

## Students design a wheelchair suited for air travel



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Springwise have spotted various innovations over the years designed to aid those with physical disabilities. From a [tailor-made wheelchair](#) to a [wearable device](#) for those who need help going to the bathroom, technology has been proven to be able to positively impact on disabled people's lives. Now two students from the [American University of Sharjah](#) have designed a wheelchair ideally suited for air travel.

Aamer Siddiqui and Ali Asgar saw the need for a single wheelchair that can function from the beginning to the end of an airborne journey. Their Air Chair provides ease of access and mobility to disabled air passengers. The C-shaped design allows the chair to slip into the pre-existing plane seat. The chair is narrow enough to fit through standard aeroplane aisles. It has also been carefully designed to complement existing flight features. For example, it uses the standard aircraft seatbelt and provides access for in-flight entertainment and safety features. Off the plane, it functions like any other wheelchair via manual or electric controls. The Air Chair is also foldable, with its height capable of decreasing by 64 percent.

Disabled air passengers must often use a different wheelchair in the airport to on the flight. This also means that they often cannot take their own wheelchair with them on long-distance journeys. The Air Chair could be the end to such accessibility problems.

The students are currently working to perfect a working model that they can then use as a prototype.

They aim to eventually pitch both directly to customers and on a larger scale to airlines themselves.

Takeaway: Wheelchair use in travel is an important yet relatively unknown issue for many with disabilities. Devising a way to improve the traditional design to integrate with existing infrastructure is cost-efficient yet effective a means of improving accessibility. How else could the travel industry better accommodate disabled passengers?

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