

Traveling with ALS: A Practical Resource Guide

Traveling with ALS can be both rewarding and achievable with the right planning. Whether you're visiting family, taking a vacation, or checking off a bucket-list destination, preparation is key. This guide provides practical tips, equipment recommendations, and helpful resources to help make travel safer, easier, and more enjoyable.

The Number One Rule: Over-Communicate

Do not rely solely on websites or online descriptions.

Before booking:

- Call hotels, airlines, rental companies, and attractions directly.
- Speak with a real person whenever possible.
- Ask specific questions about accessibility.
- Request photos or videos of hotel rooms, bathrooms, entrances, and transportation.
- Confirm accessibility accommodations in writing when possible.

What is listed online may not accurately reflect the real-world accessibility of a location. Taking the time to verify details can prevent major travel challenges.

Recommended Travel Equipment

1. Lightweight Power Wheelchair

A lightweight folding power wheelchair can make travel significantly easier. We recommend getting grant support or purchasing this on your own as insurance covers 1 mobility device every 5 years.

Recommended Option

- **Pride Jazzy Carbon Travel Folding Power Chair**
 - Lightweight and foldable
 - Airline-friendly design
 - Highly rated by many travelers with mobility needs

Funding and Equipment Resources

- **Team Gleason**
- **Compassionate Care ALS**

These organizations may help individuals access lightweight power mobility equipment.

Cushioning Matters

Consider using a high-quality pressure-relieving cushion such as:

- **ROHO Cushion**
- **These can be obtained through amazon, if you would like to get this covered by insurance reach out to your clinic team (insurance does not cover multiple cushions)**

A proper cushion can improve comfort during long travel days and reduce the risk of pressure injuries.

2. Folding Shower Chairs

Accessible bathrooms are often one of the biggest travel challenges.

Recommended Options

[Kcolic Folding Shower Chair with Wheels, 55 Cm Wide Shower Chair for Seniors with Stowable Pedals and 4-Wheel Brakes, Pleasantly | FreshCart](#)

- Folding design
- Rolling capability
- Stowable foot pedals
- Locking wheel brakes

[Seatara WheelAble Folding Commode Shower Chair with Self Propel](#)

- Combines shower and toileting functions
 - Foldable for travel
 - Self-propel capability
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3. Toileting Supplies

Having a toileting backup plan can increase confidence and reduce stress during travel.

Male Urinary Management

[Amazon.com: External Condom Catheters for Elderly Men Age 80, 20 Soft Latex, 5 Catheter Stabilization Device, 4000mL Overnight Catheter Bags x 1, 1000mL Urinary Leg Bags x 2, 2 Roll Tapes Set for Incontinence Men : Health & Household](#)

- External condom catheter systems
- Overnight drainage bags
- Leg bags for daytime use

Female Urinary Management

[Amazon.com : Sunany Female Urination Device, Reusable Female Urinal Silicone Women Pee Funnel Allows Women to Pee Standing Up, Portable Womens Urinal is The Perfect Companion for Camping,Outdoor,Travel : Sports & Outdoors](#)

[Amazon.com: Female External Catheter Condom Catheters A Reusable Portable Women's Comfortable Urine System Equipped with a Silicone Urine Collector with 2 Catheterization Bags \(Women Type Blue\) : Health & Household](#)

- Female urination devices (standing urination funnels)
- Portable female external catheter systems

Talk with your healthcare provider or occupational therapist to determine which options are most appropriate for your needs.

4. Portable Ramps

For road trips and destinations with uncertain accessibility, portable ramps can be invaluable.

Recommended Resource

- [Roll-A-Ramp-Home](#)

Portable ramps can help access:

- Homes
 - Cabins
 - Rental properties
 - Restaurants
 - Community events
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5. Wheelchair Backpack

Keeping essential items, accessible helps reduce caregiver burden and improves independence.

Recommended Option

1. [Adaptive Backpack | High Sierra](#)

Useful for carrying:

- Medications
 - Chargers
 - Communication devices
 - Water bottles
 - Personal items
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Protecting Your Wheelchair During Air Travel

Your wheelchair is one of your most important pieces of equipment. Taking steps to protect it during air travel can help prevent damage.

Before Flying

Remove and Protect the Joystick

If your power wheelchair has a removable joystick:

- Remove it before boarding.
- Wrap it in bubble wrap.
- Carry it onto the plane as a carry-on item.

If the joystick cannot be removed, cover it with bubble wrap and secure it in place.

Provide Instructions

Attach a laminated instruction sheet explaining:

- How to place the chair in freewheel mode
- How to fold or transport the chair

- Safe lifting points
- Battery information
- Contact information

This can reduce the likelihood of unintentional damage.

Label Your Equipment

Consider attaching:

- Your name
- Phone number
- Destination information
- Emergency contact information

If Damage Occurs

Airlines are responsible for damage caused to mobility equipment during transportation. Report damage immediately before leaving the airport and document everything with photographs.

Helpful Apps, Websites, and Organizations

Accessible Travel Planning

- There are travel agents that specialize in accessible travel

Wheel the World

Provides:

- Accessible hotel reviews
- Travel experiences
- Accessibility verification

Website: Wheel the World

AccessibleGO

Helps travelers find:

- Accessible hotel rooms
- Transportation options
- Rental accommodations

Wheelmap

Mobile app that helps locate:

- Accessible routes
- Accessible businesses
- Wheelchair-friendly locations worldwide

AccessNow

Global accessibility app identifying:

- Restaurants
- Attractions
- Hotels
- Community locations

Transportation Resources

[Rides in Sight - Local Transportation Services Transportation Options for Older Adults and People with Mobility Challenges](#)

Provides transportation options for:

- Older adults
- Individuals with mobility limitations

Useful for locating transportation services while traveling.

ALS-Specific Resources

Your local ALS organization

[Support Services for People with ALS – Tips, Resources - Your ALS Guide](#)

- Can assist with equipment rentals and support in the place you are traveling

Team Gleason

Provides:

- Equipment assistance
- Technology resources
- Grants that may support travel and life adventures

Rental Equipment Companies

If traveling with equipment is not practical, consider renting at your destination.

[Scootaround](#)

Offers rentals of:

- Wheelchairs
- Scooters
- Mobility equipment

[Mobility City](#)

Provides:

- Mobility equipment rentals
- Delivery services in many locations

Accessible Van Rentals

Accessible vehicles can make travel significantly easier for individuals using wheelchairs.

[MobilityWorks](#)

- One of the largest accessible van rental networks
- Locations throughout the United States

- Available at numerous major airports

[Wheelchair Getaways](#)

- Network of transportation providers nationwide
- Daily, weekend, and weekly rental options

[United Access](#)

- Dealer network throughout the country
- Airport drop-off availability
- Modified BraunAbility vehicles

[Wheelers Accessible Van Rentals:](#)

- Accessible minivans for airport and city travel
- Delivery options available

Accessible RV Rentals

For travelers who want flexibility and access to their equipment throughout a trip, accessible RVs can be a great option.

[Wheelchair Accessible RVs for Rent | Outdoorsy](#)

Offers listings for:

- Wheelchair-accessible RVs
- Adapted camper rentals

[Wheelchair Accessible RV Rentals](#)

Provides:

- Accessible RV rental options
- Nationwide search capabilities

Travel Planning Checklist

Before You Leave:

- ☐ Speak with your healthcare team
- ☐ Verify accessibility by phone
- ☐ Request photos of accommodations
- ☐ Bring extra medications and supplies
- ☐ Bring medical documentation for medications
- ☐ Pack wheelchair charger and backup cables
- ☐ Label all mobility equipment
- ☐ Create a medical information sheet
- ☐ Carry emergency contacts
- ☐ Confirm transportation arrangements
- ☐ Identify nearby medical facilities at your destination

- ☐ Develop a backup plan for toileting and transfers
 - ☐ Allow extra time for every step of the journey
 - ☐ Bring enough nutrition for unexpected delays
 - ☐ Bring a low-tech communication device
 - ☐ Program travel phrases into your communication device for easy access
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Final Thoughts

Traveling with ALS may require more planning, but it is possible. The key is preparation, flexibility, and communication. Start planning early, verify every accessibility detail directly, and don't hesitate to use available resources and organizations for support.

Remember: Travel does not have to look the same as it did before ALS to be meaningful, memorable, and enjoyable.