

FACT SHEET

Travelling on Airlines With an Artificial Limb



Before you fly

- **Talk to your airline:** Every airline is different. Ask them about their rules for travelling with an artificial limb, wheelchair, or other mobility aid.
- **Let the airline know if you need help:** If you use a wheelchair or need help getting around, ask for mobility assistance when booking. You may need a support person with you, especially if you can't assist in your own evacuation or if you need help using the toilet during the flight.
- **Consider travel insurance:** In case your bags (or artificial limb) get lost.
- **Think about where to sit:**
 - Lower limb artificial limb users: aisle seat or one with extra legroom.
 - Upper limb artificial limb users: choose a seat that lets you reach food and drinks more easily.
- **Ask about extra luggage for medical gear:** Disability equipment might not count toward your luggage limit. Check with the airline.
- **Talk to your prosthetist early:** Make sure your artificial limb fits well and is in good working order before you travel. Keep a record of your prosthetist's contact details and ask them for contact details about an artificial limb service at your destination.

What to pack

In your carry-on:

- Spare valve, liner, sleeves, socks, ointments.
- Toolkit (but avoid sharp tools – they may be restricted).

- Scanners should not interfere with your device. However, for microprocessor limbs, it is recommended that you take a USB charger and a compatible power bank in your hand luggage. This means you can clear any errors and ensure your device is charged throughout the journey.

Optional:

- Spare artificial limb (if you have one). Label it as fragile and pack it in checked luggage, or ask the airline if you can carry it on.
- Walking aids, if needed.
- Tracking device (like an Apple AirTag) in both carry-on and checked bags.

At the airport

- **Security checks:** Be prepared for a gentle pat-down by someone of the same gender. While you won't typically be forced to remove your artificial limb, it will likely undergo additional screening procedures, such as inspection, a hand-held metal detector, and potentially a swab test for explosives. Allow extra time for this.



- **Mobility inside the airport:** Ask for help (e.g. a wheelchair) if walking long distances or if carrying bags is difficult.

During the flight

- **Swelling can happen:** The air pressure on the plane may cause your residual limb to swell, so if you remove your artificial limb, it can be hard to put it back on. A compression garment may help. Walking around or raising your affected limb can also reduce swelling.



- **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water – it helps reduce swelling too.



For more helpful resources, please visit our website: www.pw.co.nz/resources

Microprocessor knees or myoelectric arms

- Charge your device before the trip.
- Pack your chargers and adapters in your carry-on.
- Check battery rules with your airline. Most batteries for artificial limbs are allowed on board, but some (like for the Ottobock Empower ankle) need to be in your carry-on.



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