



TRAVELLING SAFELY IN A TAXI FACT SHEET

NOTE

Every day, members of our community travel in taxis to access much-needed services, community events, shopping and family and friends. This information is a timely reminder of the safety protocols needed to ensure that you get to your designation safely.

What is a WAT?

A wheelchair-accessible taxi (WAT) is a vehicle that has been modified to safely accommodate at least one and up to three wheelchairs.

Providers of WAT services have a primary duty of care to ensure the safety of their services. They also have an obligation to ensure all WAT drivers must be able to demonstrate competence in the safe loading, restraint, carriage and unloading of a customer in a wheelchair.

Crash Test Wheelchairs

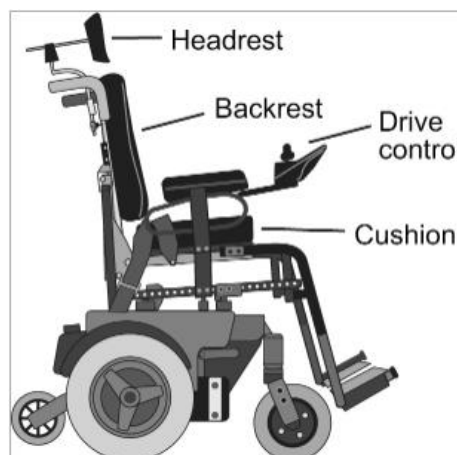
Did you know that your wheelchair needs to meet Australian Standards to be safely used in a vehicle?

For people who need to stay seated in their wheelchair for transport, it is strongly recommended that the wheelchair used complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 3696.19 - "Wheeled mobility devices for use as seats in motor vehicles". Wheelchairs that meet this standard have been "Crash Tested" to withstand crash forces (48km/h at 20 g) in an accident. If you are unsure whether a wheelchair is "crash tested", check with the manufacturer or supplier or your OT.

Wheelchair Requirements

There are general requirements recommended to maximise your safety:

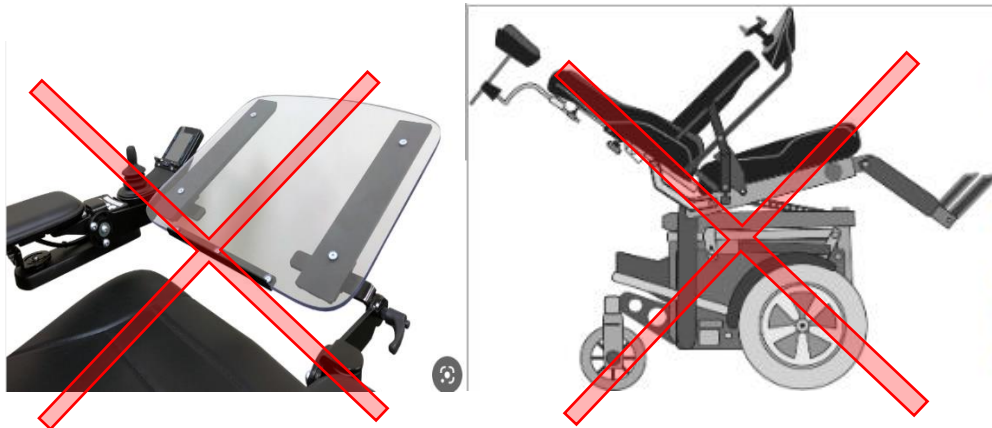
- Back support should ideally be at shoulder height,
- Head support mounted to the wheelchair or to the vehicle,
- Postural Support Devices (e.g. lateral supports) should be integrated into the seating system whenever possible, and
- Wheelchair cushions should be of minimal weight and secured to the wheelchair.





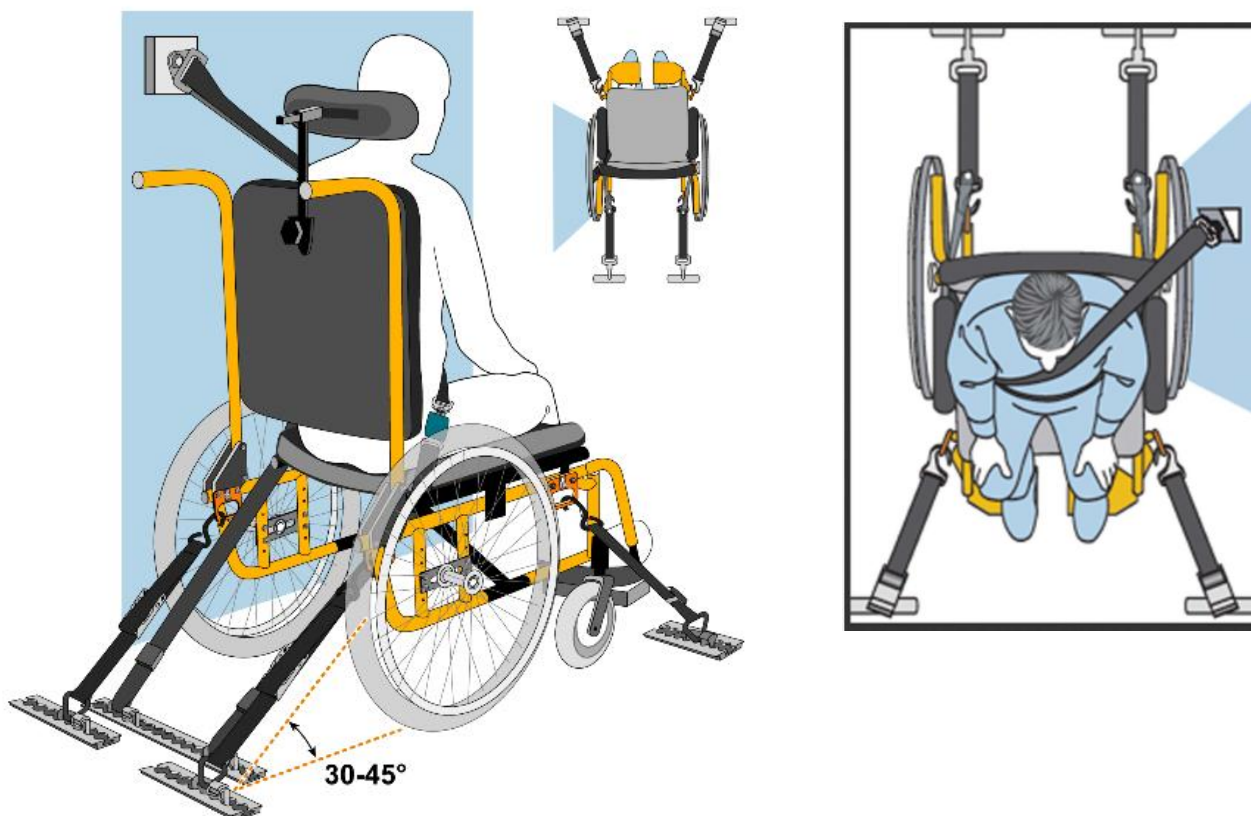
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- Ancillary items (e.g. trays and bags) should be removed from the wheelchair during transport. This can act as projectiles in an accident, and
- Wheelchair should be upright and not be tilted greater than 30 degrees.



Tie it Down!

Wheelchair tie-down systems secure the wheelchair firmly to the floor of the vehicle. The most common type of wheelchair tie-down is a four-point strap or anchor system, which attaches to specified tie-down points on the wheelchair.



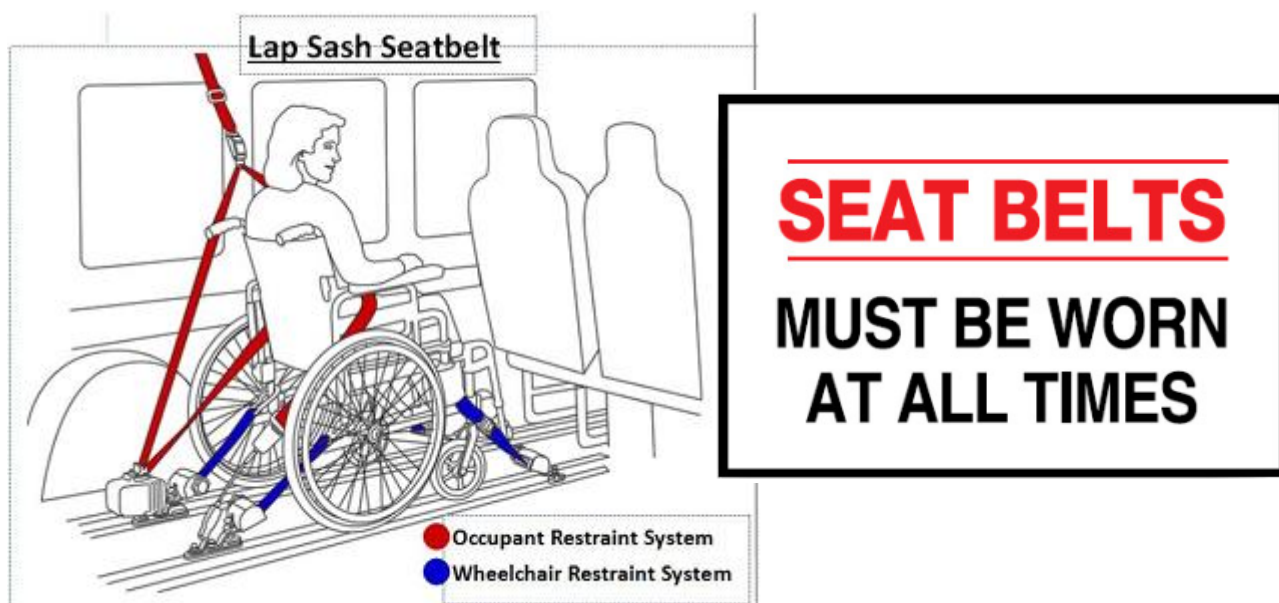
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These four tie downs should be secured for every trip so that the wheelchair is unable to move in the event of an accident.

Wheelchair tie-down and occupant restraint system should comply with AS/NZS 10542 and should always be used as per the manufacturer's instructions.

If a wheelchair occupant uses a positioning harness, do they need to use an occupant restraint system as well?

Yes. A positioning harness is not the same as a seatbelt and should not be used as one. A positioning harness is used to support a client's posture. An occupant restraint system is like a lap-sash seatbelt and is designed to limit potential injury during a vehicle accident. They have been tested to withstand forces anticipated in an accident. The wheelchair user must also be restrained independently of the wheelchair, using an occupant restraint system. These are lap/sash belts that attach to the vehicle and are separate from any postural harnesses used.



Turning On and Off the Meter

The driver can turn on the meter:

- When you and your mobility aid have been secured safely into the vehicle at the start of your trip.

The driver is required to turn the meter off when the taxi arrives at the specified destination, before assisting you from the taxi or unloading your mobility aid from the vehicle.

The driver should also turn the meter off when the journey has temporarily stopped, for example, to refuel the vehicle.

The meter should be off when the driver asks for fare payment.



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How to Address a Safety Complaint?

A passenger can make a safety complaint by contacting the taxi service provider or booking service provider who provided the passenger service.

Safety concerns can either be reported verbally or through the business's website or other online mechanisms in place to receive feedback.

Issues about safety or fares should be taken up with your service provider first, but you can also use the point-to-point transport feedback form at <https://www.pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au/safety-and-compliance/safety-complaints> or for urgent assistance call 131 500.

Serious issues or alleged criminal behaviour must be reported to the police.

Resources: <https://www.pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au/>

<https://transportnsw.info/travel-info/using-public-transport/accessible-travel/travelling-by-wheelchair-accessible-taxi>