

Travel Your Way

A Guide for an Accessible Trip



Going on vacations and travelling are very exciting times to gain new experiences and create memories. At the same time, they can present barriers for Autistic people due to sensory processing differences, changes in routine, visiting new people and places, and crowded environments.

This guide is designed to offer strategies to support Autistic travelers before and during a trip. It aims to identify potential challenges and create accommodations that make travel more predictable and comfortable. Through proactive planning, sensory considerations, and communication supports, this resource promotes more inclusive and enjoyable travel experiences for everyone. These tips and strategies can help transform travel into a journey that feels safe, meaningful, and memorable.

Preparation for Autism Friendly Travel

Research

- consider destinations and transit based on your needs
- preview locations and/or venues using Google Maps street view, virtual tours or videos
- identify Autism-friendly venues and attractions



Inquire

- ask transit providers how they can flag staff about your needs
- research available accommodations:
 - priority boarding
 - extra space
 - assistance at security
 - sensory-friendly areas
 - quiet zones



Book

- find transit providers that offer programs to assist Autistic passengers ([click here](#))
- find Autism-friendly accommodations that offer:
 - specialized staff training
 - quiet zones
 - sensory-friendly options



For more information, contact Kerry's Place Autism Services:

+1-833-77-KERRY/1-833-775-3779
intake@kerrysplace.org
kerrysplace.org



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Pre-Travel Tips

Familiarize yourself by:

- visiting the airport or train station
- taking a virtual tour of your accommodation
- exploring websites of tourist attractions, sites and restaurants

Watch videos examples of:

- transportation sounds (e.g., train whistles, takeoff, landing movement, etc.)
- the inside of the cabin and entry tunnel
- unpoping your ears to relieve pressure

Create a short story about the trip, including:

- all planned activities
- destinations
- people you may visit

Use apps that provide:

- steps of the flight process
- gates and boarding
- security points

Packing Checklist

communication tools

- picture card
- written notes
- communication apps
- AAC device

sensory supports

- noise-cancelling headphones
- earplugs
- fidgets
- comfortable clothing

visual supports

- travel plans
- pictures of attractions being visited, maps and schedules
- social narrative(s)

essential items

- medications
- travel documents
- personal care items
- doctor notes



comfort tools

- snacks or dietary foods
- tablets or e-readers with downloaded movies, games
- toys, books, drawing material

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Air Travel Tips



- arrive early to eliminate stress of rushing and wait times
- explore to find quiet-zones



- use accessible programs made available by airports ([click here](#))



- ask for seats at the front of the aircraft or near the wings where turbulence is typically less
- inquire if its possible to have a seat with additional space or is less crowded

- use noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs
- wear sunglasses or a sleep mask
- wear a face mask for strong odors
- have sensory items handy and easily accessible

Benefits of Traveling by Train or On Road



predictable schedules and consistency of train or car travel can make planning and transitions smoother

allow for space to move, stretch, adjust plans, and take breaks that supports comfort, sensory needs and self-regulation

no long security lines, fewer checkpoints, and a much simpler boarding process

the possibility to make real-time decisions based on comfort and energy levels



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On Road and Train Tips

take a moment to evaluate the environment to be prepared for possible sensory needs

plan ahead for transitions to reduce stress

consider travelling during quieter times rather than high peak seasons or weekends

provide choices to encourage involvement in the planning and build excitement

follow usual routines as much as possible regarding sleep, meals, and activities

create a daily schedule and supervision plan to ensure ongoing supervision during the day

Travel Smart: Safety and Calming Strategies

Be Prepared

- note the location of nearest hospitals and emergency and consulate numbers
- keep identification and emergency medical information together
- have a plan in the event of an emergency

Supportive Strategies

- stay calm and give space
- offer gentle reassurance and model calmness for others
- offer comforting items
- use clear and concise language, if necessary
- prompt to use a calming tool

Tools

- music
- tactile item
- deep breathing
- movement break
- calming activity (e.g., drawing, stickers, card games)



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Online Resources

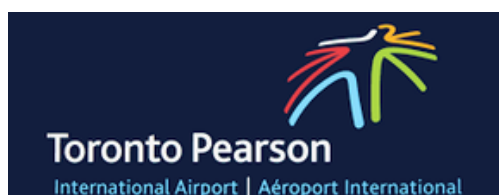
- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower
- Autism Double-Checked
- Autism Travel
- Air Canada Accessible Travel
- Travel Rehearsal Program
- Travel Tools for Autism and Other Diverse Needs



Travel Apps

- Fly for All- Alaska Airlines
- Aubin- the Accessible Travel Companion for Needs-Based Planning
- Magnus Cards
- AccessibleGo

Airport Assistance Programs



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