



Motability

The leading car scheme for disabled people

Your guide to adaptations





I can't believe I ever managed without it, Motability have given me my life and my independence back.

Mary Grace, hand controls user and Motability customer.



Contents

Over 37,000 Motability customers have adaptations fitted to their cars to help make driving, or travelling, easier or more comfortable.

This guide is designed to help explain the basics of adaptations and get you on the road to finding the right fit for your mobility needs. We'll take you through the whole process step by step, from getting the right advice from people in the know, to how to order adaptations for your new Motability car.

What are adaptations? Page 5

What kind of adaptation would best suit my needs? Page 6

Getting adaptations for your Motability car Page 15

Adaptations – your questions answered Page 17

Useful contact details Page 19



Did you know?

We've put together some film clips to help you see how our most popular adaptations work. Simply visit [motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms](https://www.motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms).

What are adaptations?

Adaptations are a range of devices that can be fitted to your car to help make driving, or travelling, easier. Typically, adaptations fall into three categories: they can help you drive, stow your wheelchair or scooter, or get in and out of the car.

How could an adaptation help me?

Regardless of whether you drive or not, adaptations can help to improve many aspects of your travelling experience. The key areas include:

- **Driving controls**
- **Stowing your wheelchair or scooter**
- **Getting in and out of the car**

What can Motability do for me?

We currently have around 400 different adaptations available through our Motability Managed Adaptations Programme (MMAP). The MMAP is designed to ensure that the process of getting an adapted car is as easy as possible. Many of the most popular adaptations are available at no extra cost when fitted at the start of your lease. Others will require payment, in addition to your Advance Payment, directly to your car dealer at the start of your lease. To help you choose the adaptations and car that best suit your needs, we've broken the process down into four simple steps:

- 1. Speak to an adaptation installer and discuss your needs.** There are more than 100 adaptation installers across the UK and you can find all their contact details, and information on which adaptations they provide, at [motability.co.uk](https://www.motability.co.uk). If you don't have internet access you can call us on **0800 093 1000**.

It's important to remember that adaptations are not suitable for every type of car. Therefore you should speak to your installer about which cars are most likely to work for you with your chosen adaptations.

- 2. If you're not sure, consider visiting a Mobility Centre.** If you've never driven with an adaptation before, it may be worth visiting a Mobility Centre.

These centres offer practical and independent advice and can help determine which adaptations would best suit your particular needs. With 17 centres across the UK, Mobility Centres employ qualified occupational therapists and driving instructors who are well positioned to offer independent advice. A typical assessment will help you to understand what types of adaptations could help improve your driving or travelling experience. To find your nearest centre, call **0800 559 3636** or visit [mobility-centres.org.uk](https://www.mobility-centres.org.uk). There may be a charge for assessments. Speak to your local centre to find out more, or call us on **0800 093 1000**.

- 3. Visit a Motability dealer and choose your car.** With a huge selection of cars to choose from, there's bound to be one that suits both your needs and budget. There are nearly 5,000 Motability dealerships across the UK with trained Motability Specialists who will be happy to talk you through your options. You can search for local dealers in your area and find more information about the Motability Scheme on our website, [motability.co.uk](https://www.motability.co.uk).
- 4. Order your car and adaptations.** Once you have chosen your car and adaptations, your Motability dealer will complete the simple online ordering process with you. Your dealer will work with an appropriate installer to ensure that your brand new car is fitted with the adaptations you need before your car is delivered. You can also arrange a free familiarisation session to help you get used to using your new adaptations. If you think this would be useful, simply speak to your dealer when you place the order.

Read on to find out more about the most popular adaptations. To see the complete list of adaptations available, go to [motability.co.uk](https://www.motability.co.uk).

What kind of adaptation would best suit my needs?

A good place to start is to think about your current travelling experience – which areas have become more difficult or uncomfortable? If you're experiencing difficulties with driving or travelling, it's almost certain that there'll be an adaptation available to help improve your experience.

This section has been separated into the three main categories, depending on which element of travelling you need assistance with. If you'd like to find out more about how these adaptations work, you can watch our film clips. Simply visit [motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms](https://www.motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms).



The best thing about my adapted car is the peace of mind. I feel safe and confident knowing if my leg gets tired I can use the hand controls.

Hand controls user and Motability customer.



1. Driving

Driving controls can make a huge difference to your motoring experience. In fact they could even enable a person to drive where it would otherwise not be possible. They vary from simple attachments which can be bolted onto your car to the replacement of all the driving controls with a system individually designed for you. In most cases the original car controls and features can still be used, so your nominated drivers can still drive. However, it's important to bear in mind that most driving controls require an automatic gearbox. In particular driving controls can help with speed control, steering and signalling.

Speed control

If you find using standard pedals for braking or acceleration difficult, you may be better off using a **hand control**, such as a **push/pull device**. This popular adaptation allows you to control the speed of the car with your hands by pushing or pulling a lever to accelerate or brake. There are various hand controls available from different manufacturers, but the basic function is the same across most models. They range from more basic mechanical push/pull systems to electronic or air compression systems.

Alternatively, if you have limited mobility in your legs, or find push/pull hand controls too tiring, an **electronic accelerator** might help. This enables you to accelerate by pressing on a ring positioned either above or below the steering wheel or by pulling on a trigger device. Electronic accelerators require less effort than push/pull hand controls and will all come with a hand operated push brake.

If you have limited mobility in your right leg and cannot use the standard accelerator comfortably, you may benefit from having a **left foot accelerator** fitted. This will allow you to control the speed with your left foot, while the original accelerator pedal is safely folded out of the way. In most cases the original pedal can still be used if you have nominated drivers who do not require adaptations. If you've never driven with a left foot accelerator before, it is important to speak to your adaptation installer or a Mobility Centre for advice before you place your order – see page 19 for contact details.

Other options

- *If you have limited movement on your left side, it may be worth choosing a car with an automatic transmission so that you don't have to worry about changing gear.*

Things to think about

- When trying out hand controls, it's important to make sure that they feel comfortable. How does it feel in your hand? Are you able to use it with ease? Would you feel confident using it on long journeys? If it doesn't feel quite right, speak to your adaptation installer – they may be able to suggest an alternative solution.
- Depending on how the hand controls are linked to the original car pedals, this may impact the amount of leg room you have. Speak to your adaptation installer to make sure you will have enough leg room or whether a particular type of car is better suited to the adaptations you need.
- If you are having hand controls fitted and your legs are prone to involuntary spasms or you are unaware of your foot position, it may be worth considering pedal guards. These guards go in front of the car pedals to prevent the pedals being pressed accidentally. Most pedal guards can be fitted as quick release, meaning they can be easily removed for another driver to use the standard pedals.



Left foot accelerator

Steering

If you have difficulty holding or turning a standard steering wheel, there are a number of simple solutions that may be able to help. For example, **steering wheel balls** can be fitted to allow you to have more control when steering the car. You simply hold the ball, making sure your hand is comfortable, and use it to turn the steering wheel in the direction you need. If you're having hand controls fitted, then it is often essential to have a steering wheel ball to enable you to steer the car with one hand while operating any hand controls with the other. If you also need assistance using other functions such as indicator switches, you might want to consider a remote control device, which incorporates a steering wheel ball. See the next section on signalling for more information.

Steering wheel ball

Other options

- *If you find using a steering wheel difficult or it makes your arms tired on longer journeys, lightened, power-assisted steering could also help to make driving easier.*
- *Many new models of cars now come with steering wheel mounted audio controls as standard to give you a more enjoyable driving experience.*



The adaptation is an advantage as it makes it easier for me to move the steering wheel.

Malcolm Tooby, steering wheel ball user and Motability customer.





Indicator switch



Remote control device incorporating steering wheel ball

If you have limited movement in your upper body, you could benefit from **remote control devices**. These controls allow for basic car functions, such as the horn, windscreen wipers and lights, to be operated by a single control pad, making it safer and more comfortable to drive. They can also incorporate a steering wheel ball, to assist with steering, and basic car functions, which can be operated with one hand.

Signalling

If you struggle to reach or operate your car's standard controls, such as the indicator, there are simple attachments available to help make using them easier. For example, if you have hand controls fitted to your car, you may find operating the standard indicator difficult, especially if you also have a steering aid. To enable you to steer safely, you could benefit from having hand controls with a **built in indicator switch**. Once fitted, you can indicate by simply flicking the switch on top of the hand grip and you won't need to take your hands off the steering wheel or hand control.

Things to think about

- If you find moving your arm or fingers difficult, extended indicator switches could help.
- Different makes and models of cars have different wiring systems, which will have a direct impact on which adaptations can be fitted onto the car as well as the cost of the adaptation. Therefore if you're having electronic adaptations, such as remote control devices, you should discuss the likely costs with your installer before choosing your car.

General driving aids

Adaptations can also help with general areas of driving such as operating a handbrake or reaching the pedals. For example, if you have difficulty operating a standard handbrake, you could have an **easy release handbrake** fitted. Alternatively an **electric handbrake** could help make the process easier, as it can be operated by a single button. This feature is sometimes available as standard on new car models.

If you struggle to reach the pedals when driving, you could opt to have them extended. The original pedals of your car can be modified to bring them closer to the driving seat, allowing you to drive more comfortably while controlling the car with ease.

Other options

- *In some cases, you may not need to have an adaptation fitted as your motoring experience could be dramatically improved by simply choosing the right car for your needs. Car designs are constantly changing and improving. Features such as automatic transmission, push button ignition and parking sensors can all help make driving, or travelling, easier. For example, if turning the key in the ignition is a struggle, you could benefit from choosing a car with push button ignition – this is becoming increasingly common across newer car models, and won't always cost you any extra. Speak to your dealer about new features that could help improve your travel experience. You can find your nearest Motability dealer by visiting our website at [motability.co.uk](https://www.motability.co.uk).*

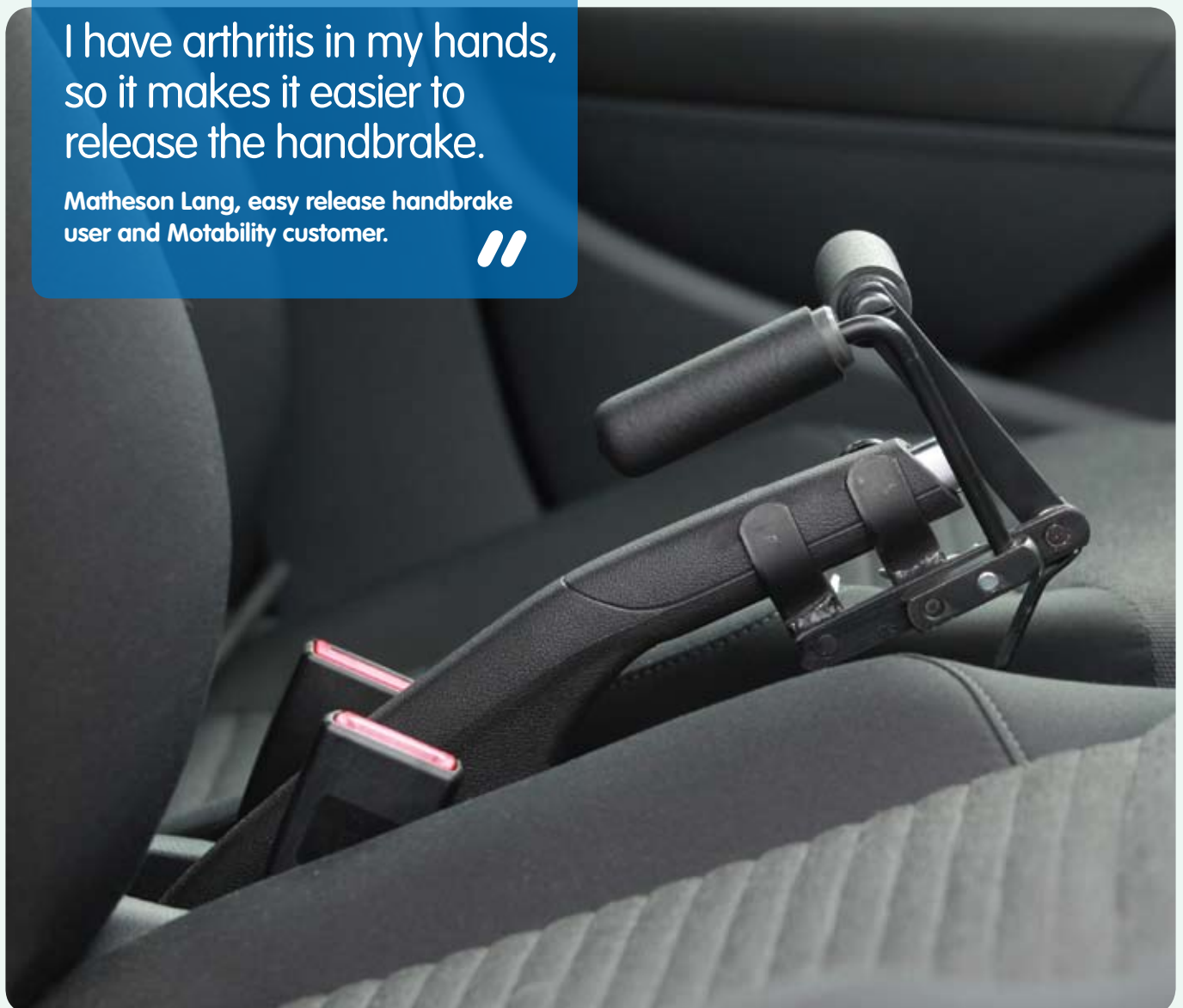


I have arthritis in my hands, so it makes it easier to release the handbrake.

Matheson Lang, easy release handbrake user and Motability customer.



Easy release handbrake



2. Stowing your wheelchair or scooter

If you cannot lift your wheelchair or scooter into the boot of your car, there are different types of stowage systems that can easily solve this problem for you:

- a hoist which stores your wheelchair or scooter in your car boot

or

- a hoist which stores a folded wheelchair in a box on the roof of your car. This option can be useful if you need to use your boot to store other items.

Both are operated at the touch of a button to lift the wheelchair. Most hoists also move the wheelchair into place within the car boot or rooftop stowage unit. Please check with your adaptation installer if this is the case for the hoist you are considering as some lightweight boot hoists still require the user to push the wheelchair or scooter into position.

Stowage systems can be a great help by taking the weight of the wheelchair or scooter and manoeuvring it effortlessly.



Roof top stowage

It's important to remember that hoists aren't suitable for every car or wheelchair/scooter, and you need to make sure that the wheelchair/scooter, hoist and car are all compatible. Make sure you get advice from an adaptation installer before you order your car.



Boot hoist

Things to think about

- The size and weight of your wheelchair or scooter will affect the type of hoist you need, and the type of hoist you need will affect your choice of car. With boot hoists it is vital to consider the size of your car boot. You must take your wheelchair or scooter with you to the dealership when choosing your car so the dealer can ensure it will fit easily into the boot with free space above it and to the side. In some cases your wheelchair or scooter will only fit in the boot with the rear row of seats folded down. Speak to your adaptation installer about which hoist will best suit your needs – contact details for all our installers can be found at motability.co.uk.
- Consider whether you might need to change your wheelchair over the course of your three or five year lease. If you change your wheelchair, the stowage solution and car may become unsuitable, so try to plan ahead in terms of size and type.
- The price of boot hoists includes a tie-down. This is an important safety feature which secures your wheelchair or scooter in the back of the car. Make sure you discuss how they work with your adaptation installer when choosing your hoist.
- Think about the places where you normally park your car, as this could affect the type of wheelchair stowage system you need. Rooftop stowage systems may mean that you are no longer able to park in underground car parks or spaces where there are height restrictions.
- If you are unable to operate a hoist yourself, you may benefit from a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV). WAVs enable a wheelchair user to travel in the vehicle while remaining in their wheelchair. For more information about WAVs download our brochure 'Your guide to Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles' from our website or call **0800 093 1000** to request a copy.



We can now go places as a couple. For over a year we needed a third person with us to lift the chair.

Molly Bickell, wheelchair hoist user and Motability customer.



3. Getting in and out of the car

When considering how to access your car as a wheelchair user, a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle may not be the only option and there are a number of adaptations that can be installed on a standard car. Most of our adaptation installers will be happy to arrange a no-obligation demonstration of the following adaptations and will advise on which cars should be suitable.

Swivel seats

If you're finding getting in and out of your car increasingly difficult or uncomfortable, there are a number of seating solutions that could help. In some cases, you may not need to have an adaptation fitted – a simple, removable **swivel seat cushion** is relatively cheap to buy from a high street motoring store and can help make the process easier, as it allows you to sit down first and then twist into position. If you require something a bit more sophisticated, you may benefit from having a **permanent swivel seat** fitted inside your car. The way in which they operate varies from model to model, but the basic function allows the whole seat to turn, and in some cases move in and out of the car, lower or tip, to help make getting in and out of the seat easier. Both manual and powered versions are available.

If you have limited mobility and find it difficult to transfer in and out of your wheelchair into a car, it may be worth considering a wheelchair swivel seat. A **wheelchair swivel seat** is made up of two parts – the top half, which is a specially designed car seat, and the bottom half, which acts as a wheelchair base. The seat part can be connected to the car and act as a swivel seat to aid entry, allowing the bottom part to be stored in the back of the car. There are both manual and powered options available

depending on your needs. While this can be a very helpful solution, it's worth noting that a wheelchair swivel seat cannot be operated independently – you will need someone to help put the wheelchair base into position and store it once you are in the car.

You can see how swivel seats work by watching our film clips at [motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms](https://www.motability.co.uk/adaptationsfilms). To find out more, or to have a demonstration of the different models available, speak to an adaptation installer or contact a Mobility Centre – see page 19 for contact details.

Things to think about

- It is essential to arrange a demonstration with an adaptation installer before ordering a swivel seat. Make sure you practise getting in and out of it from both road and kerb level. It's important to make sure that you have enough legroom and headroom, your feet clear the door sill, and that you can get in and out with ease.
- Swivel seats are only suitable for a limited number of cars. Your adaptation installer will be able to advise which cars are compatible with this type of adaptation.
- Having a swivel or replacement seat may affect your seated height inside the car, so you will need to make sure that you have sufficient headroom. Check with your installer before you order your car.
- You should check that the new seat is comfortable to sit on as it may feel and look quite different to the original car seat.
- Do not order a swivel seat until you have had a demonstration and have discussed your choice of car with an adaptation installer.



Swivel seat



Wheelchair swivel seat

Other options

- *Small details such as the shape of the car seat differ across manufacturers and models, and can make a big difference to your travelling experience and your ability to access the car. Make sure you take some time to choose one that you find comfortable and that best suits your needs, for example the side of the seat base may be flatter in some models to allow for easier access.*
- *Simply ensuring that your seat is properly adjusted to fit your body can greatly improve your travelling experience. Many cars now come with electric seat adjustments that work at the touch of a button – speak to your Motability dealer for advice or recommendations.*



I was pleasantly surprised by how comfortable, quick and safe I found it - it was much more discreet than I expected.

Mary Ann Clancy, person hoist user and Motability customer.



Electric person hoist

If you are a wheelchair user, another option for accessing the car is via an electric person hoist, which physically lifts you into the car.

The hoist includes a permanent mount fitted into the car and three easily assembled parts which clip together to form the frame. A specially designed canvas sling is put in position with very little movement required from the wheelchair user. Heavy duty hooks in the sling are then slipped onto the hoist and the hoist is raised electronically. Once you are seated in the car, the frame sections of the hoist can be removed and stowed in the boot, but the sling remains in place, making it easier to reverse the process at the end of the journey.

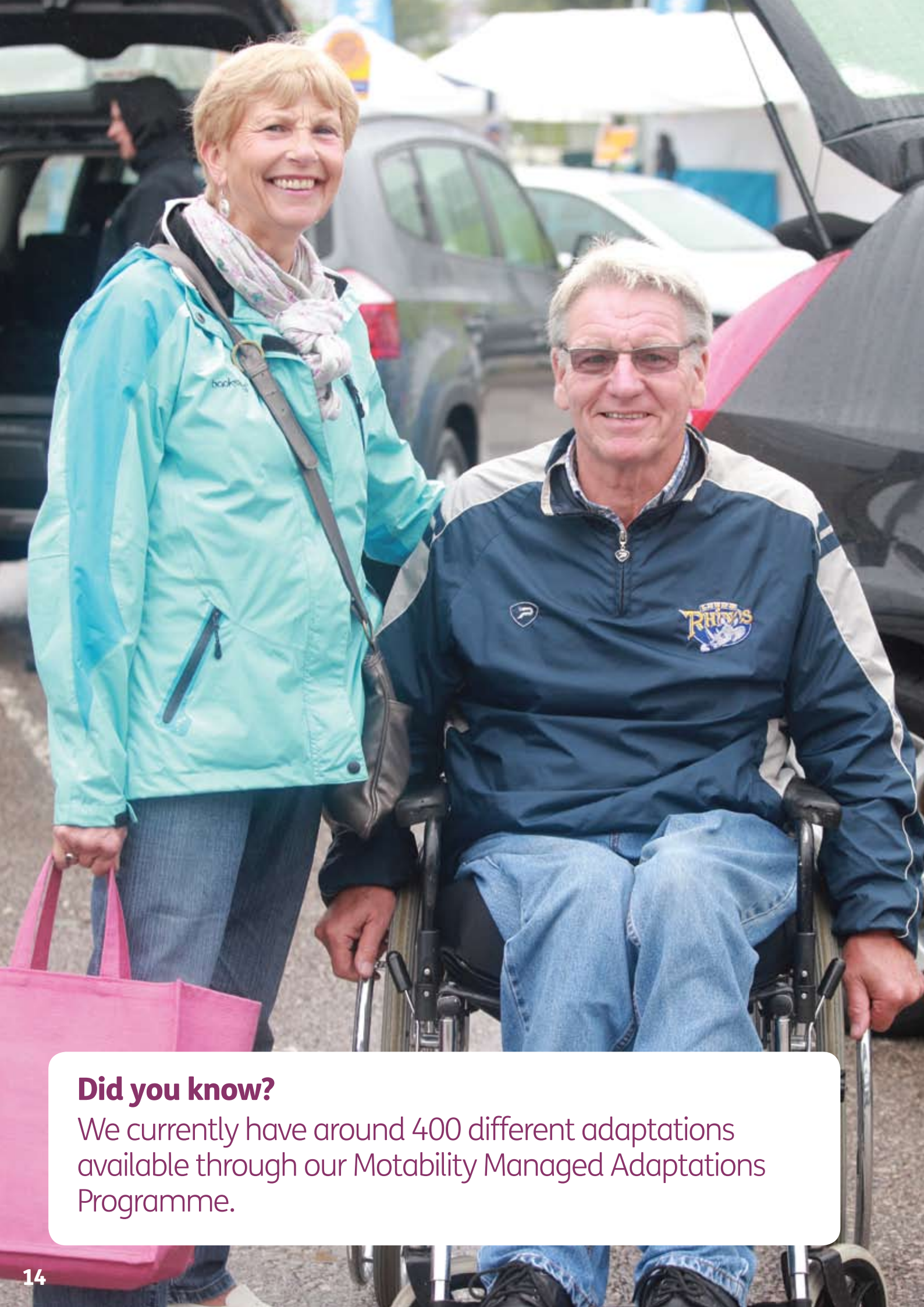
For some people this may be an alternative solution to getting a fully converted Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle. You may find your travelling experience more comfortable as you will be seated on the original car seat alongside the driver, rather than in your wheelchair. However, you'll need to check with an adaptation installer that the car you are interested in is suitable for this type of hoist.

Things to think about

- It is essential to arrange a demonstration with an adaptation installer before ordering a person hoist.
- Person hoists are not suitable for every car. Your adaptation installer will be able to advise which cars are compatible with this type of adaptation.

Electric person hoist





Did you know?

We currently have around 400 different adaptations available through our Motability Managed Adaptations Programme.

Getting adaptations for your Motability car

Leasing a car through Motability

You can lease a Motability car with adaptations if you receive either:

- The Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance
- The Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment
- The War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- The Armed Forces Independence Payment

It works by simply exchanging your allowance for the car of your choice. To find out more about the benefits of leasing through Motability, download 'Your guide to leasing a Motability car' from motability.co.uk or call **0800 093 1000** to order a free copy.

Adapting your Motability car

There are two ways in which Motability can help you adapt your car to fit your needs, depending on whether you are choosing a new car through Motability or if you need to adapt your current car during your lease.

1. Adapting your car at the start of your lease

The easiest and most cost effective way of adapting your car is at the start of your Motability lease. We currently have around 400 different adaptations available through our Motability Managed Adaptations Programme, where the adaptations are fitted before your Motability car is delivered. Our Motability adaptation installers will be happy to help you choose the right adaptation for your needs. There are more than 100 adaptation installers across the UK and you can find all contact details, and information on which adaptations they provide, at motability.co.uk. If you don't have internet access you can call us on **0800 093 1000**.

Once you have chosen the adaptations you require and have an idea of the type of car that will be suitable, your next step is to speak to a

Motability dealer. You can order your adaptations through your Motability dealer at the same time you order the car. The dealer will work with the adaptation installer to ensure that the adaptations are fitted before your brand new car is delivered. And the best bit is that many of our most popular adaptations can be fitted to your car at no extra cost. Others will require payment in addition to your Advance Payment directly to your car dealer at the start of your lease.

2. Adapting your car during your lease

If you need to add adaptations during your lease or the adaptation you need is not available through the Motability Managed Adaptations Programme, you can contact any Motability adaptation installer to discuss your needs. You will need to pay the cost of any such adaptations directly to the adaptation installer. Make sure you contact our Customer Services team on **0845 456 4566** and RSA Motability (RSAM) on **0500 37 37 37** before you get any additional adaptations fitted, to ensure your insurance covers this.



The adapted car has given me my life back again. Independence is such a small word, but has such a large meaning. The Motability service is absolutely fabulous.

Anne Brind, hand control user and Motability customer.





I can drive, it's safe and it's opened up my life again. It's the best thing that's ever happened to me.

Gillian Abbott, wheelchair hoist user and Motability customer.



Adaptations – your questions answered

Q Can I buy adaptations without involving my dealer?

A. Ordering adaptations through your dealer when you order your car is the only way to take advantage of the great prices offered through the Motability Managed Adaptations Programme. You can arrange adaptations yourself, but only through a Motability adaptation installer. You will need to pay the cost of any such adaptations directly to the installer. Remember to contact our Customer Services team and RSA Motability (RSAM) first, to ensure your insurance covers this.

Q Am I able to get more than one adaptation through the Motability Managed Adaptations Programme?

A. Yes, once you've spoken to your adaptation installer and know which adaptations you need, your dealer will take care of placing the order. Don't forget, you can find a complete list of our current prices at motability.co.uk.

Q I need several adaptations to my new car, but I'm worried they won't be fitted in time.

A. The Motability Managed Adaptations Programme is designed to take the worry out of ordering your new car. If there are any delays or issues along the way, your dealer will let you know and if you currently lease a car through Motability, you will be able to stay in it until your new one is ready.

Q Can I transfer an adaptation from my old car?

A. This may be possible as long as the adaptations are suitable for your new car. Your adaptation installer will be able to advise you of cars that might work with your existing adaptation. In most cases you will need to pay the cost to transfer the adaptation directly to your installer and you must advise RSAM for insurance purposes. However, to make things easier, we now have some larger adaptations which can be reused as part of the programme and have a transfer price listed. See the adaptations price list, which is in the Car Price Guide and on our website, for more information.

Q Can I get any financial help with the cost of adaptations?

A. Many of our adaptations are available at no additional cost, but if you are unable to afford essential adaptations Motability may be able to help. Financial help can only be given towards the least expensive solution that meets your mobility needs and your application for assistance must be processed before you place the order for your new car. For more information, call our Customer Services team on **0845 456 4566**.

Q I am part way through my current lease. Can I order adaptations for my car?

A. If you think you would benefit from an adaptation for your current Motability car you should first call our Customer Services team on **0845 456 4566** and they will advise you on the steps that you need to take. You will also need to inform RSAM by calling **0500 37 37 37** to make sure you are covered by your Motability insurance policy. You will have to pay for the adaptation yourself, and payment will need to be made directly to the installer. Your adaptation installer will inform you of how long the installation process will take. Remember – only a Motability adaptation installer should fit and/or remove adaptations.

Q I've never had adaptations before, where do I start?

A. Our Motability adaptation installers will be happy to help you choose the most suitable adaptation for your needs. There are more than 100 adaptation installers across the UK and you can find all contact details, and information on which adaptations they provide, at motability.co.uk. If you don't have internet access you can call us on **0800 093 1000**.

If you've never driven with an adaptation before, it may be worth visiting a Mobility Centre for an assessment – see page 19 for contact details.



Adaptations make me feel more confident in driving. They give me the freedom and independence that I wouldn't have otherwise.

Emily Armstrong, steering wheel ball user and Motability customer.



Useful contact details

For enquiries about Motability

Motability Operations
City Gate House
22 Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HB

Telephone: **0800 093 1000**
(lines open daily, 8am – 8pm)
motability.co.uk

If you are an existing Motability customer, please call our Customer Services team on **0845 456 4566** (lines open Monday to Friday, 8.30am – 5.30pm)

If you have specialist Minicom equipment, call our text phone: **0845 675 0009**

For enquiries about the Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

Disability Living Allowance
Telephone: **08457 123 456**
dwp.gov.uk

Disability Living Allowance (Northern Ireland)
Telephone: **028 9090 6182**
dsdni.gov.uk

For enquiries about the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement or Armed Forces Independence Payment

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency
Telephone: **0800 169 2277**
veterans-uk.info

For independent information and advice

The Forum of Mobility Centres
Telephone: **0800 559 3636**
mobility-centres.org.uk

Ricability
Telephone: **0207 427 2460**
ricability.org.uk

To find an installer

Go to the adaptations section and use the 'Find adaptation installers' tool at **motability.co.uk**

Did you know?

You can find full contact details for all our adaptation installers as well as which adaptations each installer fits; current prices and useful adaptations film clips all on our website, **motability.co.uk**.



Call our Motability Specialist **James Hart**
on **0844 247 0815** to arrange a visit.
or visit:

<http://www.chartersgroup.com/peugeotmotability/>