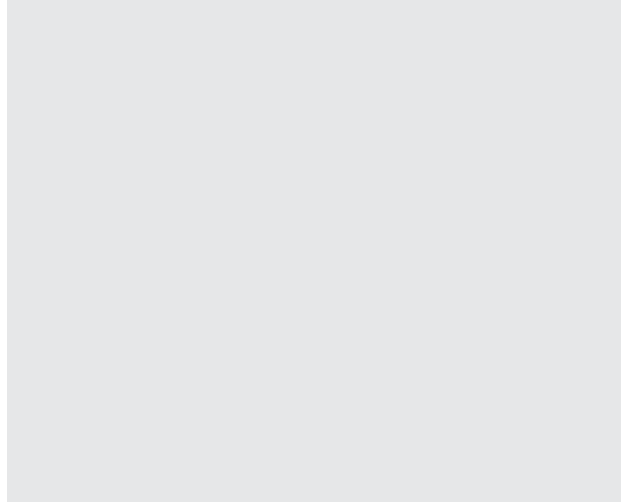

Mobility Scooter User Handbook





Mobility Scooter User Handbook

A GUIDE FOR POTENTIAL,
NEW AND CURRENT USERS
OF MOBILITY SCOOTERS

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Color Legend

In this document, there will be text that are
HIGHLIGHTED with colored boxes!
Here is a quick color guide to what these colors mean

YELLOW BOXES are important TIPS to take note of

PURPLE BOXES are important CONSIDERATIONS to think about

GREEN BOXES are ACTIVITIES for you to complete

We hope these highlighted materials are helpful for your learning

**The terms MOBILITY SCOOTER and SCOOTER
will be used interchangeably in this resource**

Disclaimer and Legal Issues

This document was developed by students from the Occupational Therapy program at the University of Manitoba. The information provided in this document is intended to provide helpful information and is not intended to replace advice and guidance from a professional health care provider. There are no guarantees of completeness or accuracy with regard to the information contained in this document. All individuals involved in the creation and distribution of this document disclaim any liability in connection with the use of this document and of the information contained herein. This document is provided without warranty of any kind.



Where can I get a Scooter and how can I pay for it?

*There are many places where you can get a scooter. When you are deciding where to purchase a scooter **CONSIDER** whether the seller will provide:*

A rental or trial period?

It's valuable to try using the scooter for more than just a few hours to get a better understanding of how well the scooter suits your needs.

Education and training on how to use your scooter?

Education and training about scooter operation can make you a more effective scooter user and reduce the risk of accidents or injury.

Education, training and services for scooter maintenance?

It is important to know how to maintain and care for your scooter, and to know where and who can provide maintenance and repair services for you.

Various options to payment?

Consider if the seller will accept different forms of payment, such as directly billing to insurance companies.

Places to purchase a Scooter: Strengths and Limitations

Source	Strengths	Limitations
Department stores and “big box” stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically have a liberal return policy If the scooter isn’t a fit • May offer a limited or extended warranty option • Economical up-front cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited selection of products • Rental and trial period not available • Typically accept only up-front, out-of-pocket payments • No training or education provided • May not have servicing/repair
Online scooter retail vendors (websites)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide variety of products • Convenience of shopping and comparing online and having it shipped to your home • Often have lower up-front cost • May have a return policy • May offer a limited or extended warranty option • May offer payment plans and 3rd party payment option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May still require assembly • Rental/trial is not available • Can’t see or evaluate the actual product until it is delivered; product may not be exactly as advertised • You may be responsible for cost and effort of return if it isn’t a fit • No training or education provided • May not have servicing/repair
Local medical equipment vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May offer trial periods or rental to evaluate fit of the scooter • Typically provide payment options including 3rd party billing • Greater product knowledge • May provide some education and training (varies) • May offer a limited or extended warranty and return options • Typically provide servicing, parts and repair services • Access to a variety of scooters • May also carry used products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have limited variety/number of products in-stock • Able to access products, but must be ordered in and can’t be previewed • Services, products and training available differ between vendors • Up-front cost may be higher than other source options
Privately-owned “used” scooters (advertisements, newspapers or online sites)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically less expensive than the new product options • Prices may be negotiable • Can see the product in-person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Function and condition of the scooter isn’t guaranteed • No training or education provided • No warranty or return option/policy • Limited opportunity to test drive the scooter; no rental option • No servicing/repair available

Places to purchase a Scooter: Strengths and Limitations

Source	Convenience	Pricing	Product trial	Rental options	Training and education	Product knowledge	Repair and servicing	Payment options
Department stores and “big box” stores	Easy to purchase and take home immediately, but very little product selection	Up-front cost typically less; products often lower quality with down-the-road costs	No trial; often have a liberal return policy	None	Typically none	Little to none	If warranted, typically through manufacturer, not the vendor	May have payment plans; typically up-front payment. May take cash, credit or debit.
Local medical equipment vendors	Knowledge of products and options, in-store trial and training. May offer 3 rd party payment options. Drive home or product delivery.	Standard market pricing. May carry used products.	Trial period may be available (varies)	May be available	Typically offer initial training and education; may be in-store or outdoors (varies)	Typically very experienced with product-specific knowledge; may have additional training	Typically offered directly by vendor; may have mobile/home service option.	May have payment plans; may assist with 3 rd party funding (insurance plan)
Online retail scooter vendors (websites)	Shop, compare and purchase at home; product delivered to your door. May be some delay; can't see/touch product prior to receiving.	May offer initial lower prices than brick-and-mortar stores.	No trial; often have a return policy (you may have to pay the cost of shipping/return)	None	Little to none; may have online educational resources	Agents may have some knowledge of scooters, but communicating online may be a barrier	May offer through service providers or manufacturer; may require shipping product back.	Often require credit card payment; may have payment plans and assist with 3 rd party funding (insurance plan)
Privately owned “used” scooters	Can see product, pay for and take home at once; need to arrange viewing and negotiate price.	Typically lower up-front cost (negotiable); may incur cost for repairs down the line.	May be able to take it for a “test run”; No return policy	None	Highly variable, may receive informal advice but dependent upon expertise of owner.	Variable; likely only relates to knowledge of the product for sale.	None	Informal but likely only up-front cash or cheque.

How do I pay for my Scooter ?

Scooters can be an expensive investment and are typically paid for by the purchaser. This section covers some potential options for funding.

Out of Pocket Payment

This option is where you pay for the scooter yourself. While financing plans are uncommon, some vendors may allow you to split your payment over 2-3 months. Every vendor is different, so remember to discuss terms of payment.

Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI)

If a scooter is prescribed by a healthcare professional due to injuries resulting from an automobile accident, MPI may cover the cost of rental or purchase, and the cost of repairs as long as it is due to natural wear and tear and not misuse or neglect.

If you had a scooter that was damaged in, or no longer meet your needs due to the injuries resulting from, an automobile accident, MPI has one-time coverage to replace the scooter.

If you have questions of your coverage plan, please contact MPI customer service directly.

Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB)

Scooters are not covered under NIHB

Continued on next page

How do I pay for my Scooter?

Private Insurance

- Private insurance companies (e.g. Blue Cross, Great West Life) may provide coverage for scooters. However, each plan is different - you need to confirm coverage by contacting your insurance provider directly.
- Private insurance plans may have a limit on coverage for purchase of a single scooter, and can range from \$500 to \$5000+ depending on the plan. There may also be a lifetime coverage limit, meaning once that coverage limit is expended, no reimbursement is available for future purchases.
- Private insurance carriers commonly requires a doctor's prescription for a mobility scooter.

Veteran's Affairs

- Veteran's Affairs (VA) may provide coverage for a scooter. However, they have a set of ***guidelines to assess eligibility for mobility scooter coverage***. If you have VA coverage, ***it is important to call them and discuss your eligibility***. In order to be assessed for a scooter, ***a doctor's prescription may be required***. VA will send an occupational therapist to complete a assessment before determining whether a scooter is appropriate and will be funded.

How do I pay for my Scooter?

Grant Applications

The following agency may provide financial assistance to purchase a scooter and typically require you to complete a grant application.

PLEASE NOTE: *your success with a grant applications is not guaranteed and may be rejected. Applications often have specific guidelines and requirements for eligibility to apply.*

Muscular Dystrophy Canada Funding

This organization provides funding assistance for individuals with muscular dystrophy and require involvement of healthcare professionals and vendors. For more information, visit: <http://www.muscle.ca/we-can-help/financial-assistance/>

How can an occupational therapist help?

Occupational therapists are health professionals with expertise in assessing mobility and enabling continued involvement in meaningful life activities. An occupational therapist can help you decide which mobility aid is best for you, including a mobility scooter, and ensure it fits well. An occupational therapist may be able to help you advocate for funding for your scooter and they can provide you with comprehensive education, training and resources regarding mobility scooter use.

You can ask your doctor or healthcare professional to refer you to an occupational therapist for a mobility scooter assessment, or you can consult a private practice occupational therapist on your own.



Contact information for occupational therapists, vendors and potential funding sources are listed on the next two pages.

Contact information for occupational therapists, vendors and insurance companies

Why should I contact an occupational therapist?

An occupational therapist:

- Can help you decide which mobility scooter fits your needs best
- Can help you develop skills and knowledge for safe scooter use
- Can help you advocate for funding for a scooter
- May provide an assessment for insurance or Veteran's Affairs claims

While a private occupational therapist may be an out-of-pocket expense, it is convenient because they can be contacted directly without the need to obtain a referral.

Visit this website for a list of all private practice occupational therapists in Manitoba: <http://www.msot.mb.ca/finding-ot-services/>

If you live outside the city of Winnipeg, you may consider contacting Community Therapy Services, a private, non-profit agency, that provides occupational therapy and physiotherapy services across the province of Manitoba. They are a good agency to consider for those who live inside or outside the city of Winnipeg.

Community Therapy Services

Phone: 204-949-0533

Location: 101-1555 St. James Street, Winnipeg, MB

Email: cts@ctsinc.mb.ca

Website: www.ctsinc.mb.ca

Blue Cross	
Email can be sent through their Online web portal	https://www.mb.bluecross.ca/contactus
Phone for clients within Winnipeg	204-775-0151 (8:00AM to 5:30 PM weekdays)
Phone for clients within Manitoba	1-800-873-2583 (8:00AM to 5:30 PM weekdays)



Great West Life	
Email can be sent through their online web portal	https://www.greatwestlife.com/common/contact.html
Insurance through and employer: General health and dental inquiries	1-800-957-9777
Retirement, savings and income through and employer	1-800-724-3402
Insurance through and advisor: Health and Dental:	1-866-430-2863
Insurance through an advisor: Life, Disability and Critical Illness insurance	1-800-665-0551

Manitoba Public Insurance	
Call center hours: 7:30 AM to 7:00 PM Weekdays, 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM Saturdays and closed Sundays	
Phone (In Winnipeg)	204-985-7000
Phone (Outside Winnipeg)	Toll free 1-800-665-2410
Phone (Deaf access)	204-985-8832



Veteran's Affairs	
Email	vac.information.acc@canada.ca
Phone	1-866-522-2122 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Weekdays

Vendor List (In no particular order)	
Canadian Healthcare Products Address: 6 - 3166 Portage Avenue Email: info@chcp.ca Phone: 204-888-9609 Phone (Toll Free): 1-800-318-3044	HomeEquip Address: 385 - 550 Century Street Email: homeequip@homeequip.ca Phone: 204-949-2300
Innovative Medical Supplies (1st Location) Address: 217 Henderson Highway Email: info@innovativemedicalsupplies.com Phone: 204-663-6633 Phone (Toll Free): 1-800-323-8634	Innovative Medical supplies (2nd Location) Address: 8 – 2727 Portage Avenue Email: courts@innovativemedicalsupplies.com Phone: 204-896-1990
HT Mobility Medical Address: 451 Henderson Highway Phone: 204-668-6111	Living Made Easy Address: 665 Archibald Street Phone: 204-231-1746
Northland Home Healthcare (1st Location) Address: 865 Bradford Street Email: Shelley@nhcp.com Phone: 204-786-6786	Northland Healthcare Products (2nd Location) Address: 1341 Henderson Highway Email: natalie@nhcp.com Phone: 204-925-4599
Re-New Mobility Address: 665 Stafford Street Phone: 204-453-6473	Reliable Mobility Address: 1046 Portage Avenue Email: info@reliablemobility.com Phone: 204-774-6322 Phone (Toll Free): 1-800-361-7788
Stevens Home Medical Supplies Address: 700 William Ave, SR 140 Email: w-store@stevens.ca Phone: 204-787-3532	

MODULE TWO

What do I need to safely use a Scooter?



A number of abilities are involved in using a mobility scooter. Here, "**ability**" refers to your capacity to perform a task. This module will help you reflect on your abilities related to safely driving a scooter.

There are three types of abilities to consider: ***physical, thinking, and processing***, all of which are important for effective scooter use.

Physical abilities involve the body performing tasks, such as strength, endurance, or balance, as well as our senses like sight and hearing.

Thinking abilities refer to our capacity to construct ideas such as planning, problem solving, and decision making. **Processing abilities** are how we interpret information from our senses and respond appropriately.

With that explanation of different “abilities”, review the checklist below and identify whether you feel confident in each of the abilities listed. Later, we will use this information to help with scooter selection and set-up.

Ability	Question	Are you able to perform this ability? (write yes or no)
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I able to walk independently or with a mobility aid (i.e., cane, crutch, walker). • Am I able to sit upright without support. • Am I able to get on and off a scooter without any assistance. • I have a strong arms to steer the tiller for long periods of time while driving. • I have sensation in my fingers and hands. • I can press the accelerator with my thumb. • I can manipulate drive controls using my fingers. • I can rotate my forearms to control speed dials. 	
Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am I able to focus on two things at once? • Am I able to make quick and in-the-moment decisions? • I plan things ahead of time. • I have a good understanding of roads and sidewalk of my community. 	
Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have clear vision. • When I focus on an object, can I see its surroundings. • I am aware of my personal space and that of others. • I recognize street signs. 	

Notice how each of these questions briefly assessed your physical, thinking, and processing abilities related to scooter use. Take a moment to reflect on your answers. If you’ve responded confidently to these questions, then a scooter is likely to be a good fit for you. If you do not feel confident with some of these abilities, this booklet will provide you with some strategies and considerations in choosing whether a scooter is right for you and if so, how you might address the abilities you are not confident in.

Physical Abilities

Four physical abilities have been identified as most important for safe scooter operation:

- Strength
- Balance
- Endurance
- Coordination



Strength and Balance

Individuals who use a scooter should have sufficient **upper body strength** to hold and steer the tiller. **Leg strength** must be sufficient to allow you to transfer on and off the scooter, reposition yourself while sitting in the scooter, and walk short distances when necessary.

Trunk strength and endurance is required to sit upright and maintain your balance for the duration of the ride, especially on bumpy surfaces.

Scooters typically come with an automobile-style seat that has limited adjustment, so you will need to be able to sit with little support.

Operating controls and grasping the steering tiller requires the ability to **move your fingers and grasp with your hands**. The ability to **feel with your hands (sensation)** is helpful for using controls, steering the tiller, and transporting your scooter.

TIPS to consider if you have poor strength and/or balance

Select a scooter with a larger back rest (both in height and width) for additional sitting support.

Consider purchasing a scooter with an adjustable head rest for improved posture, greater head support, or if you have shoulder or neck pain.

If you are concerned about balance, 4-wheeled scooters, particularly larger outdoor scooters, provide greater stability and reduce tipping risk.

Consider a compact, foldable, lightweight scooter to ease lifting and transporting the scooter if you have poor upper body strength.

To improve stability, ensure your feet firmly touch the base.

Endurance

Endurance is important to consider because sitting, steering and transporting the scooter can be tiring for some people. If you purchase a folding scooter, it can be tiring to fold and lift the scooter into a car or transport vehicle. Scooter users must be able to step on and off of the scooter and walk short distances. If endurance is an issue and the user becomes fatigued, it can increase **safety risks such as falls**.

TIPS to consider if you have poor endurance

Select a scooter with a larger back rest for increased sitting support.

Select a scooter with a place to store your walker or cane if necessary.

Select a scooter with armrests to rest your arms and provide support getting on and off the scooter.

Ride your scooter on straight, even paths.

Use your scooter for short drives or take rests during longer trips.

Coordination

Coordination is your ability to perform smooth complex movements. This is important not only for walking and transferring on and off the scooter, but also for using the controls and steering. Poor coordination can affect your ability to steer the scooter where you want to go and to effectively operate the controls. This can lead to safety risks for the scooter user, as well as for pedestrians.

TIPS to consider if you have poor coordination

Consider driving on smooth, paved sidewalks in less trafficked areas. These are also good places to practice your steering.

Spend some extra time becoming familiar with the controls on your scooter. Learn what each control does and which one you think you'll be using the most often.

Consider a scooter with fewer and simpler controls; these are often compact style scooters.



Pit Stop: Reflection Exercise

Let's Slow Down and Think.

Do you have any concerns with any of the physical abilities? If so, what kind of options or strategies will help address your needs?

My Physical Concerns	Options and Strategies

Thinking and processing abilities

Why are these Abilities Important?

If we take a moment to think about driving, it is a complex activity that requires performing multiple tasks, quick reactions, and decision-making skills. If you drive or ride in an automobile, you can probably think of times when it was necessary to brake suddenly or take an alternative route due to an unforeseen roadblock. Similarly, driving a mobility scooter safely can be demanding and requires the user to be alert and attentive to their surroundings at all times. Below is a list of the thinking and processing abilities that are most commonly identified in research as contributing to safe scooter use:

Ability	Description	Why this Ability is Required for Safe Driving
Visual acuity	The ability to see clearly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To see objects and pedestrians along your path; To read street signs;
Visual fields	Maintaining focus on a particular object, yet still being aware of items in its background.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aware of your surroundings as you focus on your path such as: pedestrians and pets, buildings, and passing vehicles on the roadway
Depth perception	Accurately judging the difference in distance between objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be aware of the depth of a curb or ramp; To recognize how close you are to people, objects, and crosswalks
Reaction time	The ability to quickly adjust to unforeseen circumstances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To respond to pedestrians, pets, or objects that may unexpectedly block your path.
Memory	The ability to retain and recall information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To remember your route to your destinations; To recognize and know street signs; To remember to check tire pressure and charge batteries before you leave.

Concentration	Being able to focus on an item while remaining alert.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When driving your scooter in Winnipeg, you will likely be exposed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sounds of passing vehicles, sirens, and horns, as with, loud construction trucks and talkative pedestrians. Sights might also be distracting on your route such as, the heavy traffic, people on a busy sidewalk, and flashing signs.
Insight	Understanding and being aware of one's abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know whether you feel comfortable driving on uneven terrain, taking an alternative route, driving indoors or outdoors with your device. To think through difficult situations and knowing who to call or what to do if you need help.
Divided attention	Being able to perform two tasks at once while remaining alert to both.	<p>There are a lot to be aware of in our surroundings when driving, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizing and reading street signs at and above eye level; Being attentive to pedestrians; and Unexpected obstacles such as, construction zones, debris, and uneven terrain.
Judgment	analyzing situations, weighing the consequences, and making appropriate decisions accordingly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make the right decisions when unexpected situations arise. To know when to accurately speed up or slow down.
Adaptability to new situations	The ability to problem solve and make in-the-moment decisions to adjust behaviours when situations do not go as planned.	<p>There may be times where your route does not go as planned. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encountering a barricaded sidewalk and must take an alternative route. Having a battery died midway home. An unexpected flat tire.

** This is not an exhaustive list of reasons why these abilities contribute to safe scooter use*

Don't be alarmed or overwhelmed when reading over this list. By becoming aware of potential demands or challenges you may encounter, you can prepare yourself appropriately, select a scooter with options that best address your needs, and obtaining the training you need to make your scooter experience effective and safe.

TIPS to think about for safe Scooter use.

Please consider these tips that relate to thinking and processing abilities and scooter safety:

- Plan your route ahead of time. Scooter users are considered **pedestrians** so ensure there are sidewalks to and from your destination.
- Stick around familiar routes. Knowing your neighborhood will help you think of alternative routes if you come across unexpected roadblocks.
- Do not forget to wear your glasses if required them to see clearly.
- Pack a pair of sunglasses when it's bright outside.
- Stay away from busy places and sidewalks if you do not feel comfortable navigating through busy environments.
- Check the weather before leaving – will the weather cooperate during the entirety of your trip? Will it rain? Will it snow?
- Always plan for extra time to ensure you get to your destination on time, in case something unforeseen occurs.
- Check in regularly with your doctor or health care professional to monitor any changes in your thinking and processing abilities.



MODULE THREE

Which Scooter is the best fit for me?

Did you know that there are a variety of different scooters available? Finding a mobility scooter to fit your needs means considering many factors.

The purpose of this section is to provide you with information to help you make an informed choice on which type of scooter may be a good fit for you. In addition to using this resource, ***it is important to obtain a trial or test drive before buying a scooter***, to make sure it is appropriate for you.

Here are some things to think about as you figure out which type of mobility scooter would be the best fit for you:

Scooter size
Battery
Indoor use
Stability

Number of wheels
Controls and Steering
Outdoor use
Durability

Size of wheels
Maneuverability
Scooter functions
Transportability

Meet the different types of Scooters!

- **Compact/Travel scooters** are best suited for people who use their scooter less frequently, use it in small and confined spaces, use it only indoors, or frequently transport their scooter in a vehicle.
- **Mid-sized scooters** are best suited for people who want to use it both indoors and outdoors, but do not plan on driving it on many long trips in the community.
- **Heavy/Outdoor scooters** are best suited for people who use it mostly outdoors and on rougher terrain in the community, or who need a larger weight capacity.



Mid-sized scooter



Outdoor scooter

ACTIVITY: The first step towards determining which scooter is the best fit for you is to ask: “Why am I considering a scooter? What do I intend to use my scooter for? Do I intend to use it to travel long distances outside or to use it mostly indoors?” Write your answer in the space below:

Visual guide with strengths and limitations of different Scooter types

Feature	Compact/travel	Mid-sized	Heavy duty/Outdoor
Wheelbase length Seating area Turning space required	Short wheelbase Small to average seating Smallest	Medium wheelbase Average seating space Moderate	Long wheelbase Spacious seating Large
Wheel size (diameter)	Small wheels More maneuverable but lower speed and ability to climb obstacles	Medium wheels Moderate maneuverability, speed, and ability to climb obstacles	Large wheels Higher speed and ability to climb obstacles but less maneuverable
Indoor use	★★★★	★★★☆☆	★★☆☆☆
Outdoor use	★★☆☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★
Maneuverability of scooter	★★★★ Least space required	★★★☆☆ Moderate space required	★★☆☆☆ Most space required
Durability and hardiness	★★☆☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★
Stability	★★★☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★
Speed of scooter (maximum)	★★★☆☆ Average 8 km/h	★★★☆☆ Average 8 km/h	★★★★ Average 12 km/h
Ease of transport	★★★★	★★★☆☆	★★☆☆☆
Diversity of functions and controls	★★★☆☆	★★★☆☆	★★★★
Battery size and driving range	★★☆☆☆ Average 8-24 km/charge	★★★☆☆ Average 16-32 km/charge	★★★★ 32+ km/charge
Weight capacity (user)	★★☆☆☆ Can be 250-350 lbs	★★★☆☆ Can be 350-400 lbs	★★★★ Can be up to 400-500 lbs
Weight of the scooter	★★★★ Lightest	★★★☆☆	★★☆☆☆ Heaviest

Wheel and Tires

Number of Wheels

Mobility scooters come in either 3 or 4 wheel format. The number of wheels will impact stability, maneuverability and turning radius. Turning radius is the amount of space required for the scooter to turn around.

3 wheeled scooters are easier to maneuver in tighter spaces and have a smaller turning radius, but are not as stable as a 4 wheeled scooter. If you plan to use your scooter mostly indoors and particularly in more confined spaces, the 3 wheeled scooter is well suited.

4 wheeled scooters have a larger turning radius and not as maneuverable, but they provide a larger, more stable base making it easier to drive on uneven surfaces (especially outdoors). They are less likely to tip sideways on uneven, sloping or transitional surfaces or if your balance is poor.

Types of Tires

The type of tires on your scooter will impact how well you are able to travel in different environments.

Pneumatic tires are filled with air and have an inner tube. The air provides shock absorption for a smoother ride and provides better traction on uneven surfaces. However, pneumatic tires can be punctured and should be checked regularly to ensure they are properly inflated.

Solid Tires are made entirely of rubber or plastic. Because they have no tube or air inside, they can't deflate, but they tend to have a bumpier ride. They are better suited to indoor use while pneumatic are better outdoors.

Wheel size and steering controls

TIP: Wheel size affects performance. Larger diameter wheels provide more ground clearance (height of the scooter platform), allowing you to get over higher obstacles, but increasing the distance you step up and down onto the scooter. A scooter can only drive up and over obstacles that are **lower than** front wheel axle (center of the wheel) so larger wheels make it possible to drive over larger obstacles. Your scooter will be unable to climb any obstacle higher than your front wheel axle.

Anti-tippers (small bars with wheels at the back of the scooter) can be added to prevent your scooter from tipping backwards, often at an additional cost.

Steering Control Types

T-shaped tillers are similar to handlebars on a bicycle. Steering may be more familiar with this type, but its position may require you to reach further forward and requires more shoulder movement when turning the scooter.

Delta tillers are curved to form a 'D' shape. The style doesn't require you to reach as much and may make turning the scooter easier.

Tillers often have a **release lever**, allowing you to move the tiller closer or further away. This allows adjustment for the user's reach, scooter fit for different body types, and to make getting on/off the scooter easier.

CONSIDER the following:

- The tiller's adjustability
- Your level of comfort with driving using the different tiller styles
- Your ability to reach for and turn the tiller
- How you fit in the scooter and ease in getting on and off

Battery

Batteries determine how far you can travel with your scooter. Consider how often you will be using your scooter and how far you intend to travel with it.

Average Battery Ranges

Travel/compact scooters typically travel 5-10 miles (8-24 km) per charge.

Midsize scooters typically travel 10-20 miles (24-48 km) per charge.

Heavy duty/outdoor scooters typically travel upwards of 20 miles (48km) per charge.

Things that Affect Battery Life

- **Weight:** The heavier the scooter, the more energy is required to move it. Adding to the weight of the scooter (e.g. baggage or add-ons) can limit the range and life of your scooter batteries.
- **Terrain:** Driving on rough or uneven terrain will consume more power than driving on a smooth flat surface. If you expect your trip to be rugged, you should adjust your distance and time accordingly as the extra strain will drain your battery earlier.
- **Speed:** Similar to automobiles, frequent and rapid acceleration and braking as well as travelling at higher speed will drain your batteries more quickly than driving at a controlled and slow pace.

TIPS for Charging your Mobility Scooter

There may be several charging port locations on the scooter. These are commonly found on the tiller and underneath or behind the seat. Tiller ports are much easier to access than those underneath the seat; consider this if you have difficulties bending down.

Transportability

Often when people think about transporting scooters, they imagine taking seats out of a vehicle of some sort and rolling in the entire scooter. However, you may be glad to know that you have more options!

Some scooters disassemble.

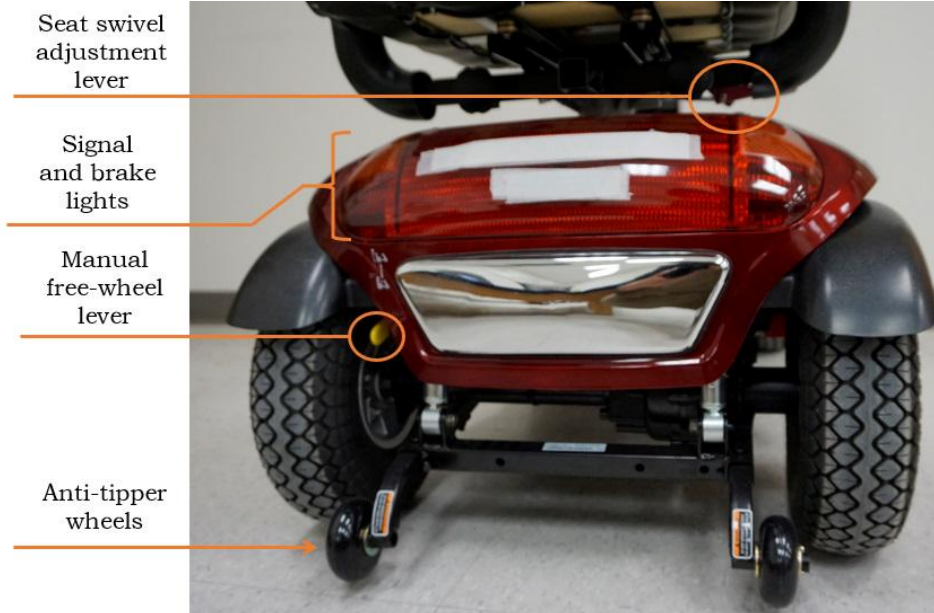
This requires **some work** to disassemble, load and then re-assemble at your destination. Disassembling divides the total weight of the scooter into several components, reducing the effort of lifting for those who have **strength limitations**.



Some scooters fold. This requires less work than disassembling, but the **user must still lift the entire weight** of the scooter to transport it. Folding scooters save space, but the weight remains the same for transporting.

There will be more information about this in the scooter transport module!

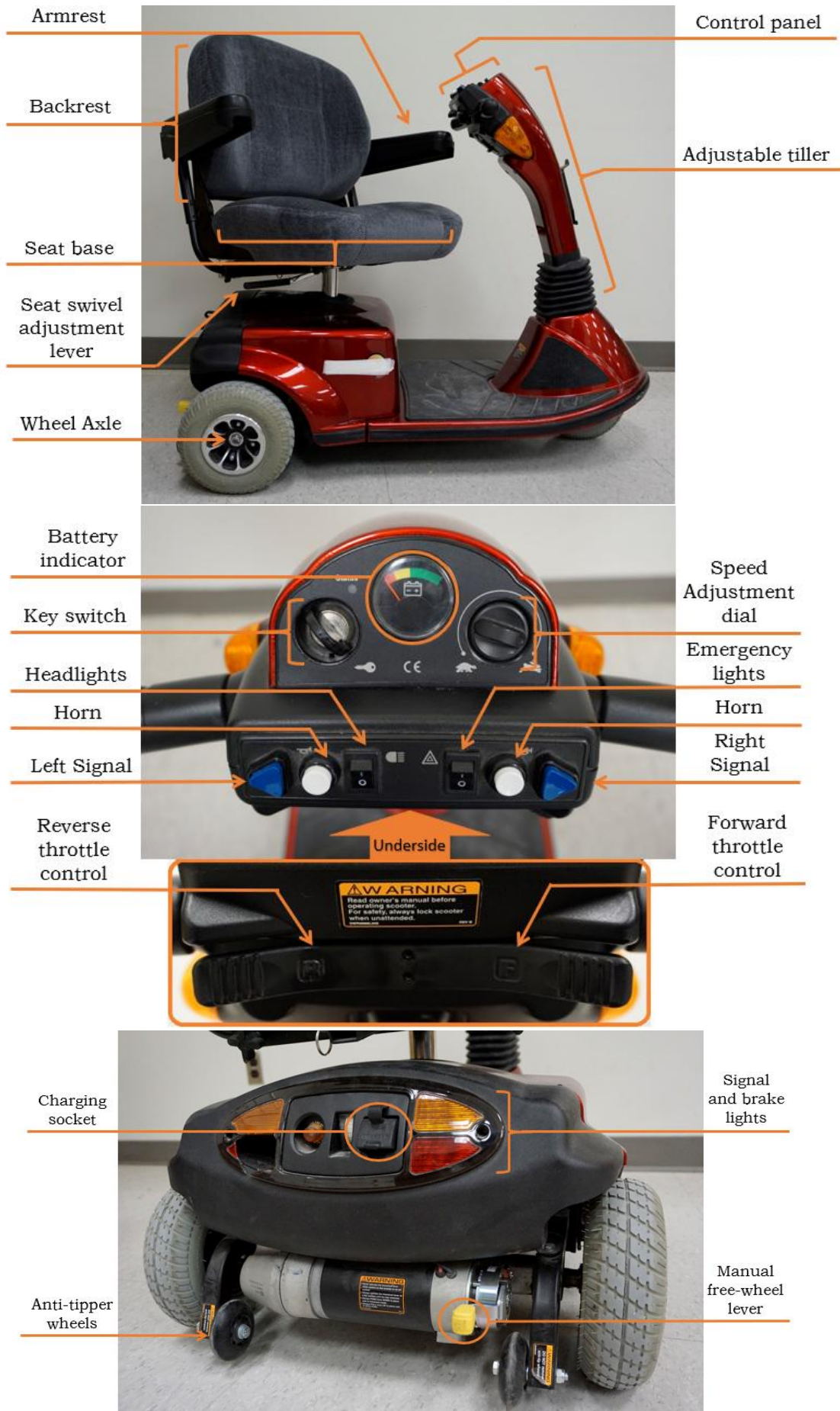
Outdoor Scooter Anatomy



NOTE: Each scooter is different and the components may not necessary be the same. The purpose of this page is to label components commonly found among scooters to give you an idea of what to look for. Always refer to your scooter user manual for more details and information.



Mid-Range Scooter Anatomy



Pit Stop: Reflection on needs

Questions	Consideration factors	My needs
Do I want to, or need to, use my mobility scooter in an indoor setting (e.g. the mall or a store)?	size of scooter	
What setting do I plan to use my scooter in? Will it be a variety of bumpy settings or will it be smooth pavement? Will I encounter a lot of obstacles/curbs/ramps?	size of scooter, tires, & number of wheels	
Will I be using my scooter in areas with lots of uneven ground and slopes? (If yes, then you may want to consider a 4 wheeled scooter with more stability over a 3 wheeled scooter).	size of scooter, tires, & number of wheels	
How far, distance-wise, do I plan to go with my mobility scooter regularly?	size of scooter & battery	
Will I need to transport my scooter and how do I plan to transport it? (Remember outdoor scooters are harder to transport)	size of scooter & size of battery	
Is there enough room for me to store my scooter? (Remember that outdoor scooters are bigger and harder to store)	size of scooter	
Do I have enough leg space when sitting on my scooter so that it doesn't interfere with steering?	Size of scooter	
Is the scooter developed to support the weight that I am currently at?	Size of scooter	
Can I comfortably see the control panel, and easily reach and access it? Is the control panel intuitive?	Controls & steering wheel	
Can I comfortably reach the steering wheel and comfortably reach the accelerator lever?	Controls & steering wheel	
Can I comfortable hold onto and turn steering wheel for long periods of time?	Controls & steering wheel	
Can I independently adjust my seat and tiller positions and perform regular tire checks?	Scooter maintenance & tires	

Driving skills and training programs



Driving Skills

Here, the term '**skill**' refers to proficiency in driving abilities. These skills are divided into two categories: **basic** and **complex**.

Basic skills are more simple tasks that are easier to learn in a short time. These include:

- Driving forward in a straight line
- Accelerating and decelerating smoothly
- Driving backward in a straight line
- Making left and right turns
- Making U-turns and 3-point turns
- Driving on level surfaces (i.e., roads, parking lots, sidewalks)
- Steering around expected and unexpected obstacles

Complex skills generally take more time and practice to master.

These include:

- Driving up and down curbs
- Driving up and down ramps and side slopes
- Driving on uneven terrain
- Driving in crowded spaces
- Crossing streets and intersections without lights
- Using crosswalks
- Opening and closing doors

Scooter safety & driving tips

Scooter Safety

Be visible

Wear a bright safety vest, purchase scooter flags and/or reflective stickers that will help you be visible to pedestrians and vehicles.

Safety Checks

Always perform a safety check before leaving:

- Is your tire pressure okay?
- Are your batteries charged?
- Are your turn signals and headlights working?

Always perform a safety check when getting off the scooter and make sure your scooter is turned off before stepping out of it.

Tipping

Tipping is among the most common reasons for scooter-related injuries. A **sideways tip** (or falling off sideways) is more likely than tipping backwards.

Consider the following to optimize your safety:

- Avoid leaning forwards or sideways, *unless it is to stabilize the scooter*.
If you find yourself doing leaning forwards, try adjusting the tiller or seat.
- Shift your weight forward when going up a slope or curb and shift your weight backwards going down a slope or curb to maintain your balance.
- Approach uneven surfaces and transitions directly head; approaching at an angle increases the risk of tipping when one wheel is lower than the other.
- Anti-tippers are an option to reduce the risk of a backwards tip.
- Making very sharp turns or turn at high speed increase the risk of tipping.
- Do not drive faster than makes you comfortable.
- 4-wheeled scooters offer more lateral and turning stability than 3-wheeled scooters.

Scooter safety & driving tips

Curbs

- Avoid going up and down full curbs as you may injure yourself or cause damage to your scooter.
- Use curb cuts (an area where the sidewalks is "cut" and slopes down to street level).
- We strongly recommended you avoid descending a curb, especially when using a 3-wheeled scooter with only 3 points of contact on the ground.
- If you need to approach a curb, make sure your **wheel axle is lower than the height of the curb**:



Notice how the axle is higher than the curb height.



Avoid curbs that are higher than the axle.

Scooter safety & driving tips

Curbs

- When using curbs, follow these guidelines:

Ascending: Slow down when making contact with the curb then speed up after your rear wheels have gone over the curb.

Descending: Approach the curb directly. Slow down, but do not come to a complete stop. Slowly roll your front wheel down and do not speed up until your rear wheel has descended the curb.



Slow down and approach the curb directly.



With proper clearance, the scooter will not get stuck on the curb and will be able to clear the curb

Scooter safety & driving tips

Slopes

Slopes (i.e., ramps, driveways)

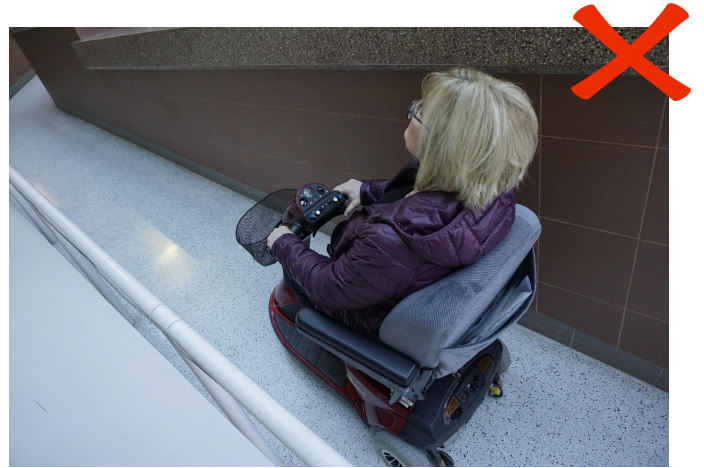
- When ascending, always drive straight onto a slope leaning your body forward.
- When descending, slow down and lean backward to maintain balance.

Side slopes (i.e., sidewalks)

- Shift your weight uphill (away from the street).



When going up a ramp, lean forward for stability.



When going up a ramp, do not lean back as you may tip.



When going down a ramp, lean back for stability.



When going down a ramp, do not lean forwards.

Outdoor and indoor obstacles

Outdoor Obstacles

Be cautious with (and avoid if possible) the following obstacles:

- Railroad tracks;
- Surfaces that may be uneven;
- Large puddles;
- Broken pavement;
- Snow and slush in the wintertime;
- Grass, soil, loose gravel, and sand.

4-wheeled scooters are better able to overcome rough terrain such as grass, soil, and loose gravel. If you must cross railroad tracks, approach them slowly and directly.

Indoor Obstacles

Indoor obstacles you may encounter:

- Elevators are small and you must be comfortable in making tight turns to enter. You may have to reverse when leaving the elevator as the size of your scooter may not allow you to make a complete turn.
- Be aware of differences in floor height or differences in floor texture (i.e., from a tile flooring onto a rug or encountering the lip of the door frame).
- It is best to approach such obstacles slowly and directly and avoid sudden jerks in motion that may lead to a fall.
- Avoid tight or narrow spaces as they are challenging to maneuver in a scooter.

The Play-It-Safe-Rule: Never approach obstacles (i.e., slopes, ramps) that you do not feel comfortable overcoming safely.

Outdoor and indoor obstacles

Avoid collision by considering the following:

- Slow down when approaching corners, both indoors and outdoors, as you cannot see if there are oncoming pedestrians.
- Do not use the scooter when under the influence of alcohol, marijuana or medications that may cause dizziness or disorientation (e.g., painkillers).
- Ensure you are always aware of your surroundings.
- Do not assume cars or pedestrians will yield you right of way; always proceed with caution.
- Ensure you are not going too fast and be prepared to stop; become familiar with how long it takes for your scooter to come to a full stop.

Additional General Tips

- We encourage you to practice driving your scooter within a familiar environment before using it in a public space.
- Scooters are not meant for another passenger, ride alone!
- Always pay attention to your surroundings.
- Practice stopping, reversing, turning, accelerating, and decelerating in your driveway or in a familiar, protected space.
- During the winter, make sure the sidewalks are cleared before leaving.
- Consider a windshield (additional cost) for your scooter for added protection and increased visibility when there is rain, snow, dust or gravel.

Training programs for mobility scooters in Winnipeg

If you purchase a scooter from a medical equipment vendor, you will likely receive an overview of how to store, disassemble, and operate the scooter. Some vendors may provide additional education and/or on-road training.

If you are looking for more training, consider contacting the **Easy Street** program located at Misericordia Health Center. The program cost is covered by Manitoba Health and provide education on scooter operation and driving skills in a safe, simulated space. If you are interested, complete a referral form on their website. For additional information, contact information is listed below:

Easy Street, Misericordia Health Center

99 Cornish Avenue, Winnipeg

Phone 204.788.8158

Website: <https://misericordia.mb.ca/easy-street/>

Online Resources

Online resources are an excellent option for additional information and training on scooters without leaving your home. The **Wheelchair Skills Program** (<https://wheelchairskillsprogram.ca/en/>) also provides education about mobility skills and operation of mobility scooters. The website is rich in content as it includes a detailed manual along with questionnaires, photos, and videos on scooter maneuverability and safety.

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy

Occupational therapists and physiotherapists can help identify the right scooter for you and help you acquire driving skills for safe navigation.

What are the safety rules of the road?



This section will explain how scooter users can respectfully and safely navigate shared outdoor environments, based on the Manitoba policies for scooter use.

Disclaimer: If you live outside of Manitoba, please consult information on policies and rules specific to your jurisdiction.

According to the Manitoba Highway Traffic Act, a mobility scooter is defined as "*a motorized mobility aid*" specifically manufactured or modified for operation by a physically handicapped person, which has a maximum speed capability of not more than 15 kph, a maximum width of not more than 81.2 cm, and a maximum mass of not more than 226 kg. A scooter user is classified as **a pedestrian**, meaning they must follow the same rules as a pedestrian (more about this on the following pages).

Rules of the Road

According to the Manitoba Highway Traffic Act, mobility scooter users must adhere to the following rules:

- Scooters are to be operated on sidewalks, not on the road.
- If no sidewalk is available or if the sidewalk is not passable, you must:
 - Travel on the left edge of the road or shoulder, facing traffic.
(by **facing traffic**, you are more visible to vehicles on the road, increasing safety).
 - Return to the sidewalk at the earliest opportunity.
 - Use the turn signals on your scooter. If your scooter is not equipped with the feature, use bicycle hand signals to inform motorists of your intentions.
- Scooters cannot carry passengers.
- Some scooters are built to reach a top speed of 15 kph or more. However, in Manitoba the **maximum permitted speed outdoors for scooters is 10 kph**.
- When entering, crossing or proceeding along a roadway shall, at all times, do so with due caution, care and attention, taking into account the traffic on the roadway at the time.
- Where permissible to cross a road, shall use a crosswalk, if available.
- Obey the instructions of a traffic control signal.

While not prescribed in the Act, we strongly discourage using headphones or a cell phone while driving your scooter.



Safe Scooter Driving Tips

- If riding in a group, always travel in single file.
- When crossing the road or riding in parking lots, follow the safety tips that apply to pedestrians such as:
 - o Cross at intersections whenever possible, preferably ones with traffic control signs or signals.
 - o Never drive out from between parked vehicles to cross a street - drivers aren't expecting you to be there.
- When crossing intersections:
 - o Look left and right and then left again before moving out into the street even when the green light and walking figure show you can cross.
 - o Make eye contact with drivers to ensure they've seen you and are aware you intend to cross the road.
 - o At a pedestrian corridor, extend your arm forward to alert drivers to your intention to cross.
 - o Make sure that all vehicles have stopped and drivers can see you before moving off the curb. Just because one car has stopped it does not mean that a car coming from behind or in another lane will stop. The second driver might not have noticed you and might not see you crossing in front of the stopped vehicle.
 - o Watch for turning vehicles as drivers are often more focused on vehicles than pedestrians.
 - o Cross as quickly as possible to minimize your time in the road.
 - o If the walking figure changes to the orange hand before you are across the street, you should keep going. If there is a median, rest there if necessary.
 - o Stop and look for cars where a sidewalk meets the entrance to a parking lot or driveway.

Scooter policy FAQ

What do I do if I need emergency assistance?

Emergency assistance can be obtained through membership with the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA). Annual membership options include Classic, Plus and Premier; pricing can be obtained by contacting CAA membership services (204-262-6000) or visiting their website at www.caamanitoba.com. Membership is the same as the automobile plan and extends to cover mobility scooters.

CAA Manitoba offers emergency road service for mobility scooters in Winnipeg. If you are a CAA member and you experience a problem while away from home, you can call CAA and they will arrange to take you and your scooter home safely. However, you must be physically able to move, unassisted, from the scooter to the CAA vehicle seat.

Coverage for scooter towing services depends on which membership type you have. CAA Plus and Premier memberships offer towing services for scooters. In order for your scooter to be towed, you must be with the scooter in person. When you are requesting assistance from CAA, it is important to have the following information ready:

- o Your membership number
- o Location and description of the disabled vehicle
- o Type of problem requiring assistance (e.g., won't start, stuck, flat tire)
- o Phone number where you can be reached 10 minutes before the service vehicle arrives
- o Tow destination if required

Scooter policy FAQ

Warranty for your Scooter

When purchasing a scooter, the warranty provided and length of warranty varies depending upon the manufacturer. Typically, warranties will cover the frame, electronics and battery.

Is Registration Required?

In Manitoba, scooters do not require registration or insurance, and there is no coverage available through Manitoba Public Insurance (MPI) for injury or damage to a scooter from collision or upset, unless the injury or damage was caused by collision with a moving motor vehicle. Scooters do not require registration as they are not vehicles; you do not need a driver's license to operate a scooter. MPI does not require scooters to have licence plates.

Can I Insure my Scooter?

Scooters can be insured through your home insurance policy. Be sure to check the specifics of your policy and what is covered. Depending upon the coverage, your scooter can be insured to protect against fire, theft and accidental damage. You will have to pay a deductible (determined by your policy) to make a claim for your scooter. A replacement scooter may not be covered by the home insurance policy.

Scooter policy FAQ

What safety measures can I take when using my scooter outdoors or at night?

Consider using the following safety gear to enhance your visibility:

- Red or orange retro-reflective flag that is well above head level
- Reflective strips and a red reflector
- Mirrors to see behind you
- Headlamp and tail lamp particularly if when driving your scooter at night
- Protective helmet
- Horn or reversing beeper
- Add-on windshield to protect against dust and gravel from the road

Is a helmet required?

- You are **not required** to wear a helmet when driving a scooter because they are not categorized as vehicles, motorcycles or bikes.

Security Considerations for your Scooter

To protect your scooter from theft, do not leave the key in the scooter when not in use. Keep your key in a safe and secure location. Store the scooter in a secure place where the likelihood of the theft is reduced (e.g., garage or indoors) or lock your scooter using a chain, u-lock or padlock.

Lock the scooter to an anchor point such as a bicycle rack or railing, and park it where it can be seen. Wheel clamps can be purchased to lock the wheels to prevent theft. Do not leave any valuables on or by your scooter. Make sure not to leave the scooter in "freewheel" mode (i.e., allows the scooter to be pushed by disabling the drive and brake system).

How do I transport my Scooter?

This section describes various ways to transport a scooter and the requirements for each method. Knowing different methods will allow you to make choices about how to transport your scooter safely to participate in your desired activities.



Some scooters can be folded or reconfigured without tools for storage or transportation. Some scooters can be disassembled for transport. Disassembly makes it easier by not having to lift the entire scooter, and takes less space.

The following are typical components when a scooter can be disassembled:

- Seat
- Battery/batteries
- Motor component
- Front section
- Back section

A battery can weigh up to 10 lbs. The other components may weigh anywhere from 10 to 50 lbs. **We recommend that if you are unable to lift 35 lbs safely, that you have someone help you to prevent injury.**

What are options for transporting my Scooter?

- Your personal vehicle
- Winnipeg Transit Plus (previously Handi-Transit)
- Winnipeg Public Transit
- Airplane
- Train

Transportation options

Items to consider when disassembling/assembling a Scooter:

- Are you able to disassemble the scooter on your own?
- Will you have someone to help you?
- Are you able to lift the parts of the scooter safely? (Remember we recommend you have help with you if you struggle with lifting 35 lbs)
- Ensure proper body mechanics (having proper help to lift heavy components and lifting with your legs not your back) to prevent injury
- Is there adequate space available to store the scooter for transport?

Personal Vehicle

You can transport your scooter using your personal vehicle. Disassembly may be required for the scooter to fit inside your vehicle (e.g., trunk).

Scooter carriers are available to help transport your scooter without having to disassemble the scooter. It is an easy way to transport your scooter but is an additional cost. A scooter carrier can be purchased from some vendors and come in a variety of formats; many attach to the back of a vehicle. Some carriers have a ramp while others have an electric winch to lift the scooter up.



Carrier with ramp

image from: www.discounttramps.com/scooter-carrier/p/SC500-AF/



Electrically powered carrier

image from: www.discounttramps.com/silver-spring-electric-power-chair-scooter-lift-carrier/p/DR-300/

Winnipeg Transit Plus (Previously known as Handi-Transit)

Winnipeg Transit Plus services are available to scooter users. To be apply, you must qualify under at least one of the following 4 categories:

- 1. Require use of a wheelchair or scooter (either ongoing or for a limited time);*
- 2. Unable to walk 175 meters (575 feet) outside;*
- 3. Have 20/200 visual acuity or less (with glasses);*
- 4. Have Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia that limits ability to travel.*

Winnipeg Transit Plus clients should provide any special instructions to the driver when using this service.

Clients should drive their scooter onto the bus or van. Once positioned inside the vehicle in the appropriate location, the scooter power must be turned off, and the client must transfer to a vehicle seat. Due to safety concerns, Winnipeg Transit Plus requires that clients using a scooter must be able to independently transfer from their scooter to a vehicle seat. Minimal assistance can be provided to upon request.

For full details on eligibility and the application form, visit:

<https://winnipegtransit.com/en/winnipeg-transit-plus-handi-transit/become-a-registrant/>

Winnipeg Transit Plus Contact Information:

Speak to a representative: (204) 986-5722

(Line is open 7 days a week from 8:00 AM till 10:00 PM)

Visit the Winnipeg Transit Plus office:

Unit B – 414 Osborne St., Winnipeg

Open Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Winnipeg Public Transit

- Let the operator know if you need the ramp lowered. Position yourself 4-5 feet away from the bus to allow clearance for the ramp
- The seats located directly behind the front wheel well are designated for scooters.
- The easy-access-low-floor buses can accommodate two scooters.

Securing your scooter

- You will be required to use a restraint belt located in the securement area. It must be attached to the scooter frame to prevent it from moving while the bus is in motion.

Exiting an Easy Access Bus

- When ringing the bell for your stop, use the stop request bell on the edge of the flipped-up seat rather than the pull cord. On most buses, this push button informs the operator that a scooter is getting off at the next stop. This will trigger the operator to kneel the bus and lower the ramp when the bus comes to a stop.
- Remain secured until the bus comes to a full stop.
- Release all securement devices.
- Wait until all other passengers have exited before approaching the ramp.



Airplane

According to the Canadian Transportation Agency, scooters are classified as large mobility aids; carriers and terminal operators have obligations to assist customers who are traveling with scooters such as:

- Carry the scooter at no extra charge in addition to the regular baggage allowance, as priority checked baggage when stored in the cargo hold, and in the aircraft cabin or at the passenger's seat where space permits.
- Assemble and disassemble scooters as required.
- Return scooters to passengers promptly upon arrival in the same condition as when they checked in.
- Repair, replace or refund damaged, delayed or lost scooters.
- Air carriers are not required to transport larger scooters where space does not permit. In these cases, carriers shall advise passengers of alternative methods of transporting their scooters.

Travelers also have responsibilities with respect to their trip such as:

Before your flight

- Let the airline know you are traveling with a scooter.
- Confirm with at least 48 hours before your flight and how far in advance you should arrive at the terminal to check in and board with your scooter.
- Provide detailed measurements (e.g., length, width, weight) and specifications (e.g., type of battery) of your scooter to the airline.
- If your scooter cannot be accommodated due to size or weight restrictions, ask what alternate arrangements can be made.
- Ask what happens if the scooter is lost or damaged.
- Research a list of companies that can fix your scooter at your destination should anything happen during your trip.

Airplane (Cont.)

On day of flight

- Check-in with sufficient time for boarding and, where necessary, to allow for transfer and disassembly of the scooter. Note: advance check-in time varies by carrier.
- Bring any special tools that may be required for assembly and disassembly of the scooter.
- Ask about when and where you will be receiving your scooter at your destination.
- At your destination, inspect the scooter. If it has been damaged, complete a claim form for damages with the carrier, preferably before leaving the terminal or station.

It is VERY IMPORTANT to communicate with your airline

Train

Rail carriers are required to:

- Accept scooters without charge in addition to the normal baggage allowance.
- Permit passengers to remain in their scooter, where possible, until they get to the train and/or passenger seat.
- Store the scooter in the same train, passenger car, or at the passenger's seat where possible.
- Repair, replace or refund damaged, delayed or lost mobility aids.
- Return the scooter to passengers promptly upon arrival in the same condition as when they checked in
- Where larger scooters cannot be carried due to space/configuration limitations, carriers are to advise passengers of transport alternatives

Note: Carriers may have procedures for frequent travelers such as a permanent file for passengers to accommodate travel with a scooter.

How do I maintain my Scooter?



This module covers maintenance required to keep your scooter functioning optimally, including general maintenance of scooter with particular focus on battery and tires.

Battery Maintenance

Proper care of batteries is essential as they are the most common reason for scooter breakdowns. Typically, both 3 and 4-wheeled scooters use two 12-volt batteries to power a 24-volt motor. The range a scooter can travel on one full charge depends on the battery's amperage. An amp, also referred to as amp hour (AH), is the amount of energy in a battery. The greater the amperage, the further the scooter can go. For example the range of a 12 AH battery is typically 10-13 km. An 18 AH battery will range between 19-23 km. Battery size will depend on the model and type of scooter.

Tip: If you are planning on driving long distances with your scooter, choose a model with higher amperage batteries.

Battery maintenance

Battery Types

There are two main types of Scooter batteries: Gel Cell and Absorbed Glass Mat (AGM). Both are low maintenance and provide a constant flow of energy over a long period of time. Gel batteries are more expensive, have a longer life expectancy and can resist high temperatures compared with AGM batteries. More recently, Lithium Ion (Li-ion) batteries have become available; they last longer, with low maintenance, but are more expensive and may be restricted from airline transportation.

Safety Tip: As scooters use two 12 volt batteries, always make sure they are of the same manufacturer. Do not mix AGM with a GEL batteries.

Battery Replacement

Batteries typically need replacement every 2-3 years if the scooter is being used regularly. However, in the case where a scooter is used less frequently (e.g., stored for more than 1 month), batteries may degrade faster and need to be replaced every 1-2 years.

Battery Care

Poor battery maintenance (partially charging your batteries or storing and driving your scooter in extreme hot or cold weather) can reduce battery life.

Consider these factors involved with battery longevity:

- **Heavy weight:** user weight and additional items on the scooter (e.g., mobility aids or oxygen tank) can drain the battery quicker.
- **Rough terrain:** frequently driving on uneven paths, grass, and wet or soft surfaces will lead to quicker battery discharge.
- **Leaving your battery discharged for over a month** can lead to the battery discharging quicker. Use and charge your scooter regularly!

Guidelines for Proper Battery Care

- Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines and procedures for charging batteries.
- If you use your scooter on a regular basis, charge your batteries overnight, every night.
- Eight hours of charging time is recommended for a full charge.
- Do not let your batteries become fully depleted for long periods of time.
- Always store your scooter with the batteries fully charged; if storing for long periods of time, charge the batteries regularly and ensure that the scooter gets a quick use at least once a month.
- Check batteries once a month and recharge if required.
- Always make sure your batteries are fully charged before using your scooter.

Battery Disposal

GEL and AGM batteries are toxic, and **must be recycled**. Visit the website Call2Recycle: <http://locations.call2recycle.ca/mb/winnipeg/> to find locations near you that will take used batteries.



The batteries can be located under the seat base.



Pictured here are two 12 volt batteries.

Tire maintenance

Tire Maintenance Tips

- If your tires are pneumatic, check tire pressure before leaving.
- Perform monthly safety checks on your tires; make sure wheel bearings are in good shape.
- Check tire treads for wear and tear. Treads should not be worn down to less than 1/32".

General Maintenance Tips

- Store your scooter in a clean, dry place (i.e., garage, outdoor shed) to prevent rust.
- Avoid driving in deep water and rain as this may cause damage to the electrical components of the scooter.
- Perform a weekly surface clean (wipe down seats, control panel, steering tiller, etc.) with a wet cloth.
- Perform a monthly deep clean (i.e., underside) to prevent damage caused by build-up dirt and grime.
- Check for oil leakage under the scooter on a weekly basis. If you notice leakage, have it serviced immediately.
- Bring your scooter in for a full maintenance check on a yearly basis.

Additional Resources

For additional information on the various Scooter components, informing your choice of a scooter, and transportation, please visit:

Research Institute for Disabled Customers – Mobility scooters**

<https://www.ridc.org.uk/content/mobility-scooters>

Electric Mobility Scooters: Information and Guides

<https://www.disabled-world.com/assistivedevices/mobility/scooters/>

Philips Lifeline – Mobility Scooters User Guide: Safety & Operation Tips

<https://www.lifeline.ca/en/blog-article/mobility-scooters-user-guide-safety-operation-tips/>

Scootaround – Mobility Scooter Safety

<https://www.scootaround.com/blog/59-mobility-scooter-safety>

Manitoba Law: The Highway Traffic Act

<https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h060e.php>

Manitoba Public Insurance – Road Safety: Motorized Mobility Aids

<https://www.mpi.mb.ca/en/Rd-Safety/Vulnerable/Pages/motorized-mobility-aids.aspx>

Canadian Transport Agency: Carriage of Mobility Aids On Board Planes, Trains and Ferries

<https://www.otc-cta.gc.ca/eng/publication/carriage-mobility-aids-board-planes-trains-and-ferries>

About the Authors

This resource was developed by Karine Hildebrand, Ephraim Hui and Hardeep Deol as Master of Occupational Therapy students under the supervision of Ed Giesbrecht, Associate Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Manitoba.

As occupational therapists, we seek to empower and enable people who may have experienced a shift in functional status, to reclaim and re-engage in daily activities they find meaningful. We value the therapeutic impact that independence and self-confidence brings to everyday life, and want our clients to be able to do what they love, as safely as possible.

This resource was developed to address the need for a comprehensive resource on safety and education for mobility scooter users. This resource is intended to support individuals throughout their journey in finding, purchasing and using a mobility scooter that helps them engage in the meaningful day to day activities. Our sincere hope is that this resource helps you find a mobility scooter that fits your needs and will have provided you with knowledge to keep you safe and enjoying the freedom and independence that you deserve. Thank you for making our booklet a part of your journey. Happy Scooting!



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