

GETTING THERE: USING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION



When looking for alternative transportation, you need to explore all options – from informal arrangements with relatives and friends, to formal public services. You can use this worksheet, along with the questions on the back side, as you explore all your transportation options.

Transportation Alternatives	Telephone	Availability, Destination (day, time, route)	Cost	Notes (pros & cons)
Family Members:				
Friends:				
Demand-responsive Services:				
Private Program Services:				
Taxi/Car Services:				
Mass Transit:				
Other Local Programs:				

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Family and friends. Getting rides from family and friends is usually the first alternative to driving, for reasons of ease and familiarity. The degree of willingness and the cost of mileage and time need to be considered. Consider the following:

1. Who is available to provide rides at the times required?
2. Will they provide rides willingly or resent personal inconveniences?
3. What informal arrangements might give the rider opportunities to give something in return (e.g., making dinner, taking the driver to lunch, paying for gas)?

Demand-responsive services, private programs or other local services.

Demand-responsive services such as Dial-a-Ride or elderly and disabled transportation services offer door-to-door services by appointment. These are often government-subsidized and are available at reasonable fees. Types of destinations may be limited to medical or grocery shopping purposes. Private program services may be available from adult day centers, assisted living facilities, malls or stores. Other local programs, often sponsored by faith-based or non-profit organizations, provide older adults transportation for donations or nominal fees. Consider the following:

1. What are the criteria for using the service (e.g., minimum age, disability, affiliation)?
2. How much does it cost? Do passengers tip drivers? Can an account be set up in advance with the service?
3. How far in advance should arrangements for a ride be made?

4. Is there a limit to the number of trips or types of trips (medical or grocery only)?
5. Where and when does the service run?
6. Will drivers provide assistance to people with physical or other health constraints?
7. Can companions accompany the person on the service?

Taxis or car services. These offer flexible scheduling and can actually be cheaper than owning and maintaining a car. Some car services may be willing to set up accounts for relatives to pay for services. Consider the following:

1. How is the cost calculated?
2. How long in advance should I call for a ride?
3. Can an account be set up in advance? How are tips handled with an account system?
4. Will drivers provide assistance with bags or packages?

Mass transit. This may be appropriate for those with mild dementia who are accustomed to taking a bus, subway or train. Consider the following:

1. How much does it cost? Are there discounts for older or disabled people?
2. Can an account be set up in advance with the service? Are there monthly passes?
3. What are the hours and geographic area of service?
4. Most important, is mass transit appropriate, considering my relative's cognitive or physical limitations?