

Barcelona, Spain



Report made by

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- **Date:** October, 2022.

General information of the city

- **Name of the city and country:** Barcelona, Spain
- **Description:** The second biggest in Spain, Barcelona, capital of Catalonia, is a city friendly towards arts and culture. It is also known for its healthy Mediterranean food, its nice weather and for being home of Gaudi's architectural masterpieces.

Transportation accessibility

- Barcelona's subway is 90% wheelchair accessible. Here is a [map of accessible stations](#) with elevators and ramps at the beginning of each platform (2022 version). **Always board on the first cart**, otherwise you may find a step when getting off.
- There are some key line transfers that are not yet accessible, so check your route before boarding.

- There are announcements for upcoming trains and for next stop once on board.
- Unfortunately, elevator maintenance is not the best and elevators do not work every now and then. This happens especially on bigger stations. If that's the case, the recommendation is to board again and exit at the next station (not ideal, we know).
- The bus system is also 100% wheelchair accessible. Just make a sign to the driver of an incoming bus for them to deploy an automatic ramp to board the bus.
- Both on subway stations and on bus stops there is in place the Navilens guiding system that gives indications for people with visual impairments. You can download its scanning app for iOS or Android.
- Some bus stations have visual and audio indications for next incoming buses. On board, all buses have visual and audio indications for next stops.
- Tramways are also 100% wheelchair accessible, although they are not widespread around the city.
- FGC trains to go to nearby cities is also 100% wheelchair accessible.
- RENFE trains, also to go to other cities, however, are not all wheelchair accessible and schedule for accessible trains changes everyday, so you may have to wait for an accessible train to pass. Accessible carts are always in the middle (usually the 3rd cart).
- Long distance high-speed trains AVE, AVLO (low cost), OUIGO (low cost), TGV from Sants Station are also wheelchair accessible, though assistance to board needs to be booked at least 12h in advance when buying the ticket. Assistance is also available, with prior booking, to other passengers with disabilities. You need to be there 30 minutes before departure.
- Accessible taxis can be booked via the FREENOW app. They may take up to 30 minutes to arrive depending on where they are in the city.
- **Score: 4/5.** Quite good, comparing it to other cities, as nearly all subway system (90% currently) and all buses are wheelchair accessible. On subways, always board on the 1st cart. Elevator maintenance and RENFE trains accessibility to outer cities can be improved. The Navilens system for people with visual impairments is also a nice feature.

Streets accessibility

- Streets in Barcelona's city center are mostly flat (mildly downhill towards the sea).
- There are curb cuts in all crossings (most of them are zero level) throughout all the city. One of the best in the world in my opinion.
- Although most pavement on sidewalks is small-tile based, sidewalks on most streets is well maintained, so rolling is mostly safe with no hazard of front casters getting stuck.

- There is also tactile pavement leading to all curb cut crossings.
 - Some streets in the heart of many city districts are pedestrians only.
 - Unfortunately, even though there are many accessible traffic lights in Barcelona using the CIBERPAS system, sound signals are only activated on demand via a remote control that only locals with visual impairments have. This is not so convenient for tourists. You may try to get it from ONCE, the leading organization for the blind in Spain, by contacting at saucti@once.es.
 - Cobblestone is uncommon, although it may be found in some areas in the Gothic Quarter (the old town).
 - Although there are barely any public toilets, accessible toilets can be found in shopping malls, most tourist attractions, public buildings and many newer or bigger restaurants.
- **Score: 4.5/5.** Nearly perfect, with great 0-level curb cuts. The only downside is that audio signals on traffic lights is only available through a remote control that may be hard to get for tourists.

Restaurants & shops

- About 80% of restaurant and shops entrances are wheelchair accessible in the city center. Inaccessible places are the exception.
 - On outer areas, it may be a bit lower, but it's still really high (around 70%).
 - Accessible restaurants and shops have either 0-level access or ramps. Ramps are usually mild, though every now and then you may also find ill-shaped ones.
 - All new and many bigger restaurants have accessible toilets.
 - Many restaurants, bars and cafes also have terraces, so finding an accessible place to eat will not be a problem.
- **Score: 5/5.** One of the best in the world, as inaccessible places are the exception and not the norm. Also, accessible toilets are common in either new or bigger restaurants.

Hotels & accommodation

- Many hotels in Barcelona are not only wheelchair accessible, but also have accessible rooms.
- Accessible hotels are also available in different price ranges, from hostels (Youth Hostel Pere Tarrés has accessible shared rooms with accessible bathrooms), to mid-range options (for instance, the Ibis Hotel chains) or higher-end hotels.
- In the middle range, you can find the chain with the most accessible hotels in the world, ILUNION Hotels. There are 4 available in Barcelona. 40% of the hotels' staff

members are persons with disabilities, so they are knowledgeable in the needs of disabled people. Service dogs are also most welcomed.

- For other options, such as AirBnB apartments, you should contact the owners before booking, as regular buildings accessibility is not that good (a step at the entrance or steps before the elevator is a regular occurrence). Newer buildings should be ok, though.
- **Score: 5/5.** Many accessible options in different price ranges. We specially recommend hotels from the ILUNION Hotels chain, which have really good accessibility for all type of disabilities and are well located within the city.

Tourist attractions accessibility

- Most tourist attractions in Barcelona are wheelchair accessible, although many of them also have inaccessible areas.
- Museums and other attractions, like Sagrada Família, have accessibility features for people with hearing or visual impairments.
- Park Güell, which is a popular destination, is feasible on a wheelchair if you have someone helping you push or if you have a mobility aid that can handle steep slopes (and sometimes even uneven).
- Some churches, like Santa Maria del Mar, may only be accessed by wheelchair at specific schedules.
- Nevertheless, accessibility information can be found on most attractions' websites.
- Discounts or even free entrance for people with disabilities and a companion is also quite common.
- Beach accessibility is quite good too. There are wooden boardwalks to access most beaches and during summer there is a service to help users who need it get into the water (available in specific beaches and prior booking depending on the assistance needed). Here is all the [information on beach accessibility in Barcelona](#).
- **Score: 3.5/5.** Quite good, most attractions are wheelchair accessible, although many have inaccessible areas (Park Güell may only be for the adventurous). Nevertheless, accessibility information is usually available on all attractions' websites and discounts for disable people, plus companions, are common. Beach accessibility is pretty good too.

Getting there

- Barcelona's El Prat Airport (BCN) has two terminals, T1 and T2, and is connected to the city by train, subway, bus and taxi. The terminal that you get to depends on your airline.

- The train station at the airport is not wheelchair accessible.
 - On the other hand, the subway is accessible (L9), although you'll need to change to L3 at "Ciutat Universitària", if you want to get to the city center. The subway has stops at both terminals, T1 and T2. A special subway ticket to the airport needs to be bought. Nevertheless, you can get it at the airport even if you get there with a regular ticket.
 - Aerobuses connecting the airport to Plaça Catalunya (Barcelona's central square) by bus every 5 minutes are also wheelchair accessible. The trip takes 35 minutes.
 - Finally, accessible taxis are also an option. You can book them via the aforementioned FREENOW app or by phone or online at an accessible taxi company.
 - You may also get to Barcelona by high-speed train from other cities in Spain or even from Paris. High-speed trains are wheelchair accessible (see Transportation section).
 - The high-speed train station, currently Barcelona-Sants, is conveniently connected both by bus and subway (L3 and L5) to other areas in the city. To get to the subway, though, you have to exit the station and go to the elevator located at the base of Carrer Numància (Numancia Street).
 - Finally, ferries to get to the city are usually wheelchair accessible (check details with the company) and the Ferry Terminal also is, plus it's located right next to the city center.
- **Score: 4/5.** Accessibility from main transportation hubs to the city center is good. We recommend the bus from the airport to Plaça Catalunya if you want to avoid subway transfers.

Overall accessibility score

- **Score:** 26/30. Overall **4.3/5 stars**.
- **Summary:** Accessibility is above average in all of its categories, which nowadays is still a remarkable feat around the world. Aside from occasional out of order subway elevators or some minor inaccessible areas in tourist attractions, accessibility should not be an issue for you to enjoy the city.