



Why scooters are better than powerchairs ... sometimes.

Sometimes it's better to consider a mobility scooter over a powerchair in circumstances where a powerchair may not be the best choice. But why?

Easier to operate

When it comes to steering, a scooter is more intuitive. Steering is just like driving a car or riding a bike. You just point the steering column in the direction you wish to travel. Provided you have use of your arms it's easier to steer a scooter than using a joystick to steer a powerchair, which takes a lot more training and is more easily mistake prone.

Great for small people

Small people, children, or people with short arms, but not confined to a powerchair 24/7 might find a small portable scooter better to use because it's easier to reach the controls. Scooters have adjustable steering columns and most can be pulled back close to the user.

Best for difficult terrain

Scooters are tougher than powerchairs in most instances, especially the larger ones build for outdoors. With larger wheels and no castor wheels on the front or back, scooters can handle bigger obstacles such as gutters, softer surfaces like grass, and steeper hills.

Cheaper

An equivalent mobility scooter is cheaper than an off-the-shelf powerchair with similar specifications. It's rare to find a scooter that costs more than \$6,000, and most are in the sub \$5,000 price point, even as low as \$2,000 or less.

More comfortable

Most scooters now have suspension – and very good suspension in the higher end scooters. Together with a much longer wheel base, this makes the ride more comfortable over a bigger range of terrain types. [More here.](#)

Fewer moving parts

Powerchairs rely on skid steering to change direction, either to turn or to reverse (just like a bobcat or a tank). So they need two motors, two gearboxes, more wheels, and more complicated electronics. That all adds up to being more expensive to both buy and repair, and for more things to go wrong. Scooters are just like an electric car – an electric motor driving through a single gear box to the rear wheels.

But what about safety?

Because scooters are easier to operate and steer, their safety record is very good. And your legs don't stick out the front. [You can read more about safety issues here.](#)

However, given all this, powerchairs are still the way to go when the user is pretty much confined to the chair 24/7, or who cannot use their arms sufficiently to operate a scooter. Then a custom designed chair is what is required, to make sure the user is comfortable in all circumstances.