BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Mobility Scooters & Power Chairs

Batteries, chargers, travel and handy tech add-ons — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for riders and their families

The tech side, explained patiently

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

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For mobility scooters & power wheelchairs · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to the technology side of a mobility scooter or power wheelchair: the batteries, the charger, the phone apps, phone mounts and lights, travel by plane, train and bus, and the paperwork and scams that come along with them. It is not medical advice. Questions about fit, seating, speed or which device is right for you belong with your prescriber and your equipment supplier, and this guide will point you to them often. Read it in any order and at your own pace.

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PART 1

Getting Started

What this guide covers and what it doesn't, the parts of a scooter or power chair in plain words, and the three people who look after it: you, your equipment supplier and your prescriber. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you ride a mobility scooter or a power wheelchair, or you help someone who does, this guide is for **you**. A scooter or power chair is a wonderful thing: it gets you to the mailbox, the store, church and the grandkids' ball games. It is also a piece of technology, with batteries, a charger, a small computer called the controller, and sometimes a phone app. That's the part I can help with.

I'm Bill. I've spent more than 30 years working with technology, and these days I help folks here in Portage County feel at home with theirs. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it at your kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, and without trying to sell you anything.

What this guide will do for you

- Explain the parts of a scooter or power chair, so the owner's manual makes more sense.
- Teach you how to look after the batteries, so they last as long as they can.
- Explain the charger, the lights on it, and why only the approved charger should ever be used.
- Show you handy add-ons: a phone mount, charging your phone from the chair, lights, apps and theft trackers.
- Walk you through traveling by plane, train, bus and accessible ride, including the battery rules.
- Help you keep the paperwork in order, and spot the fake "free scooter" calls.

What this guide will *not* do

I'm a technology helper, not a doctor, a therapist or a wheelchair technician. This guide will never tell you which scooter or chair suits your body, how your seat should be set up, or what speed is right for you. Those decisions belong to the professionals who know you, and I'll point you to them every time the subject comes up.

STAY SAFE

The two people to call first

For **repairs, battery replacement, speed or programming changes and warranty**, call your **durable medical equipment (DME) supplier**, the company that delivered your chair or scooter. For anything about **fit, seating, whether a scooter or power chair is right for you, or a prescription for Medicare or insurance**, talk with your **prescriber**: your doctor, or the physical or occupational therapist who works with them.

You can't break it by learning

Reading about batteries, plugging in the charger, putting a phone on a mount, setting up an app: none of that can hurt your chair. The few things that truly could, like opening the battery box or changing the controller settings, I'll mark clearly as jobs for your supplier.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

A rider who understands the battery gauge and the charger worries less about getting stranded, and a family that knows who to call for what gets problems fixed faster.

I'm only a phone call away

If anything in this guide leaves you unsure about the tech side, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. There's no such thing as a silly question.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Scooters and Power Chairs: The Parts in Plain Words

Scooters and power chairs do the same basic job in different ways. You don't need to be a mechanic, but knowing the names of the main parts makes the owner's manual, and any phone call to your supplier, much easier.

The two kinds, side by side

	Mobility scooter	Power wheelchair
How you steer	A handlebar column called the **tiller**	A small **joystick** on the armrest, or another control
Wheels	Usually three or four	Drive wheels plus small casters; layouts vary
Seat	Usually a swivel seat on a post	Often a fitted seating system
Who sets it up	Your supplier	Your supplier, often with a therapist

GOOD TO KNOW

This is not a buying guide

Which one is right for a person is a medical and practical decision. Your prescriber and supplier help make it, and for Medicare the prescriber has to document why (Chapter 22). This guide only explains how the technology works.

The parts you'll hear about

Part	What it does
Batteries	Store the energy. Usually two big batteries in a box under the seat, or one lithium pack on travel models. Chapter 5 explains the types.
Charger	Refills the batteries from a wall outlet. Some are built in with a cord; others are a separate box. Chapter 10 covers it.
Controller	The small computer that turns your joystick or throttle into motion. It holds the speed and driving settings your supplier programmed.
Battery gauge	Lights or a bar on the tiller or joystick that show how much charge is left (Chapter 6).
Key or power button	Turns the electronics on and off. Scooters often have a key; chairs often have a button.
Freewheel lever	Releases the motor brakes so the chair or scooter can be pushed by hand. Chapter 12 explains when that's safe.
Charging port	Where the charger plugs in, often on the tiller or the joystick module.
USB port	Some models have one for charging a phone (Chapter 14).

TIP

Find these on your own model

Sit down with the owner's manual and find each part on your actual chair or scooter. If you lost the manual, the maker's website usually has it under **Support** or **Owner's Manuals**; search for your model name. Your supplier can also send one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

When you can say "the light on the joystick is flashing" or "the freewheel lever won't stay in," your supplier can often tell what's wrong before the technician even comes out.

CHAPTER 3

Who Does What: You, Your Supplier and Your Prescriber

The single most useful thing in this guide may be this one page: knowing who to call. A scooter or power chair has three "owners" of different jobs, and calling the right one first saves days.

Job	Who handles it
Charging every day, keeping it clean and dry	You and your family
Phone mount, apps, trackers, lights you add	You (a helper like me can set these up)
Flat tires, worn batteries, broken parts	Your **DME supplier**
Error codes, beeping, flashing lights	Your **DME supplier** (after the simple checks in Chapter 13)
Speed, acceleration, any controller programming	Your **DME supplier** only
Warranty claims	Your **DME supplier**, who works with the maker
Seat fit, cushions, posture, positioning	Your **prescriber** and therapist, with the supplier
Scooter or power chair? A new one?	Your **prescriber**, who writes the order
Medicare or insurance paperwork	Your **prescriber** and **supplier** together

What "DME supplier" means

Durable medical equipment (DME) is equipment like wheelchairs, scooters, hospital beds and CPAP machines. The **DME supplier** is the company that sold or rented it to you and delivered it, sometimes called the provider or dealer. Their name is usually on a sticker on the chair or on your delivery paperwork.

1. Look for a sticker with the supplier's name and phone number on the frame, under the seat, or near the battery box.
2. If there's no sticker, check your delivery paperwork or a Medicare Summary Notice, which lists who billed for it.
3. Write the supplier's name and phone number on the Cheat-Sheet in Chapter 26, and save it as a contact on your phone.
4. Write down the **model** and **serial number** from the label on the frame too. The supplier will ask for them.

HEADS UP

Bought it online or secondhand?

If you bought your scooter from a store, a website or a neighbor, you may not have a DME supplier. The maker's website usually has a **dealer locator** for authorized service dealers. Call one before something breaks and ask whether they service your brand.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing who to call turns "my chair won't go and I don't know what to do" into one calm phone call to the right people.

CHAPTER 4

Your First Week: Manual, Numbers and Photos

Whether your scooter or chair is brand new or new to you, a little record-keeping in the first week makes every repair, warranty claim and trip easier later. Your phone is the perfect tool for it.

Take five photos

1. Open the **Camera** app on your phone.
2. Take a photo of the whole scooter or chair from the side, and one from the front.
3. Take a close-up of the **label with the model and serial number**. Make sure the numbers are sharp.
4. Take a close-up of the **battery label** if you can see it without opening anything. It shows the battery type and, on lithium batteries, the watt-hours you'll need for flying (Chapter 19).
5. Take a photo of the **charger's label**, which shows its model and the batteries it's made for.

> **TIP**
>
> **Make an album**
>
> In the **Photos** app, make an album called "My Scooter" or "My Chair" and put these photos in it. On an iPhone, tap **Albums** and the **+** sign; on Android, the steps vary by phone but are usually under **Collections** or **Albums**. Then you can show the serial number to anyone in seconds.

Keep the paperwork together

- The owner's manual, or a link to it saved on your phone.
- The warranty card or warranty terms, and the delivery date.
- The supplier's name, phone number, and your account or order number.
- Any notes from the supplier about how the chair was set up. Don't change those settings yourself.

Read the safety section of the manual

Every owner's manual has a long safety section. It's worth reading slowly, once, with a family member. It lists the situations its maker says can lead to tips, falls or loss of control, such as slopes, curbs, ramps, wet ground and turning on a hill, and what that maker recommends. This guide doesn't repeat or replace that advice; your manual is written for your exact model.

STAY SAFE

Questions about how it fits you

If anything in the safety section raises a question about your own body, balance or seating, ask your prescriber or therapist, and your supplier. I can help you find the manual and read it on a bigger screen, but I won't advise on fit or driving.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Ten minutes with your phone camera now means you'll never have to crawl around looking for a serial number when you're on the phone with a supplier or an airline.

PART 2

Batteries

The two main battery types, reading the battery gauge, daily charging habits, when batteries wear out, and storing your scooter or chair for a while.

CHAPTER 5

Battery Types: Sealed Lead-Acid and Lithium

Almost every scooter and power chair runs on one of two families of rechargeable battery. Knowing which kind you have tells you how to charge it, how to store it, and whether you can fly with it.

Sealed lead-acid: AGM and gel

Most full-size scooters and power chairs use **sealed lead-acid** batteries, often written **SLA**. They come in two kinds: **AGM** (absorbed glass mat) and **gel**. Both are sealed, so you never add water. They are heavy, usually sold in pairs, and sit in a box under the seat. They are a close cousin of a car battery, but built for slow, deep, everyday use.

Lithium-ion

Many lightweight folding and travel scooters and chairs use a **lithium-ion** battery pack, the same family of battery that's in your phone, only much bigger. Lithium packs are far lighter, so they can often be lifted out and carried. They need their own care, especially around heat and damage (Chapter 11).

	Sealed lead-acid (AGM or gel)	Lithium-ion
Weight	Heavy	Much lighter
Where you see it	Many full-size scooters and chairs	Many folding and travel models
Charging habit	Charge often; makers say keep them topped up	Follow your manual; habits vary by maker
Flying	Spillable or not, rules differ; ask the airline	Size limits in watt-hours (Chapter 19)
Replacing	Your supplier, usually as a matched pair	Your supplier or the maker, approved pack only

How to tell which you have

1. Look in your owner's manual under **Batteries** or **Specifications**.
2. Look at the photo you took of the battery label in Chapter 4. Words like **AGM**, **Gel**, **Sealed Lead Acid**, **Li-ion** or **Lithium** tell you the type. A lithium label also shows **Wh** (watt-hours).
3. Still not sure? Call your supplier with the model and serial number.

STAY SAFE

Don't open the battery box to check

Scooter and chair batteries are heavy and store a lot of energy. Opening the box, disconnecting cables or swapping batteries is a job for your supplier unless your manual specifically shows you how. A wrong connection can damage the electronics or cause a fire. And when batteries are replaced, only the type your maker approves should go in.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing your battery type answers half the questions you'll ever have: how to charge, how to store, and whether it can go on a plane.

CHAPTER 6

Reading the Battery Gauge and Range

"How far can I go?" is the question every rider asks. The battery gauge gives you a rough answer, and a little experience makes it a good one.

What the gauge shows

Most scooters and chairs show the charge as a row of lights or a bar, often green, yellow and red. Green means plenty, yellow means it's time to think about heading home, and red means charge soon. Some newer chairs show a percentage or an estimated range on a color screen or in a phone app (Chapter 16).

HEADS UP

The gauge can bounce

On many models the gauge dips while you climb a hill or start from a stop, then recovers when you coast. That's normal. Read it while you're moving steadily on flat ground for the truest picture.

Why the range you get differs from the brochure

- **Hills, grass, gravel and thick carpet** use more energy than smooth flat floors.
- **Cold weather** lowers how much a battery can give, for both lead-acid and lithium.
- **Older batteries** hold less than new ones (Chapter 8).
- **Weight carried** and **tire pressure**, on models with air-filled tires, both matter.
- **Power seat functions**, lights and charging a phone from the chair all use a little battery.

Learn your own range, safely

1. Start each outing with a full charge.
2. Note where the gauge sits when you get home from a normal trip, say to the store and back.
3. Do the same for a few different trips. Write the results on the Cheat-Sheet (Chapter 26).
4. Plan longer trips so you'll be home, or somewhere you can charge, with the gauge still out of the red.

TIP

Bring the charger on long days out

For a long day, such as a fair, a museum or a family visit, bring the charger and ask ahead whether there's an outlet you can use. A short top-up over lunch can make the trip home relaxed instead of tense.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing your real-world range means you choose the trip, instead of the battery choosing it for you.

CHAPTER 7

Daily Charging Habits

The best thing you can do for your batteries costs nothing: a steady charging routine. Your owner's manual has the exact advice for your model; here's what the makers' manuals commonly say.

For sealed lead-acid (AGM and gel) batteries

- Pride Mobility's owner's manuals say AGM and gel batteries should be charged as often as possible, and that they don't have a "memory" the way old nickel-cadmium batteries did. In other words, topping up after a short trip doesn't hurt them.
- Some Pride manuals also recommend an occasional long, uninterrupted charge. Your own manual will say whether yours does.
- Pride's manuals say to use batteries of the same type and chemistry, and never to mix AGM and gel batteries.

GOOD TO KNOW

How long to leave it plugged in

Charging times and limits differ by model. Some manuals give a minimum, some a maximum, and some recommend an occasional longer charge. Follow your own manual, not a neighbor's or a website's. If your manual isn't clear, ask your supplier.

For lithium batteries

Other makers' manuals give their own advice, such as how soon to charge after a ride and how low to let the gauge go. Follow the manual for your model.

Lithium packs usually have a built-in **battery management system**, a small circuit that stops charging when the pack is full and protects it from running too low. The makers' advice on charging habits differs, so follow your owner's manual. The fire-safety habits in Chapter 11 apply to every lithium pack.

A simple routine that works for most riders

1. When you get home, park in your charging spot, near the outlet, on a hard floor.
2. Turn the scooter or chair **off**. Many models won't drive while the charger is connected, and some won't charge properly while switched on. Check your manual.

3. Connect the charger to the chair and the wall in the order your manual gives.
4. Check that the charger's light shows it is charging (Chapter 10).
5. In the morning, or when the charger shows full, unplug from the wall, then from the chair.

TIP

Make it hard to forget

Set a daily reminder on your phone, such as "Plug in the scooter" at 8 p.m. Say to Siri, "Remind me every day at 8 p.m. to plug in my scooter," or ask Google Assistant the same thing. A family member can also get a reminder to call and check (Chapter 24).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A steady routine means you start every day with a full battery, and the batteries themselves last longer before they need replacing.

CHAPTER 8

When Batteries Wear Out

All rechargeable batteries slowly lose capacity. One day you'll notice you aren't getting as far as you used to. That's normal wear, not a sign you did something wrong.

Signs it may be time

- The range on your usual trips has dropped a lot, even after a full charge.
- The gauge falls quickly into yellow or red, especially on hills.
- The charger finishes much faster than it used to, or never seems to finish.
- The scooter or chair slows down, stutters or shuts off under load.
- Any battery is swollen, cracked, leaking, hot or smells odd. That's a safety issue: stop using it and see Chapter 11.

Who replaces them

Battery replacement is a job for your **DME supplier** or an authorized service dealer. They know the right battery for your model and how it connects, and on many models lead-acid batteries are replaced as a matched pair. Using the wrong battery can damage the controller or the charger, and can void the warranty.

1. Call your supplier and say, "I think my batteries are wearing out." Give the model and serial number.
2. Tell them what you've noticed: how far you go now, and how far you used to.
3. Ask whether it's covered by warranty or by your insurance, and what it will cost if not.
4. Ask what happens to the old batteries. Suppliers usually take them for recycling.

If you have Medicare

Medicare guidance says it covers necessary repairs and servicing of a power mobility device, including parts and labor, through a Medicare-enrolled supplier. If your chair is **rented**, the supplier is responsible for keeping it repaired. If you **own** it, Medicare usually helps pay for repairs and replacement parts such as batteries. Repairs covered by the maker's warranty go through the warranty instead. Your supplier knows the details for your situation; Chapter 21 covers repairs in more depth.

HEADS UP

Cheap batteries online

Batteries sold online can look identical and cost less, but may not match your model's requirements or your warranty. Before buying any battery yourself, ask your supplier or the maker which ones are approved.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Spotting worn batteries early, and calling the supplier before you're stranded, keeps a small repair from becoming a day stuck at home.

CHAPTER 9

Storage, Cold Weather and Long Breaks

Ohio winters, a hospital stay or a long trip can leave a scooter or chair sitting for weeks. A little planning keeps the batteries healthy while it waits.

Where to keep it

- Indoors, somewhere dry, is best. Rain, snow and road salt are hard on electronics and connectors.
- Avoid very hot spots such as next to a furnace or in a closed car in summer, and freezing spots such as an unheated shed in January. Your manual lists the temperature ranges for your model.
- Keep it out of the way of exit doors and hallways, so it never blocks your way out in an emergency.

If it will sit for a while

1. Charge the batteries fully before you put it away, unless your lithium manual says to store at partial charge.
2. Turn the power off and remove the key if there is one.
3. Follow your manual's advice for how often to recharge during storage. It differs by model and battery type, so ask your supplier if your manual doesn't say.
4. Put a recurring reminder on your phone so you don't forget.
5. Before the first ride after storage, charge fully and take a short test drive at home.

Riding in the cold

Cold weather shortens your range, so plan shorter trips in winter. If your scooter has been out in the cold, let it warm up indoors before charging if your manual asks for that. Wipe off snow and salt when you come in, and never use a hair dryer or space heater to dry the electronics.

STAY SAFE

Space heaters and chargers

Keep the charging spot well away from space heaters, curtains and anything that can burn. Fire departments advise plugging battery chargers straight into a wall outlet rather than an extension cord or power strip (Chapter 11).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Your scooter or chair is ready to go the first warm day of spring, instead of needing a battery call.

PART 3

Chargers, Safety and Simple Checks

The charger and its lights, lithium fire safety, freewheel mode and turning the power off, and the simple checks to make before you call your supplier.

CHAPTER 10

The Charger and Its Lights

The charger is the quiet workhorse of your scooter or chair. It gets plugged in every day, so it's worth understanding what it does and what its lights are telling you.

What the charger does

A charger takes power from your wall outlet and feeds it into the batteries at the right voltage and in the right steps for your battery type. A charger for sealed lead-acid batteries works differently from a charger for lithium batteries. That's why the charger that came with your scooter or chair, or a replacement your supplier or maker approves, is the only one that should ever be used.

STAY SAFE

Only the approved charger, every time

Never use a charger from another scooter, a car-battery charger, or a "universal" charger bought online. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has warned against universal chargers for e-bikes and e-scooters because of the fire risk, and the same principle applies here: use the charger made for your batteries. A lead-acid charger must never be used on a lithium pack, or the other way around.

Reading the lights

Most chargers have one or two small lights. The colors and patterns mean different things on different makes, so your owner's manual, or the label on the charger itself, is the final word. In general, chargers show three kinds of message:

Message	What it usually means
Power	The charger is plugged into the wall and has power.
Charging	Power is flowing into the batteries. Often an orange, yellow or blinking light.
Full or finished	Often a green light. Many chargers then drop to a gentle "maintenance" charge.
Fault	Often a flashing or red light. Something is wrong with the charger, the cable or the batteries.

1. Find the charging section in your owner's manual and look for a chart of the charger lights.

2. Take a photo of that chart with your phone and add it to your "My Scooter" or "My Chair" album (Chapter 4).
3. The next time you charge, watch the lights change so you know what normal looks like on your charger.

HEADS UP

A fault light that won't clear

If the charger shows a fault light, unplug it from the wall, check that both plugs are pushed in firmly, and try once more. If the fault comes back, stop and call your supplier. Don't open the charger or keep trying.

Taking care of the charger and cord

- Plug the charger straight into a wall outlet, not an extension cord or power strip (Chapter 11).
- Keep it on a hard, dry surface with air around it, not under a blanket, cushion or bag.
- Don't pull it out by the cord; grip the plug.
- Check the cord and plugs now and then for cracks, bent pins or scorch marks. If you see any damage, stop using it and call your supplier for a replacement.
- A charger may feel warm while it works. If it's too hot to touch, smells of burning, or makes a loud buzzing, unplug it from the wall and call your supplier.

HEADS UP

Lost the charger?

Don't buy a look-alike from an online marketplace. Call your supplier with your model and serial number and ask for the correct replacement. The plug may fit on a wrong charger even when the voltage or battery type is wrong.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing what normal looks like on your charger means you'll notice the day something changes, long before it leaves you with a flat battery.

CHAPTER 11

Lithium Batteries, Lead-Acid Care and Fire Safety

Lithium and sealed lead-acid batteries both store a lot of energy, and both deserve respect. Lithium packs need extra care around heat and damage. This chapter collects the fire-safety habits that fire departments and safety agencies recommend for big rechargeable batteries.

Where to charge

- On a flat, dry, hard floor, in a spot with good airflow.
- Away from exit doors and hallways, so the scooter or chair never blocks your way out.
- Away from anything that can burn: curtains, bedding, paper, a space heater.
- Out of direct sun and away from water.
- With the charger plugged **straight into a wall outlet**, not an extension cord or power strip.
- Not on a bed, couch or soft chair.

> **TIP**
>
> **A working smoke alarm nearby**
>
> Make sure there's a working smoke alarm near the room where you charge, and test it. That's good advice for any home, and especially for one with a large battery charging in it.

Lithium packs: the special rules

- Use only the charger and battery pack approved by the maker of your scooter or chair.
- Don't leave a lithium pack in a hot car, and don't charge it while it's very hot or very cold. Your manual gives the temperature range.
- If a pack is dropped, crushed or gets soaked, stop using it and ask your supplier to inspect it, even if it looks fine.
- Never open, repair or "rebuild" a lithium pack, and don't buy rebuilt packs.
- Ask your supplier or the manual whether your maker recommends charging overnight or while you're nearby. The advice for lithium packs varies by maker.

Sealed lead-acid: the special rules

- Keep them charged; lead-acid batteries don't like to sit empty (Chapter 7).
- They're very heavy. Lifting them out of the box is a job for your supplier unless your manual shows a travel model's battery pack being lifted by hand.
- Replace them only with the type your maker approves, usually as a matched pair (Chapter 8).

Warning signs: stop and act

Safety agencies list these signs that a big rechargeable battery is in trouble:

- Smoke, or a strange smell.
- A change in shape or color, such as swelling or bulging.
- It's unusually hot.
- It leaks.
- It won't charge any more.

STAY SAFE

If you see smoke or flames

Get everyone out of the home and call **911** from outside. Don't try to move the scooter or chair, and don't go back in for it. If there's no smoke but you see a warning sign, unplug the charger from the wall if you can do so safely, move away from it, and call your supplier before using it again.

Getting rid of old batteries

Scooter and chair batteries never go in the trash or the curbside recycling bin. Your supplier usually takes old batteries back when it replaces them. For a loose lithium battery, the EPA says to bring it to a battery recycler or household hazardous waste collection, and The Battery Network (formerly Call2Recycle) has a drop-off locator at batterynetwork.org. Damaged or swollen batteries need special handling, so call ahead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A safe charging spot and a few good habits let you plug in every night without worry.

CHAPTER 12

Freewheel Mode, Pushing and Turning the Power Off

Every scooter and power chair has a way to release the motors so it can be pushed by hand, and a way to turn the power off. Both are simple, and both have safety rules your manual explains for your model.

What freewheel mode does

When the scooter or chair is in drive, the motors hold it in place like a parking brake. Moving the **freewheel lever** (sometimes called the manual release or push mode) disconnects the motors, so a helper can push it, for example onto a vehicle lift or out of a tight spot when the battery is flat. With the motors disconnected, the motor brakes are released too.

STAY SAFE

Read your manual before using freewheel

Because the brakes are released, freewheel mode needs care. Owner's manuals spell out where and how to use it for each model, and many warn against using it on any slope. Read that section with your helper before you ever need it, and ask your supplier to show you the lever in person. Always return the lever to drive afterward.

Find the lever on your model

1. Look in your owner's manual for **freewheel**, **manual release** or **push mode**.
2. Find the lever on your scooter or chair. On many, it's near the back, by the motors.
3. Take a photo of it and add it to your album, so a helper or a technician can find it quickly.
4. Notice how it looks in **drive**. Many scooters and chairs won't drive at all if the lever is left in freewheel.

Turning the power off

Turning the power off when you aren't driving is one of the simplest safety habits. It means a bumped joystick or tiller lever can't make the scooter or chair move.

- Turn it off before you get on or off, unless your manual says otherwise.
- Turn it off when you stop to talk, shop or eat.

- Turn it off before plugging in the charger.
- On a scooter with a key, take the key out when you park, and keep a spare at home.

STAY SAFE

If there's ever a tip or a fall

Look after the person first. If anyone is hurt or can't get up safely, call **911**. Afterward, call your supplier before using the scooter or chair again, so it can be checked, and let your prescriber know. This guide doesn't give advice on driving technique or balance; your prescriber, therapist and owner's manual do.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing where the freewheel lever is and how the power switch works means a flat battery or a tight spot is an inconvenience, not an emergency.

CHAPTER 13

It Won't Go: Simple Checks Before You Call

Many "my chair won't go" moments have a simple cause. These checks are all safe to do yourself. None of them involve opening anything or changing a setting. If they don't solve it, your supplier is the next call.

The five-minute checklist

1. **Is the charger still plugged into the chair?** Many scooters and chairs won't drive while the charger is connected. Unplug it the way your manual shows.
2. **Is the power on?** Check the key or power button, and look for lights on the tiller or joystick.
3. **Is the freewheel lever in drive?** If it was moved, put it back (Chapter 12).
4. **Is there charge?** Check the battery gauge. If it's empty, charge fully and try again.
5. **Turn it off, wait about a minute, and turn it back on.** This clears some temporary faults.
6. **Is there a reset button or circuit breaker?** Some models have one, often near the battery box. Your manual shows whether yours does and how to press it. If it keeps tripping, stop and call your supplier.

Flashing lights and beeps: write them down

Many power chairs and some scooters report problems by flashing a light a certain number of times, or by beeping in a pattern. Your manual may have a chart of these codes. Even if it does, the most useful thing you can do is write the pattern down for your supplier.

1. Count the flashes or beeps in one round, then the pause, then count again to be sure.
2. Write it down: "Five flashes, pause, five flashes."
3. Better still, take a short video with your phone camera so the supplier can see and hear it.
4. Note what you were doing when it started: going up a ramp, just after charging, after rain.

STAY SAFE

Never change the controller settings

The controller holds the speed, acceleration and driving settings your supplier programmed for you. Don't use programming tools, apps or online instructions to change or "unlock" them, and don't let anyone but your supplier do it. Changing them can make the chair behave in ways you don't expect, and can void the warranty. If something about how it drives feels wrong, call your supplier, and talk with your prescriber about whether the settings still suit you.

When to stop and call the supplier

- The checklist didn't help.
- A fault code keeps coming back.
- It moves on its own, jerks, or won't stop smoothly. Turn it off and don't use it.
- There's a burning smell, smoke, or a battery warning sign (Chapter 11).
- A tire is flat, a wheel wobbles, or something is cracked or loose.

TIP

What to say on the phone

"This is [your name]. I have a [maker and model], serial number [number]. Since [day], it [what happens]. The joystick light flashes [number] times. I've checked the charger, the freewheel lever and the battery." That one sentence can save a lot of back and forth.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Most of the time, the checklist gets you moving again in minutes. When it doesn't, you hand your supplier exactly what they need to fix it fast.

PART 4

Handy Tech Add-Ons

Charging your phone on the go, phone mounts, lights and bags, power chair apps, and trackers that help keep your scooter or chair safe.

CHAPTER 14

Charging Your Phone on the Go

Your phone is your lifeline when you're out: it calls for a ride, a family member or help. Keeping it charged on a long day out is easy once you know your options.

Option 1: a USB port on the chair or scooter

Some newer power chairs and scooters have a **USB port**, often on the joystick module or the tiller. Look in your owner's manual under **USB** or **charging port** to see whether yours has one and what kind of plug it takes. Charging a phone from the chair uses a little of the chair's battery, so you may notice slightly less range on a long day.

1. Find the USB port. If it has a rubber cover, flip it open.
2. Check whether it's the older rectangle shape (**USB-A**) or the small oval (**USB-C**).
3. Use your phone's own charging cable, or one with the right plug at each end.
4. Plug in. Your phone should show a lightning bolt or a charging sign.
5. Close the cover when you're done, to keep rain and dust out.

STAY SAFE

No home-made wiring

Never splice wires, clip adapters onto the batteries, or add a car-style power outlet to the scooter or chair yourself. If you want a charging port and yours doesn't have one, ask your supplier whether the maker offers an approved add-on that they can fit.

Option 2: a power bank in your bag

A **power bank** is a small rechargeable battery for your phone. It doesn't touch the chair's electrics at all, which makes it the simplest choice. Charge it at home overnight, tuck it in your bag with a cable, and plug your phone in whenever it runs low.

TIP

Flying with a power bank

Power banks must go in your carry-on bag, never in checked luggage. That's a separate rule from the one for your chair's battery (Chapter 19).

A few habits that help

- Charge your phone at night along with the scooter or chair, so both start the day full.
- Turn on your phone's **Low Power Mode** (iPhone) or **Battery Saver** (Android) on long days out.
- Keep a short cable in the same bag as your power bank, so they never get separated.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A charged phone means you can always call for help, a ride or a family member, wherever the day takes you.

CHAPTER 15

Phone Mounts, Lights, Bags and Covers

A few well-chosen accessories make a scooter or chair more useful every day. The rule for all of them is the same: they should never get in the way of the controls, the brakes, the charger port or your view.

Phone mounts

A phone mount holds your phone where you can see it, for maps, calls or a quick glance at the time. Most clamp onto a tiller, an armrest tube or a bar, without any drilling.

1. Check your owner's manual or ask your supplier whether the maker offers a mount for your model. That's the simplest choice.
2. If you buy a clamp-on mount, make sure it fits the tube size on your scooter or chair.
3. Attach it where it doesn't block the joystick, tiller controls, battery gauge or key.
4. Tighten it by hand and test that it doesn't slip.
5. Don't use the phone while you're moving. Stop, turn the power off, then look.

STAY SAFE

No drilling into the frame

Don't drill holes in the frame or attach anything to the seating, the controller or the wiring. Drilling or clamping in the wrong place can damage parts and void the warranty. Your supplier can tell you where accessories can safely go.

Lights and being seen

Many scooters, and some chairs, come with headlights and taillights; your manual shows how to switch them on. If yours doesn't, your supplier may offer an approved light kit. Battery-powered clip-on bike lights are another option that doesn't touch the chair's wiring.

- A bright front light and a red rear light help drivers see you at dusk and on dark mornings.
- Reflective tape or reflectors on the back and sides help too.
- A tall safety flag can make a low scooter easier to spot in a parking lot.

Bags, baskets and cup holders

Bags and baskets carry the shopping, the power bank and your umbrella. Where you hang the weight matters: heavy loads hung in the wrong place can change how a scooter or chair handles. Your manual lists where bags can go and how much they can hold. Ask your supplier before adding anything heavy.

Rain covers

Rain and electronics don't mix. A fitted cover for the joystick or tiller, or a full cover for parking outdoors, helps. Most makers sell covers for their models. If you get caught in the rain, dry the scooter or chair with a towel when you get in, and let it sit indoors before charging if it got very wet. If it was soaked, call your supplier before charging.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The right add-ons make every trip a little easier: you can see your map, carry your things and be seen at dusk.

CHAPTER 16

Power Chair Apps: MyPermobil and Others

Some newer power chairs can talk to a phone app over Bluetooth. The app shows information about the chair, such as the battery, the distance you've driven and how the seat functions have been used. It's a window into the chair, not a remote control for its settings.

MyPermobil, for Permobil power chairs

Permobil, a power wheelchair maker, offers a free app called **MyPermobil**. According to Permobil and the app's store listing, it can:

- Estimate how far you can still travel on the current charge.
- Let you know when it's time to charge, or when the batteries may need replacing.
- Show your distance driven and your battery charging cycles by week and by month.
- Keep a record of how you use the seat functions, which you can share with your care team if they ask.
- Link with **Amazon Alexa** or **Google Assistant**, so you can ask by voice for your battery status or distance driven.

The app connects through the Bluetooth built into Permobil's joystick modules, and Permobil says the chair needs the right hardware for it. Many newer Permobil chairs have it; older ones may not.

Setting it up

1. Ask your supplier whether your chair works with MyPermobil. Have your model and serial number ready.
2. On your phone, open the **App Store** (iPhone) or **Google Play** (Android) and search for **MyPermobil**.
3. Install the app and follow its instructions to create an account.
4. Turn on **Bluetooth** on your phone and keep the phone close to the chair, with the chair turned on.
5. Follow the app's steps to connect to your chair. If it says no chair is found, call your supplier.

STAY SAFE

The app is for information, not settings

Speed, acceleration and seating programming are set by your supplier, often with your therapist. Don't use any app or programming tool to change them yourself. If the app's numbers worry you, such as lower range, ask your supplier. Questions about seating or how much to use the seat functions belong to your prescriber or therapist.

Other makers

Other makers have added apps or Bluetooth features to some models, and new ones appear over time. Your owner's manual and your supplier are the best way to find out whether your chair or scooter has one. Download apps only from the App Store or Google Play, and only the one your maker names.

HEADS UP

Look-alike apps

Search results sometimes show apps that look official but aren't. Check that the app's developer name matches your chair's maker before you install it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

An app that estimates your remaining range turns "Will I make it home?" into a quick look at your phone, and a family member can ask the same question by voice.

CHAPTER 17

Trackers, Keys and Keeping It Secure

Scooters and power chairs are expensive and hard to replace quickly. A few simple steps make them less likely to be taken, and easier to find and prove ownership if they are.

Record what you own

- Keep the photos and serial numbers from Chapter 4 in your phone and on paper at home.
- If your maker offers product registration, register your scooter or chair. It also helps with warranty and recall notices.
- Ask your homeowner's or renter's insurance company whether your scooter or chair is covered, and what they need from you if it's stolen or damaged.

A Bluetooth tracker

A small tracker such as an Apple **AirTag**, a Samsung **SmartTag** or a **Tile** can help you find a scooter or chair that's been moved or taken. Hide it out of sight, for example in a zipped pouch under the seat or inside a bag that stays on the chair. It shows up on a map in your phone's finding app.

1. Set up the tracker with your phone, following its instructions, and give it a name like "Scooter."
2. Put it somewhere hidden that doesn't touch the wiring, batteries or controls.
3. Check once that it appears on the map in **Find My** (iPhone), **Find Hub** (Android) or the Tile app.
4. If the scooter or chair is ever stolen, don't go after it yourself. Call the police and share the location.

GOOD TO KNOW

Trackers alert other people

Apple and Google built alerts into phones that warn someone if an unknown tracker seems to be traveling with them. A tracker on your own scooter is fine, but it may alert a family member who borrows it. Never use a tracker to follow a person without their knowledge.

Everyday security

- On a scooter with a key, take the key with you and keep a spare at home.
- When parked outside a store or at church, park in sight if you can, and turn the power off.
- A cable lock through the frame can discourage a quick grab. Avoid locking through wiring or the seat.
- For a lift-out lithium pack, take the battery with you if your manual shows it lifts out easily.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few minutes of preparation means a stolen scooter or chair has a much better chance of coming home, and your insurer and supplier have everything they need.

PART 5

Travel and Transport

Taking your scooter or chair in the car, flying with it, and getting around by bus, paratransit and train.

CHAPTER 18

Cars, Vans and Vehicle Lifts

Getting a scooter or chair into a car or van is mostly a matter of the right equipment and a little practice. The technology side is about the batteries, the lift and how everything is secured.

Folding and take-apart models

Many travel scooters and folding chairs come apart into a few pieces, or fold in one motion, so they fit in a trunk. Your owner's manual shows the steps for your model. A few tips:

- Practice at home, with a helper, before your first trip.
- Turn the power off before you start taking it apart.
- The battery pack is often the heaviest single piece. Lift it the way the manual shows, or have a helper lift it.
- Take a few phone photos as you take it apart, so putting it back together is easy.

Vehicle lifts and ramps

A **vehicle lift** raises a scooter or chair into a van, an SUV or onto a hitch carrier. Lifts are installed by mobility vehicle dealers, who match the lift to both your vehicle and your scooter or chair. Ask them to show you how to use it, and how the scooter or chair should be strapped down.

STAY SAFE

Riding in a vehicle while seated in the chair

Whether a person can safely stay seated in their power chair while a vehicle moves depends on the chair, the tie-down system and the seat belts. Your owner's manual says whether your chair is designed for it. Ask your supplier and your prescriber. The same goes for scooters: check your manual, and never guess.

Batteries in the car

- Don't leave a lithium pack in a hot parked car in summer. Bring it inside.
- In winter, a cold battery gives less range. Let it warm up indoors before charging if your manual asks.

- If you charge a travel model from a car's power outlet, use only a car charger approved by the maker.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A little practice at home means your scooter or chair goes along on family outings without fuss.

CHAPTER 19

Flying with a Scooter or Power Chair

Air travel with a scooter or power chair is very doable, and U.S. law protects your right to bring it. The rules are mostly about the battery, so this chapter starts there. The airline has the final say on its own procedures, so always call ahead.

The FAA's battery rules

The Federal Aviation Administration's **PackSafe** rules for wheelchairs and mobility devices say:

- A **lithium-ion** battery on a wheelchair or mobility scooter is limited to **300 watt-hours (Wh)**.
- You may bring **one spare** battery up to 300 Wh, or **two spares** up to 160 Wh each. Spares go in your **carry-on** bag, never in checked luggage.
- If the device is built so the battery can be removed, the battery is taken off and carried in the cabin.
- Lithium **metal** batteries (a non-rechargeable type) aren't allowed on these devices.
- Sealed lead-acid batteries have their own rules; the airline will tell you what it needs.

> **TIP**
>
> **Find your watt-hours before you call**
>
> Look at the photo of your battery label from Chapter 4. Lithium labels list **Wh**. If yours doesn't, your supplier or the maker can tell you, and some makers offer an airline information sheet for travel models.

What the airline must do

Under the **Air Carrier Access Act**, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) says airlines must accept battery-powered wheelchairs, including the batteries, and must package the batteries as hazardous materials when that's needed. Powered chairs and scooters generally travel in the cargo hold, and the airline can't charge you for that.

- With a battery-powered chair, DOT says to arrive at the airport **1 hour before the normal check-in time**.
- On a plane with **fewer than 60 seats**, an airline may ask for up to **48 hours'** advance notice to carry a powered wheelchair.

- Ask the airline whether you can ride your own scooter or chair to the gate and have it brought back to the aircraft door.

Get your scooter or chair ready

1. Call the airline when you book. Tell them the make, model, weight, size and battery type and watt-hours.
2. Ask your supplier how to protect the joystick or tiller and whether any part should be removed and carried on.
3. Write a short instruction card: how to engage freewheel mode, how to turn the power off, and any parts not to lift by. Attach it to the chair or scooter.
4. Take photos of the scooter or chair from every side at the gate, before you hand it over.
5. When it comes back, check it before you leave the airport. Report any damage to the airline right away, in writing, and keep a copy.

Security screening

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) screens wheelchairs and scooters, including seat cushions and pouches that can't be removed, and may test them for traces of explosives. To ask for help at the checkpoint, call **TSA Cares** at **(855) 787-2227** or use the request form on tsa.gov, at least 72 hours before your flight. TSA Cares helps with the checkpoint only, not boarding.

If your chair is damaged

A DOT rule from December 2024 strengthened passengers' rights when a wheelchair is damaged or delayed, but enforcement of some parts of it, including the parts about airline liability for damage, has been paused while DOT writes a follow-up rule. In August 2026 DOT extended that pause to April 30, 2027. DOT says airlines are still responsible for damage to wheelchairs in their care. Report damage before you leave the airport, and call your supplier about repairs.

STAY SAFE

Don't fly on a damaged battery

A battery that has been dropped, swollen or damaged must not fly. If you're unsure, ask your supplier before the trip.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the battery rules and your rights means fewer surprises at the airport, and a much better chance your scooter or chair arrives ready to ride.

CHAPTER 20

Buses, Paratransit and Trains

Public transit can carry scooters and power chairs too. Each service has its own rules about size and how devices are secured, so call ahead the first time.

Buses and paratransit in Portage County

In Portage County, the **Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA)** runs the buses. Its ADA paratransit service is a door-to-door option for people who can't use the regular buses. PARTA says the service runs during the same hours as its fixed routes, for trips that start and end within three-quarters of a mile of a route. You apply first, with a form that you and your doctor fill out.

1. Call PARTA at **(330) 678-1287** or visit partaonline.org and look for **ADA**.
2. Ask for the paratransit application, or download it from the website.
3. Fill in your part, and ask your doctor's office to complete theirs.
4. Once you're approved, ask how far ahead to book rides, and tell them about your scooter or chair.

GOOD TO KNOW

Scooters count

Under the U.S. Department of Transportation's ADA definition, a mobility scooter with three or more wheels counts as a "wheelchair" on transit, as long as it fits on the lift or ramp and in the securement area. Tell the service your device's size and weight when you sign up.

Other ride options

Your Area Agency on Aging can tell you about other transportation programs for older adults. In Portage County that's **Direction Home Akron Canton**, at **1-800-421-7277** or dhad.org. Some senior centers and churches run ride programs too; ask whether their vehicles take scooters or power chairs.

Amtrak

Amtrak publishes size and weight limits for wheelchairs and scooters on its **Wheeled Mobility Device** page at amtrak.com, and says it may be able to accommodate larger devices depending on the train. Check that page, and call **1-800-USA-RAIL** to tell them about your scooter or chair when you book.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Paratransit and accessible trains mean appointments, shopping and visits are within reach, even without a car that can carry your scooter or chair.

PART 6

Paperwork, Medicare and Scams

Warranty and repair records, how Medicare Part B handles power mobility devices, and the "free scooter" calls to hang up on.

CHAPTER 21

Warranty, Repairs and Keeping Records

A scooter or power chair will need service over its life: tires, batteries, a joystick, a worn part. Good records make every repair faster, and your phone can keep them for you.

Warranty basics

- Warranties come from the maker, but claims usually go through your **DME supplier** or an authorized dealer.
- Different parts often have different warranty lengths. The frame, the electronics and the batteries may each have their own. Your warranty card or owner's manual lists them.
- Opening the battery box, changing controller settings, using unapproved chargers or batteries, or drilling into the frame can void a warranty. When in doubt, ask first.

Repairs and Medicare

If Medicare helped pay for your scooter or chair, its guidance says:

- If you **rent** it, the supplier must keep it maintained and repaired.
- If you **own** it, Medicare usually helps pay for necessary repairs and replacement parts.
- Repairs can be done by a Medicare-enrolled supplier; it doesn't have to be the one that sold it to you.
- Repairs that the maker's warranty covers go through the warranty first.

When you call about a repair that will take time, ask whether a loaner is available while yours is in the shop.

Keep a simple repair log

1. Open the **Notes** app on your phone and start a note called "Scooter repairs" or "Chair repairs."
2. Each time something happens, add a line: the date, what happened, who you called, and what they did.
3. Add photos of any damage, and of the paperwork the technician leaves.
4. Keep the supplier's name, phone number and your account number at the top of the note.

TIP

Scan the paperwork

The Notes app on iPhone can scan paper documents into a clear copy: in a note, tap the camera or attachment button and choose **Scan Documents**. On Android, the Google Drive app can scan too. Then the delivery papers and warranty card are always with you.

Recalls

Power wheelchairs and scooters are medical devices, and makers sometimes issue recalls or safety notices for a part or a charger. Registering your product with the maker is the best way to hear about them. You can also ask your supplier once a year whether there are any notices for your model, and search the maker's website for **recall** or **safety notice**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

With a repair log and scanned paperwork on your phone, you can answer every question a supplier, insurer or airline asks in seconds.

CHAPTER 22

Medicare Part B and Power Mobility Devices

If you have Medicare, here is how it describes coverage for power wheelchairs and scooters. This chapter explains the process in plain words. It can't tell you whether you qualify, or which device is right for you. Those are questions for your prescriber, and the paperwork is handled by your prescriber and supplier together.

What Medicare.gov says

- Medicare Part B covers power wheelchairs and scooters as durable medical equipment **only when they're medically necessary**.
- You need a **face-to-face examination** and a **written prescription** from a treating provider before Medicare will cover a power wheelchair or scooter.
- The equipment has to come from a supplier enrolled in Medicare.
- After you meet the Part B deductible, you generally pay **20 percent** of the Medicare-approved amount.
- Certain types of power wheelchairs need **prior authorization**, an approval before delivery. The supplier usually sends the request, with information from your provider.

GOOD TO KNOW

Medicare Advantage plans

If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, your plan's rules apply, and it may have its own approval steps and network of suppliers. Call the member services number on your plan card.

How the process usually goes

1. You talk with your doctor or other treating provider about getting around at home.
2. You have a face-to-face visit, and the provider decides whether to write an order. They may refer you to a physical or occupational therapist for an evaluation.
3. A Medicare-enrolled supplier receives the order and paperwork, and handles prior authorization if it's needed.
4. The supplier delivers the equipment, sets it up and shows you how it works.

STAY SAFE

Who decides what

Whether a scooter or a power chair is right for you, and how it should be fitted and set up, is decided by your prescriber and therapist with your supplier. This guide, and I, stay out of that decision.

Checking a supplier and your statements

- To find Medicare-enrolled suppliers, use the supplier directory on Medicare.gov or call **1-800-MEDICARE** (1-800-633-4227).
- Read your **Medicare Summary Notice** or your plan's statements when they come. Look for any equipment you didn't order or receive. If you see one, call 1-800-MEDICARE (Chapter 23).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Understanding the steps helps you ask good questions, keep track of the paperwork, and spot anything that doesn't belong.

CHAPTER 23

"Free Scooter" Calls and Other Scams

Scooters and power chairs are expensive, and that makes them a favorite of scammers who target people with Medicare. The good news is that the warning signs are easy to learn.

SCAM ALERT

The "free scooter" call

A caller says Medicare will give you a free or low-cost scooter, power chair or brace. All they need is your Medicare number. The Federal Trade Commission says to **hang up**. Medicare doesn't call people to offer equipment. A scammer can use your Medicare number to bill for things you never get.

What to do instead

1. Hang up. Don't press any numbers, and don't call back a number they give you.
2. Never give your Medicare, Social Security or bank numbers to someone who called you.
3. If you want to know whether Medicare might cover a device, talk with your own doctor.
4. To check on your Medicare account, call **1-800-MEDICARE** yourself, from the number on your card.

Other scams to watch for

SCAM ALERT

Ads that promise a chair "at no cost"

Real Medicare coverage always starts with your own treating provider and a face-to-face exam (Chapter 22). An ad, website or caller that skips that step, or asks for your Medicare number first, is a red flag.

SCAM ALERT

Too-cheap batteries and chargers online

Websites and marketplace listings may sell batteries or chargers that look right for your model at a very low price. Some are the wrong type, some are poor copies, and some never arrive. Buy replacements through your supplier or the maker (Chapter 8 and Chapter 10).

SCAM ALERT

A caller offering to "update" or "unlock" your chair

No legitimate supplier calls out of the blue to change your chair's settings or speed over the phone or through an app. Hang up and call your own supplier at the number you already have.

SCAM ALERT

Secondhand sellers who rush you

If you buy a used scooter from a stranger, be wary of anyone who wants payment by gift card, wire or payment app before you've seen it. Meet in a public place, test it, and ask for the serial number so you can check with the maker.

Where to report

What happened	Who to tell
Medicare fraud	1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)
Scam calls and offers	Federal Trade Commission: ReportFraud.ftc.gov
Medicare and health fraud tips	HHS Office of Inspector General: 1-800-HHS-TIPS (1-800-447-8477)
Money lost or ID stolen	Your bank, and your local police

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

One firm hang-up protects your Medicare number, your money, and your chance of getting the right equipment the right way.

PART 7

Family, Help and Your Cheat-Sheet

How family can help from near or far, an honest word about when to call Bill, and a one-page summary.

CHAPTER 24

For Families: Helping from Near or Far

If someone you love rides a scooter or power chair, you can help a great deal with the tech side, without taking over. These are small things that make a big difference, and they respect the rider's independence.

Help with the routine

- Set up a daily charging reminder on the rider's phone (Chapter 7).
- Save the supplier's number in the rider's phone and your own, under a clear name like "Scooter Supplier."
- Help take the photos and write the serial numbers in Chapter 4.
- Do the five-minute checklist in Chapter 13 together once, so it's familiar before it's needed.

Share locations, if the rider wants to

Location sharing lets family see where each other is on a map. Some riders like knowing a family member can find them if the battery runs out on a trip. It should always be the rider's choice, and they can turn it off at any time.

1. On iPhone, with Family Sharing set up, open **Settings**, tap **Family**, then **Location Sharing**, and choose who to share with.
2. Or open the **Find My** app, tap **People**, and share your location with one person.
3. Check that the family member can see the rider on their map.

On Android, the Google Maps app can share a location too: tap your profile picture and look for **Location sharing**.

Emergency information on the phone

On an iPhone, a **Medical ID** can be seen from the lock screen by emergency responders. Adding a short note such as "Uses a power wheelchair" and the supplier's phone number can help if the rider ever needs assistance. Android phones have a similar emergency information feature in Settings, often under **Safety and emergency**. The "Ways Your Scooter or Power Chair Tech Can Make Life Easier" section of this guide walks through it.

What to leave to the professionals

STAY SAFE

Families: please don't adjust the chair

It can be tempting to "fix" a slow chair or a seat that looks wrong. Don't change speed or controller settings, swap in batteries or chargers from elsewhere, or adjust the seating. Call the **supplier** for repairs, batteries, programming and warranty, and the rider's **prescriber** for questions about fit, seating or whether the device still suits them. If there's been a fall or a tip, let both know.

TIP

Go along to an appointment

If the rider would like, offer to sit in on a call or visit with the supplier or therapist. A second set of ears, and a phone to take notes, helps everyone.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

The rider stays independent, and you have peace of mind that the charging, the contacts and the paperwork are all in order.

CHAPTER 25

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can handle the tech side of a scooter or power chair on your own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand saves time and worry. Here's my straight advice.

Times it's well worth a call

- **Setting up an app** like MyPermobil, and linking it to Alexa or Google Assistant (Chapter 16).
- **Setting up a tracker** and checking it shows up on the map (Chapter 17).
- **Phone setup for the rider**: charging reminders, Medical ID, location sharing with family, saving the supplier's number (Chapter 24).
- **Getting the paperwork on the phone**: photos, serial numbers, scanned documents and a repair log (Chapter 4 and Chapter 21).
- **Planning a trip**: finding your battery's watt-hours and preparing for the airline call (Chapter 19).
- **Checking a call, ad or website** you're not sure about, before you give out any numbers (Chapter 23).
- **You'd simply rather have a patient person help.** That's always a good enough reason.

What I don't do

I don't repair scooters or power chairs, replace batteries, change controller or speed settings, or handle warranty claims; those belong to your **DME supplier**. I don't give advice on fit, seating, driving or which device is right for you; that's your **prescriber** and therapist. I'm glad to help you prepare your questions for them and to look after the phone and app side.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace, with no rushing, no talking down and no jargon. I explain what I'm doing in plain words, and I'll always tell you honestly when something isn't worth the money. Home visits are here in Portage County, Ohio; remote help reaches you wherever you are. I've been doing this work for more than 30 years.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042**, or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is free to read and share with family and neighbors.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may be greeted by Sophie

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you might first meet **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time. The actual help always comes from me.

— Bill

CHAPTER 26

Your Scooter & Power Chair Cheat-Sheet

Keep a copy of this near your charging spot. The whole guide, boiled down.

The essentials

Remember	
Repairs, batteries, settings, warranty	Your **DME supplier**.
Fit, seating, which device, Medicare order	Your **prescriber** (doctor or therapist).
Charger	Only the one approved for your batteries. Straight into a wall outlet.
Charging spot	Hard, dry floor; away from exits and anything that burns; smoke alarm nearby.
Controller settings	Never change them yourself. Supplier only.
Battery warning signs	Smoke, smell, swelling, heat, leaking: get out and call 911 if there's smoke.
Won't go	Charger unplugged? Power on? Freewheel in drive? Charged? Off and on again.
Flying	Lithium up to 300 Wh; spares in carry-on; call the airline; arrive early.
"Free scooter" call	Hang up. Call 1-800-MEDICARE yourself.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
Maker and model	_____
Serial number	_____
Battery type and watt-hours (Wh)	_____
Charger model	_____
DME supplier name and phone	_____
Account or order number	_____
Prescriber or therapist and phone	_____
Warranty ends	_____
Delivery date	_____
My usual range (trip and gauge)	_____
Freewheel lever is at	_____
Insurance or Medicare plan and phone	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Smoke, flames or a hot, swollen battery: get everyone out and call **911** (Chapter 11).
2. Someone is hurt after a tip or fall: call **911**, then the supplier before using it again (Chapter 12).
3. It won't go: do the five-minute checklist (Chapter 13).
4. A fault light or beeps: count them, take a video, and call your **supplier**.
5. The charger shows a fault: check both plugs, try once more, then call your supplier (Chapter 10).
6. A question about fit, seating or speed: call your **prescriber** and your supplier.
7. A tech question about an app, tracker or your phone: call Bill at **(330) 200-8042**.