



*"When you can't breathe...
nothing else matters"*

Portable Oxygen (O₂) Travel Tips

Has this ever happened to you? Travelling with portable oxygen can become a nightmare if you don't do a little preparation beforehand? If you are prepared you can enjoy your trip with little to worry about.

Some useful travel tips:

- Always check with your doctor first that you are fit to travel
- Check with your oxygen supplier that they are happy for you to take your oxygen with you. If your oxygen is subsidised some suppliers allow you to travel freely within the state as long as you notify them
- Cylinders must be positioned upright with proper securing devices i.e. wall chain, cylinder base or trolley

Here are a number of websites that may be of assistance:

- For very general information site for travelling with oxygen in Australia, visit <http://www.airliquidehealthcare.com.au/en/home-oxygen/home-oxygen-1/safety-1/travelling-with-oxygen-1.html>
- The following is an Australian website regarding air travel, visit: http://oxygensolutions.com.au/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_term=Travel%20Oxygen&utm_campaign=Google+CPC+Inogen+Campaign+QLD&keyword_k=travel%20oxygen&gclid=CJzr6erqvMICFVMJvAodajkAWA
- The [Inogen website](http://www.inogen.com/resources/traveling-oxygen/traveling-by-car/) is an American website but has a lot of useful information for all forms of travel, visit: <http://www.inogen.com/resources/traveling-oxygen/traveling-by-car/>
- For a very helpful general guide to travelling with oxygen in Australia, visit: http://dying.about.com/od/ethicsandchoices/a/O2_Travel.htm

Most of these websites are in relation to travelling with portable oxygen concentrators, which has become the easiest way to travel.

Portable oxygen concentrators can be hired for a short period of time which can make travel easier.

Travelling by car:

- When travelling by car and using oxygen therapy always ensure that you have a window open. If using air conditioning, ensure that it is on fresh and not recycled as it is best not to get a build up of concentrated oxygen in the car
- If using a portable concentrator make sure it is secured and check with the manufacturer's specific instructions
- If using cylinders, ensure that they are secured either upright in the appropriate device such as a carrier or lying down behind the passenger's seat. Once again please check with the manufacturer's or supplier's instructions as these may vary.

Travelling by bus:

- Most bus lines will allow you to travel with oxygen - it is advisable to contact them directly.

Travelling by rail:

- Most Train lines will allow you to travel with oxygen - it is advisable to contact them directly
- Some train lines won't guarantee power to recharge your oxygen concentrator, but if they do some portable oxygen concentrators can run on power from the train –it is best to check first
- Some train services will require you to notify them in advance of your needs
- If travelling on international train services you may require your doctor's letter noting your prescription.
- Some train lines have restrictions on cylinder sizes and number of cylinders and may require you to provide a strap to secure the cylinder to your seat.

Travelling by plane:

Your doctor may organise a HAST (High Altitude Simulation Test) to determine if it is safe for you to travel by plane. For more information see: <http://www.lungcentre.com.au/#!high-altitude-smulation-tests/c495>

Domestic:

Most flight carriers are happy for you to travel with a portable oxygen concentrator, but may have restrictions to bottled oxygen. It is best to contact the airline direct to identify what is required.

If you need oxygen on the other end of the flight you may need to organise with a supplier at the other end to arrange oxygen there.

International:

If requiring oxygen during an international flight all airlines have specific policies including a medical clearance to fly.

- Virgin: <http://www.virgin-atlantic.com/gb/en/travel-information/special-assistance/onboard-oxygen.html>
- Qantas: <http://www.qantas.com.au/travel/airlines/medical-assistance/global/en>
- Air New Zealand: <http://www.airnewzealand.com.au/special-assistance-medical-equipment#oxygen>

Cruising:

Most large cruise lines are happy to accommodate your need to use oxygen. It is always wise to check with each specific cruise line their requirements in the transportation of oxygen.

<http://www.cruise critic.com/articles.cfm?ID=1425#oxygen>

https://book.princess.com/pdf/cp/Princess_Health_Form.pdf

Summary:

Preparation is the key to successful travel with oxygen.

- Plan your trip well ahead
- Clearance and written medical advice from your doctor is essential
- Check with all the services that you are going to travel with regarding their specific requirements
- Carry all emergency contact details for all your services with you
- Take a copy of your oxygen prescription
- Check with your travel insurance that the oxygen is included and covered
- If going overseas, check that you can recharge/fill up your oxygen appliance in the countries you will be visiting
- Research the details of the nearest hospital to where you will be staying
- Make sure the people you are travelling with are familiar with your oxygen appliance
- Carry spare nasal prongs and tubing
- Have a contingency plan should your appliance breakdown/run out