismantled/folded only – staff will not assist with dismantling scooters or carrying them on board.

London Overground

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: No policy

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but staff will not assist with dismantling the scooter or carrying it on board

Merseyrail

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice. Doors must not be blocked.

Priority for space: No policy

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but staff will not assist with dismantling and carrying on board.

Northern Rail

Scooters allowed: Dismantled only (because of space). Staff will not assist with dismantling the scooter or carrying it on board.

ScotRail

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1040mm
- Width 560mm
- Weight 300kg
- Turning radius 990mm

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Scooter user must move to a seat

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but can't guarantee assistance with dismantling or carrying on board.

Passengers must give dimensions of their scooter when booking assistance.

South West Trains

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

3-wheeled:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 230-300kg
- Height 1350mm

4-wheeled:

- Length 1120mm
- Width 560mm
- Weight 230-300kg
- Height 1350mm

Permit scheme? Yes – no travel without permit. Permits can be issued online or through contacting the Assisted Travel team. Scooter specifications are required.

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – but can't guarantee help with dismantling and carrying the scooter.

Southeastern

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

Mainline trains (class 375, 465-9, 395):

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Metro line trains (class 376, 465, 466):

- Length 1000mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked.

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it if assistance has been booked in advance.

Southern

Scooters allowed? Yes, on most trains. Class 442 Express trains allow dismantled scooters only.

Specifications:

Most trains:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Passenger's choice, but prefer they move to a seat

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked and to wheelchair users

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will help carry the scooter if assistance has been booked in advance.

Southern's specifications vary with the type of rolling stock being used. This should be visible on National Rail enquiries, and will also be mentioned when the passenger books assistance.

Stansted Express (operated by Greater Anglia)

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm
- Weight 300kg

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Can stay on scooter, but preferably move to a seat

Priority for space: Goes to wheelchair users

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it on and off the train.

Virgin

Scooters allowed? Yes

Specifications:

- Length 1200mm
- Width 700mm

Permit scheme? No

During journey: Stay on scooter or move to seat – passenger's choice. 'Companion seat' next to the wheelchair space available.

Priority for space: Goes to people who have booked

Dismantled scooters: Allowed – staff will not help dismantle the scooter, but will help carry it on and off the train.

Three-wheeled scooters will generally be assumed to meet the size criteria, while four-wheeled scooters will often be checked ahead of travel.