

Birmingham Airport

A guide for children with autism



Introduction

We recognise that airports can be stressful environments. This is especially the case for people with autism.

We want to make sure that all passengers feel as comfortable as possible during their time in the airport. We have teamed up with Autism West Midlands, to create a guide that can also be used as a tool to help you prepare the child or young person you are travelling with for their journey to and through Birmingham Airport.

If you are travelling with someone with autism we can support you during your time at the airport. You must book assistance through your airline or tour operator.

Please contact your airline/ tour operator at least 48 hours before departure or arrival at Birmingham Airport and when booking please book DPNA (disabled person needing assistance) assistance. If there is an option to give further information regarding the assistance you need please type the word 'Autism'. This will then enable us to give you the appropriate help.

This is a step by step guide for children with autism.

Going to the Airport



You are going to Birmingham Airport because you are going on an airplane to

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Who will be travelling with you when you go to the Airport?

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There are lots of ways that you can get to the airport

Tick the box on the photo that shows how you are getting to the airport.

Bus - You will get off the bus outside the airport.



Taxi - You will get out of the taxi outside the airport.



Train - You will take the air rail link from the train station to the airport. There will be a recorded voice telling you what is happening and there might be music playing. You will get off the air rail link at the airport.



Car - You will be parking in an indoor carpark.



Car - You will be parking in an outdoor carpark.



You will park your car with lots of other cars and then you will walk to the airport; each carpark has a sign to tell you how long it will take to get to the airport entrance.



You might have heavy suitcases or bags. To help you carry these you might put them on a trolley.



Inside the Airport Terminal



The airport can be a very busy place. There might be loud announcements or other loud noises such as babies crying.

The airport terminal is busy with lots of people in it so you will stay close to and tell them if you feel worried.

I can use to help me to stay calm.

Fun Fact

Did you know there are now 2 areas where you can play before you fly?
Check out skyzone at gate 54 and gate 3!

OCS and Customer Service



If your family need help while you are in the airport they might find a Customer Care Agent.

Customer Care Agents wear yellow vests that say OCS on the front and back. Can you spot the OCS Special Assistance desk like the one in the photograph?

- yes
- no

Fun Fact

Did you know the runway at Birmingham airport is 3003 metres long. That's the equivalent of 25 football pitches!

Check-In



You will need to tell the airport staff you are here and ready to get on the plane.

You can do this by using a self-service kiosk or you can go to the check in desk. You will need to take your large bags and suitcases to staff at the check in desk.

How many large bags do you have?

The large bags will then go on a special conveyor belt. Airport staff will put them on the plane, along with the other passengers bags.

Security Screening



Next you must go through security. There may be a lot of people queueing here at the same time.

- You will need to wait in a queue until it is your turn.
- When it is your turn you will put your coat and bags into one of the grey trays, you may also be asked to take your shoes off and place them into a tray.
- The conveyer belt will take the tray through a small scanning machine that looks at your bags. You will get everything back at the other side.

Fun Fact

Ever wondered how long it takes to get planes ready for their next journey? Bigger flights take around 2.5 hours, but some flights can take just 25 minutes!

Security Screening Continued



You will wait until it is your turn to walk through the metal archway. The archway is a special scanning machine.

The Security Officer will call you one by one. When it is your turn you will need to walk slowly through by yourself.

If the alarm sounds or beeps, you may feel afraid. If you feel afraid you will tell

Waiting to Board the Plane



You will need to wait before you get on the plane. There are lots of things to do while you are waiting. There are shops to visit and places to eat. There are also 2 sky zone areas, one close to gate 54 and the other at gate 3.

While we are waiting we are going to.....

Remember always stay close to the people you are travelling with so you do not get lost.

Fun Fact

Did you know it only takes 90 seconds from the train station to the the terminal on the air rail link?

Boarding the Plane



You will need to wait at the Boarding Gate until you are told you can board the plane.

You will join a queue to give your documents to the airport staff on the boarding gate. You might walk onto the plane through a tunnel or you may catch a bus and walk up steps to the plane.

Did you walk through a tunnel or did you walk up some steps to the plane?

- tunnel
- steps

When you get on the plane, there will be friendly staff there who will say hello. When you get to your seat your parent or carer will help put your seatbelt on. The onboard staff will go through the safety procedures. There may be a loud announcement before the plane takes off.

Taking Off



When the plane is ready for take off, it will then start to move along the runway like a car on the road.

- The plane will be pushed backwards so that it is in the right direction to taxi to the runway.
- It will start moving slowly then get faster, you will hear the engines start. This might be loud.
- You might hear another loud noise, this is the wheels going inside the plane.
- While you are on the plane you can do activities such as drawing, reading or listening to music.

Write down the activities you are going to do on the plane.

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Coming Home - Passport Control



When you arrive back at Birmingham Airport your plane will make its way back to the stand. You will then need to get off the plane.

- You will enter the Arrivals area either using a tunnel, by bus or by walking depending on which stand your airplane is parked on.
- You will then need to go through passport control. This is where you will need to show your passport to the Immigration Officer.
- They will look at your picture to make sure it is you.

Coming Home - Baggage Claim



Once we have gone through passport control you will need to collect your bag.

- You will need to collect your bag from the baggage carousel. You may have to wait in this area while your bag is unloaded from the airplane. This area can be very busy and noisy.
- A screen in the baggage claim area will tell us which carousel our bag will come out of.

Can you spot what number carousel you are?

- Finally you will need to make your way through Customs and out through the signs marked 'Exit'.
- You will exit the airport through the Arrivals area of the airport.

We hope you have found this guide useful and we hope you enjoy your time at Birmingham Airport.

Remember to look out for the OCS team if you need any help during your visit!

We would also love to hear about your visit to the airport. You can tell us about it by emailing us at [**bhx.prm@ocs.co.uk**](mailto:bhx.prm@ocs.co.uk)

