

Getting There Safely: Rideshare Tips

Rideshare services like Uber or Lyft can be important resources for folks who need to access transportation, but may feel uncomfortable, unable, or unsafe to use public transportation. There are also risks associated with using these services.

While rideshare services have policies in place to protect riders, trans and nonbinary survivors may want to consider some additional safety strategies while riding.



Choose your pickup and drop-off locations carefully. Most rideshare apps store ride history, which might be visible if someone (like a partner, parent, or friend) has access to your phone. Consider choosing a pick-up location at an intersection a few blocks from your home. If you're going somewhere you want to keep private (like a shelter or a clinic), pick a drop-off location nearby but not at the actual address.

Make sure you're catching the right ride. Rideshare apps will provide you with the driver's license plate and a description of their car; make sure this matches before getting in. Uber also offers the option to "verify your ride" with [RideCheck](#). RideCheck provides a unique four-digit code for each ride, which you will have to verbally give to your driver to start the ride. This is an optional feature that gives you additional confirmation that you're getting into the right car.

Share your ride with trusted contacts. Let a friend know where you're going. You can use location sharing on your device, or through the rideshare app directly. This is a great way to ensure that someone can see that you arrive at your location safely. Another lower-tech option is just telling friends where you're headed and calling or texting when you get there! Ideally, ensure the driver hears you tell someone where you are going or that you have gotten in the car.

Prioritize your health and safety. Rideshare services have policies to support passengers with disabilities. Some vehicles have space for mobility aids while others do

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not; you can always call your driver before they arrive to confirm. While most rideshare services no longer require masks for drivers to prevent the spread of COVID-19, you can choose to wear a well-fitting mask (and request that your driver do the same, if you are comfortable). Sitting in the backseat and opening a window can also help to improve airflow and reduce COVID-19 and other illness transmission, even if your driver is not masked.

Know your rights around incident reports. The process of reporting incidents of harassment or discrimination differs across rideshare apps. Using Uber, you can make a report directly through the app, even while the ride is still ongoing. Lyft has similar features.

When a passenger makes an incident report, the passenger will never be matched with that same driver again. The rider will be contacted by an Uber safety team member to get detailed information about the incident.

Know that you have options if something goes wrong. Even when taking steps to ride safely, we know that discrimination and harassment can happen. If this happens to you, know that there are resources available. There are several options for helplines that will NOT contact law enforcement or emergency services without your consent.

Some of these helplines include:

- BlackLine: 1 (800) 604-5841
- Trans Lifeline: (877) 565-8860
- TrevorLifeline: 1-866-488-7386

Helpline operators can support you in processing what happened, meeting your immediate needs, and making decisions about what to do next.

Most often, using rideshare apps to get where you need to go is a safe option, especially if you do not feel safe or comfortable using public transportation. It can also be nerve-wracking for some trans survivors to be matched with a driver you don't know, or when you've heard about bad experiences from other trans folks. Know that you have options to make your rides safer, protect your privacy, and get support when you need it.