

Parking Made Easy - Making Life Easier

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PARKING MADE EASY - MAKING LIFE EASIER

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Written by Daniel Battaglia.

To drivers and home owners, who value their time and money and want to live a better life. I hope this book provides some insights to help give you more freedom to do what you want, when you want and live better.

Thanks in advance for reading and sharing the book with your friends and family. Feel free to join us on the website for more benefits.

Why Does Parking Matter?

If there is one thing that unites everyone in Australia, it comes at the end of every car journey, and that is finding somewhere to park. It doesn't matter if you are driving a 20-year-old Holden or the latest Ferrari, at some point you have to get out of the car, and that means parking it somewhere.

Yet, despite it being something we all do every day, other than moaning that there is never any good parking, there isn't much information about it. For instance, how many people know that Ancient Romans struggled with parking chariots too, or where the first parking meters came from? Not many.

Not finding a parking spot can be a pain, and getting a ticket can ruin your day. We'll help you find the right parking spot to avoid those tickets to begin with, but also help you with some ideas on challenging tickets if you do get one.

Today, with this book, you can become a parking expert. In this ultimate dive into parking, we'll look at its history, the problems you deal with today, and where parking may go in the future. But we'll also show you how parking can make you money, and even live without parking altogether!

You'll never find a parking guide like this anywhere else, so get comfy and let's explore the world of parking together, and how something that seems as ordinary as parking can make your life a lot better and put money in your pocket!

The Complete History of Parking

We may think of parking as something new, but that is not actually the case. While at times it can seem like a torture device designed to mess with your day, parking has been an issue for civilizations throughout history.

The story of frustration in finding somewhere to park begins with the Roman Empire, where finding a place to leave your chariot was as frustrating as it can be today to park your Corolla. Although the horses involved with a chariot ride tend to be messier than a Toyota wherever you leave them. As long as we have had transport, someone has been complaining about what to do with it once they reach their destination.

There have been many advancements over the years to suit the transport of the times. For instance, in the UK, inns tended to have a stable alongside to keep horses, and to this day you can find old buildings with arches in them designed to allow a coach and horses to pass through and stop in the courtyard.

Car parking as we understand it today actually first appeared to cater to horse drawn carriages across the US in the late 1800s. However, as the motor vehicle emerged in 1886, things changed rapidly. The new invention quickly became the must-have transport, and numbers in use grew rapidly. By 1920, parking garages entirely dedicated to the car began to appear in numbers. But the use of cars, and of course commercial vehicles, ensured that far more parking than ever before was needed. Where a city once needed two or three parking services for carriages, they now needed dozens for the sheer number of cars being used.

So, the question at the time was how we fit more parking spaces into the space we have. The solution for this issue was the multistorey carpark. The first in the UK, and very likely the first multistorey in the world was built in central London, with seven floors and space for one hundred vehicles. It opened its doors in May 1901, which is probably much earlier than you thought, and sadly no longer exists. However, another London multistorey that opened in 1902 on Wardour Street is still here today. Almost certainly the oldest surviving example, it had three levels and held two hundred vehicles. Today it is a pub, but the building itself is still intact, a true piece of parking history.

Of course, going up is not the only way of solving the space problem, and underground car parks started appearing around 1930. These were mostly part of new buildings, including office and apartment blocks, providing parking for those using the building. That is a practice we still see today, and almost every major city will have buildings with underground parking. It's a great idea that saves space and provides security. It also means that if you are going to work or going to your apartment, you know that there is a place to park when you get there. For anyone that has spent half an hour trying to find a space when visiting a friend in the city, you know how welcome that would be.

But parking truly changed on July 16th, 1935. That was the day the first parking meter was installed on the corner of what was at the time First Street and Robinson Avenue in Oklahoma City, United States. Known as Park-O-Meter No. 1, it was designed by Carl Magee, and turned what were up until that point free parking spaces into paid ones. The idea was not popular at first, people had got used to parking where there was a space

and not having to pay. However, after seeing how traffic flow improved, parking meters were accepted in Oklahoma.

While that initial test was successful, it wasn't until 1945 that meters became a cohesive parking solution. Los Angeles became the first city in the world with a metered parking system ran by the local government. It is seen as a pioneer for the modern approach to parking. As a result, through the 1950s the parking meter system spread to cities across the United States, and then further afield.

The next big breakthrough in parking came during the late 60s and 70s, where automated systems began to appear in parking garages and multistorey solutions around the world. Here people could park, do their thing, then pay for parking as they leave without the need for parking attendants. That added efficiency made parking a profitable business, and it has never looked back.

Since then, little has changed in terms of what car parking looks like. It is still based around the same idea of parking areas that you pay to enter, or parking meters you pay to park by the road. Technology has added even more efficiency and made it easier to pay for parking though. With automatic license plate recognition, app-based payments and more, technology has added to parking profitability throughout the 80s, 90s and beyond.

But apart from those superficial and efficiency changes, the real difference is the demand. There has never been a more popular form of transport than the car, and with that popularity comes an almost endless need for parking.

Parking Today – It Doesn't Have to Be a Nightmare

If we look at parking today, the basics haven't changed. Parking meters and car parks are still the main choices we have when looking to park in a city. In fact, they are mostly the same facilities that we used twenty or thirty years ago, but that doesn't mean parking is the same as it was even in the 1990s.

Technology has had a dramatic influence on how parking is managed, and today parking systems use those tools to maximize efficiency across an entire community. For instance, you can enter a city that you have never been to before or drive to a major event, and you will find helpful signs directing you to the parking area that has available spaces. Because the signs can change in real time depending on parking demand, you never have to do that old time-wasting activity of driving to each car park looking for somewhere with spaces available.

These digital systems work with traffic flow cameras and management to keep vehicles moving and direct them to the best places for parking. While this is happening, the digital systems also build a vast database of information about parking, traffic volume and so on, and that is used to analyse the process, predict demand and improve management. It is a constant cycle, and one that has made parking much less of a nightmare than it has been in the past.

Parking has also changed with how we live. It is not just about commuters and shoppers in a city. It's not even just about cars anymore. Whether its photography, mountain biking, hiking or just enjoying the natural world, as a society we are more

aware of the world around us, and more people than ever want to experience it for themselves.

So parking is now important outside of cities, whether it's for cars, RVs or caravans at popular destinations. Facilities here have to deliver a more comprehensive service too, not just a space for a vehicle, but power for overnight stays and other facilities too. Parking has become part place to store the vehicle and part accommodation, an essential service that supports the idea of getting out into nature for millions of people.

That applies to other areas too, not just vehicles with wheels. Another area of rapid growth is our love of water. From fast boats to tow skiers and wakeboarders, ribs that let you explore the inland waterways or luxury yachts that provide an apartment experience on the water, boating has become not just popular, but an aspirational activity.

The thing is, every one of those boats needs a place to park. While working from home is popular, permanent living as a water nomad is not within most of our grasps any time soon, so the fun does have to stop, and we need to leave the boat somewhere safe. Importantly, we need somewhere the boat will still be when we come back. Boating would, I think, be a lot less fun if that boat just floated away never to be seen again every time you left it.

That is why we see more marinas popping up along coastlines around the world. They are essentially parking garages for boats, but again, as with caravan and RV parks, they have a lot more going on than somewhere to leave your boat. Access to shore power, maintenance services, even wifi for those staying on board for a few days, these are all things boat parking also has to offer. The result of all that is that if you ever thought car parking is expen-

sive, don't get into boating. Expect to pay tens of thousands of dollars a year to for a nice birth, which is essentially a parking spot.

That also leads on to the things we take for granted with parking, that someone has to provide. Your average multistorey car park user doesn't need power or wifi like a boat or a caravan of course, but there is one thing that users do expect in all of those parking applications. That when they return, their car, truck, boat or whatever will be there.

Security is a major concern for anyone leaving a vehicle, and while most parking solutions avoid promising anything regarding security, users do expect some level of protection, even if it is just being well lit and having security cameras. However, for some situations security is an even more important factor, and even legacy car parks today tend to have been updated with monitoring and other measures to help protect users and their vehicles.

But security is not the only thing that has changed over the years. We have talked about different vehicles and boats, and how parking solutions have evolved to cater to those, but cars themselves have changed too. While electric vehicles are very much the future of parking, they are here now, and in numbers that grow each year.

As a result, there is a need to cater to these vehicles, and that is something that is just beginning. In major cities and along high-traffic intercity routes, you will find electric vehicle chargers starting to appear with increasing frequency. This changes parking again, not just in terms of having to supply electricity to specific parking spaces, but in how those spaces are used.

Charging an electric vehicle can take anything from twenty minutes to a couple of hours, and the parking system has to allow for that too. Providing vehicle charging solutions means working with third party suppliers to deliver the equipment and service, and with that comes more responsibility. The very worst thing for an electric car driver is planning a journey and then getting to the charge station to find out it isn't working. As technology advances and cars require more advanced charging, parking systems will need to adapt further to keep up too.

On the whole though, car parking today is probably easier and more convenient than any time in history, but there are still issues that could be better. Parking is getting more expensive than ever, and there are more vehicles looking for a parking space. While these large systems operated by local government are great for cities and other large communities such as event spaces and so on, parking can still be an issue where there are smaller demand levels.

These parking needs, such as weekend parking near popular areas for picnicking, sports and other leisure activities, don't really fit into such massive digital systems, yet demand here is increasing too. This has opened the door for a new wave of parking solutions, and as we adapt to changing transport technology itself, those new options will become increasingly necessary and desired.

The Future of Parking – Living the Dream

In the 60s, *The Jetsons*, a cartoon about a family living in the future, featured a flying car that folded down into a briefcase when not in use. It is unlikely that we will ever see that solution to parking become reality, but many other sci fi books and films have predicted self-driving vehicles, and we know they are coming because they kind of exist today. While brands like Tesla have pushed the boundaries of driver assistance to become a version of self-driving, including parking the vehicle automatically, currently the parking infrastructure has not really kept up.

But we know that cannot continue, and the reality is that as transport technology evolves, parking solutions will have to evolve as well. But what does that mean long term? Will we be able to arrive at a parking centre, get out and leave the car to it, then call it back to us when we want to leave? That seems like the dream approach to parking, but what does it need to make it happen?

There are two parts to that kind of service, the technology in the car park itself, and the technology within the car. For such a seamless experience, the two will need to work together, in that the vehicle must be able to drive autonomously, but also receive information about parking locations and when it should return to the entrance, from the car park itself. Both sets of technology actually exist today, not as refined as required for a reliable autonomous parking experience, but that is only a matter of time and development. But is it the right answer?

Right now, parking systems know which cars are parked where within the car park, this data is used to establish remaining capacities and so on, and while not universal, there are cars that can go off and park themselves when needed. So that future service is nearer than we think, but in the meantime what does car parking look like? Some may say that the future is already here without needing self-driving cars. In Japan and some cities in the United States, lift based parking solutions offer a similar experience today. You arrive at a parking garage; your vehicle is pulled into a cubicle which is then lifted away. When you want to return to your car, the system finds the right cubicle garage and then returns it to the entrance, so you can drive away.

There are advantages to this approach, without the need for ramps to drive up and down to reach the parking, more cars can be parked in a given space. Because no one actually enters the building where vehicles are stored, it is also incredibly secure too. These systems are being constantly refined, and in the future, it is likely such a garage could be completely automated. With the advantages of space and security, is that more likely to be the future of high-density parking? If we look at other factors, it may well be.

Cities are increasingly looking to decrease car numbers, opening up spaces instead for social areas, encouraging cycling and other more environmentally friendly approaches to transportation. This is unlikely to change even with widespread adoption of electric cars, so parking will naturally require large hubs with high density parking that allows easy access to walks, bikes or public transport to central areas. To get an idea for the future, we can look at what technology best fits this scenario.

It is likely that these robotic lift type solutions that pack more vehicles into each parking area fit the needs of city designers better than any more traditional multistorey or underground system that requires ramps and so on, whether the cars are operated by drivers or park themselves. There are other things that are in the favour of this approach too.

Architects are under pressure to soften the appearance of buildings in cities across the world, to create spaces that have more light and elegance. A more compact multistorey space, or an underground alternative with only one small entrance space is easier to disguise with cladding, colour and other design tricks that much larger car parks that have ramps and so on.

There is also the matter of technology. While there are cars that can drive themselves in a limited way now, and numbers are only going to increase, they are not all cars, and may never be. Holden stopped making cars in 2020, but in twenty years' time, there will still be Holden cars driving on the roads. Those cars can never use autonomous parking systems, but they can use the robotic systems that take your car away and bring it back via a crane lift. They can use them today, and they can use them in the future.

So, the dream of a car swooshing away into its own spot automatically could well be the future. However, it is more likely to be carried there by a machine rather than drive itself. But not all parking is in cities with integrated parking solutions ran by the local authorities. For parking elsewhere, things will develop alongside vehicle technology, and there is one area that must advance for the future of the automotive industry itself, never mind parking. That is electric car charging.

Right now, charging is a bit of a mess. Different speeds depending on the charger installation, there is no real cohesive system and owners often have to wrestle with a number of different apps to access charging networks on the go. Then there are the mechanics of charging, a heavy cable that has to be plugged in, account information and payment input before the car can be charged. As with phones, wireless charging is the solution, it removes much of the hassle and fail points for a better experience. But what would that look like in cars?

The obvious answer is charging areas embedded into the road or parking space, with a vehicle stopping on top of it automatically charging. There are hurdles to this, it would mean an end to the various account systems currently used to access charge networks, and instead have something tied to the vehicle itself. However, this kind of solution offers easy and efficient charging without the hassle we have today.

This would also require new technology for parking. For instance, our robotic car parks could have a charge loop in each container or cubicle, so electric vehicles charge automatically once they are taken away for storage. Likewise, on-road parking at parking meters could include chargers under each space. This makes the charging process so much less hassle but allows for electric car charging without having to install endless charge stations in streets, and avoiding all the cables that the current system will need. Given the sheer number of electric cars that will be in operation in just a decade or so, and one cable per car, you can see how much an alternative is required.

But while technology will continue to drive the parking experience, and in cities and communities the need for clean, open spaces will change where we park and what that parking looks

like, there will still be areas where parking sits outside of these grand designs. At its heart, a parking space is somewhere to store a vehicle while you go off and do something, and that need is not going to change. Large robotic parking systems in cities may appear in numbers, but they are not going to be the norm in areas with a smaller traffic flow or specific needs.

What we may see, and it is happening now, is that entrepreneurs and visionaries can find ways to provide a more selective parking solution on a smaller scale, that caters to a very specific need in a specific location. Not only are these services essential and in high demand, but they can be a source of income for anyone who has access to suitable parking space. With more cars than ever on the roads, and with a shift to electric not changing that, the future of parking looks to be heading in multiple directions. The centralised systems operated in cities and other large communities will follow an approach that minimises the space required and seek to integrate such facilities into an overall plan for the area. However, in some areas where there is no overall control of parking operations, the idea that you can rent a parking spot from a single person makes sense. Some people have space, others need that space, and as more cars are used, that space is in ever higher demand.

There are a number of ways that can work, and it is one of the things we love at Parking Made Easy. Let's look at the idea of parking as an income and how you could grab a share of the massive parking economy for yourself, or solve your parking problems for much less than you think.

Renting – Can Parking be Profitable?

So far, we have focused on mass car parking, usually ran by local authorities. Whether that is street parking on meters or integrated parking systems using multistorey and underground car parks, there is little difference around the world. That is because they work, and provide the mass parking solutions big cities, major events and so on need.

But large city-wide solutions can never really cater to every need, and if we look beyond the large office blocks, shopping centres and so on, parking can look very different. With housing costs rising, apartments have grown in popularity for city dwellers, but modern apartments have an in-built problem. As we mentioned before, architects and planners are constantly trying to create open spaces, so apartments today are usually accompanied by underground parking. The problem is, one parking space is fine if you are single, but a couple living in a nice new apartment need somewhere else to park their second vehicle.

Imagine paying the cost of a city multistorey to park your car every day? You'd need a second job just to fund it, but what is the alternative? There are thousands in Australia struggling with this situation, and they are not alone. Across the country, people are looking for more cost-effective and reliable ways to deal with their own parking needs. More of us are commuting into cities and communities than ever before, and that brings with it parking issues. Yes, the integrated parking systems work well, but are incredibly expensive, especially if you are looking to park a car for eight hours a day five days a week.

That is a big chunk of your earnings just to park your car. With many offices and other workplaces not having enough parking of their own, this is an issue for people everywhere, and in growing numbers. It is similar with sports fans, or those attending regular events, even with people who love to boat or mountain bike or enjoy other activities. Few marinas have enough parking for every boat owner, if you arrive on a weekend, you may find there is nowhere to leave your car. A weekend rate at a traditional car park will make your boating trip an expensive one. Likewise with sports or events, parking at the ground can be some of the most expensive parking you will ever find, and there isn't always enough space even then.

In all of these situations, car owners are looking for a parking solution that is both affordable and can offer long term reliability. Whether that means a spot every weekday while at work, or something they can use every weekend for boating, biking or watching sports, as well as those looking for a spot that they can use every day because there is nowhere at home to keep the car.

The answer to all these issues is not the latest computer-controlled parking system, but in ordinary people, just like you, who have an empty driveway, garage or some land that can be used as a parking lot. The average rate you can get for a parking spot is around AUS\$400 a month, or AUS\$4,000 a year, with some variation depending on your location. But this is something that you can do in any country, not just Australia, in fact, in cities like London there is even more demand, and prices can be even higher.

Everyone Benefits

The great thing about renting parking spaces is that everyone benefits. Those who rent out their driveway, parking spot, garage or land have extra income, which is always nice, while those needing parking spaces get a great deal, save money and have a parking space that will always be there when they need it. No more losing half an hour a day finding somewhere to park, and then spending huge chunks of your earnings to keep your car there once you find one.

A win-win situation is a rare thing, but renting out parking spaces really is one. Not just for car owners either. Everything we have talked about with car parking applies even more to trucks, trailer boats, caravans and other larger items. There is a need to store all of these things, and renting out space from an individual is one of the best solutions here too. If you have the space, someone is looking for it.

This is an opportunity that applies almost anywhere in the world too, because demand for this more affordable, long-term solution is a universal thing. From London to Los Angeles, everywhere you find a lot of people, there are issues with parking. Whether you are a car owner looking for that different approach to parking for your vehicle, or someone who has an empty drive or garage looking to earn a little extra each month, parking space rental works for everyone.

How Rental Parking Works

Instead of paying daily or even worse, hourly for your parking from a corporate or local government owned facility, car owners can find someone offering to rent their parking space and deal di-

rectly with that individual. The rental is covered by a lease agreement as with property rentals, so everyone knows exactly where they stand and everything is legal and compliant. The car owner then simply pays the agreed fee, whether that is per day, month or year, and they have a parking space they can use for less money.

There are a number of benefits to this, because the parking is based on a deal between the two people, it can be completely custom to meet any need for both parties. For instance, if someone needs parking for work Monday to Friday, they can agree a fee to cover that. The parking spot owner can then use it themselves at the weekend or rent it out to someone else for weekend use, whatever suits. In this situation though, no one is paying for more than they use, its better value for the car owner and offers flexibility for the renter.

How much a parking space costs will depend on a number of factors, how much demand there is, the location and so on. For instance, a London parking space recently sold for \$1 million, and Hong Kong parking spots can fetch even more. In that market, rentals can be incredibly expensive, however away from that kind of madness, in most countries a \$400 a month rental rate is probably the average. This is usually a significant saving for the vehicle owner. Costs rise for larger vehicles too, and if you are thinking about renting out a drive, garage or other space, it is important to do some market research and find the kind of prices similar spaces in your area are achieving.

The Business of Renting a Parking Space

If you have a space to rent out, then it is important to remember that in doing so, you are starting a business. There are few regulations about renting parking spaces, but there are some things to think about before you do. One of the key aspects of the process is the land itself. Do you own it outright? If so, you can probably do what you want with it, although if it is a plot of land, making sure that local authorities will allow parking on it and establishing whether you need any kind of license is essential.

However, for most people renting out an existing driveway or garage, the biggest issue is if you don't own the building outright. If you are leasing the property, you must check the lease to see that you can rent parts of it out. Your contract may prevent this and breaching that contract could see you lose your home. If you have a mortgage, it is important to check the terms. It is not usually the case, but there may be a clause about renting out parts of the mortgaged property. Always be certain before you do anything, being found out later on can be a costly problem.

It is also important to remember that as income, the money you receive for any rental is subject to the taxation laws that apply at your location. You should always seek advice from a tax professional to be sure of your responsibilities when it comes to this, so you can be confident in the legality of your rental business.

However, while there is some work involved in contracts and records to ensure you comply with legislation, renting out spare space really is worthwhile. If you have space for two cars, you could be adding an extra \$800 a month to your income. It is not

life changing, but that can fund a lot of fun things or just take the pressure off where money is concerned.

Pros and Cons of Rental Parking

Nothing is perfect, and while rental parking has a lot to offer both drivers and renters, there are some things to consider too. Firstly though, let's look at the benefits you get from a rental parking space as a driver:

- **Save Money!** – Private rental can be as little as half the cost of a commercial parking solution.
- **Save Time** – Instead of wasting your time looking for a parking space every day, you can just drive right to your rental, knowing it is ready to use.
- **Peace of Mind** – With a signed contract, you know your parking is sorted. No more worrying about finding a space, no hassles about the costs.

Renters benefit too, of course, with extra money from something they are not using. A simple way to add a little extra income and it is all so easy to do.

It is not perfect though, there are challenges for drivers thinking of using rental parking to solve their needs.

- **Finding the right space** – Unlike large commercial solutions, there are no signposts to tell you where a rental parking opportunity is. You have to find them, and that is not always easy.
- **Availability** – While rental parking is growing in popularity, there may be no one offerings spaces where

you need one right now.

Luckily, there is something that we can do about both of these problems, that is why we always say that with our help, you can enjoy parking made easy.

PARKING MADE EASY - MAKING LIFE EASIER 21

The following terms and conditions shall apply to this Parking Space Lease Agreement ("Agreement"):

_____, as Lessor, does hereby agree to let to _____, as Lessee, a parking space located at _____ (Building/Street Address) _____ (City), _____ (State), such parking space being further described Parking Space No. ____ at the aforementioned location.

Terms and Conditions:

1. Items Left in Vehicle. Lessor shall not be responsible for damage or loss to possessions or items left in Lessees vehicle.
2. Damage to Vehicle. Lessor shall not be responsible for damage to Lessees vehicle, whether or not such damage is caused by other vehicle(s) or person(s) in the parking lot and surrounding area.
3. Parking Lot Attendants. Lessor shall / shall not / may provide parking lot attendants. In the event that Lessor provides such attendants, any use of such attendant by Lessee to park or drive Lessees vehicle shall be at Lessees request, direction and sole risk of any resulting loss and Lessee shall indemnify Lessor for any loss resulting from such use.
4. Payments by Lessee. Lessee agrees to pay \$ _____ per (week, month, or other term) for the lease of the aforementioned parking space. Lessee is to make such leasehold payment – (to Lessor or Lessors Agent) in person (or by mail) at _____ address. Payments shall be made in advance by Lessee on (the first Monday of each week, the first of each month, or other agreed date).
5. Receipts by Lessor. Lessor agrees to provide a receipt to Lessee for each payment received. Such receipt shall show the amount paid and number of the leased parking space.
6. Termination. Either party may terminate this Agreement by providing (7 days/30 days/or other time period) written notice to the other party. Any such notice shall be directed to a party at the party's address as listed below in this Agreement.

EXECUTED AND AGREED by the parties hereto, this the ____ day of _____, 20____.

Lessor Name, Signature and Address

Lessee Name, Signature and Address

Downloadable at <https://www.parkingmadeeasy.com.au/Templates.docx>

Booking Your Parking – Securing Your Spot in Advance

Traveling anywhere by car, boat or any vehicle you are in control of means having somewhere to leave it when you arrive at your destination. For a long time, this was a minor inconvenience, something you never worried about, just find a space when you get there. But parking today has got a lot more expensive, and with more cars, boats and every other kind of vehicle in use, finding a parking spot can be a frustrating, not to mention time consuming experience.

Driving five hours to an event to find parking full and a choice of a long walk or risking a parking fine as the only options is not a fun time. It's guaranteed to spoil your day out and leave you stressed. But it can apply to everyday situations too. How many of us have to have that dash for a space just to go to work, or to go to a stadium to watch a game? Uncertainty about parking is one of those things that makes a journey a chore and turns an event into something else.

It doesn't just apply to one-off parking either, imagine if you had somewhere you could park every time you go to the gym or your office, and without spending a fortune on parking charges too? Maybe you run a business and are tired of the sheer amount of money being spent on parking charges by your team as they travel to different cities, not to mention the hours of work time lost over a year from your people trying to find a cost effective parking option wherever they are.

Think how much better going to an event, setting off on your daily commute or any journey at all would be, if you knew

you have a parking space waiting for you when you got to your destination. Once you say it, being able to book your parking in advance seems obvious, yet it is a relatively new thing, and another advance driven by technology.

Booking Your Parking

Combining the benefits of privately rented parking spaces with the convenience of app or web-based advanced booking, this is a strategy that can transform the parking experience for owners of any vehicle, whether an individual, fleet manager or business owner.

Booking a parking spot for a day, a week, a month or a year in advance means that every time you head off, you already know that you have somewhere to park. For commuters it takes away the stress, and with the savings you enjoy by avoiding commercial parking solutions, it is better for the bank balance too.

This type of parking can cover any vehicle need too, from cars to boats, hard standing for trailers, even space to store aircraft, trucks and other large equipment. In each case, the vehicle owner has an assurance of somewhere to park before they set off, and the landowner makes some money. It is a simple idea too, but it has taken technology to make it possible. If we look at the process, you can see why.

Booking parking is pretty easy, you need to first search for someone offering a suitable parking spot where you need it. Then you need a way of contacting the parking spot owner and discuss your parking needs. After that, you agree a fee for your parking and book the spot for a particular time, whether that be for a day,

a week, a year or any other interval. Then you need a secure way to pay for that service.

Parking booking today is available through web platforms and apps for your mobile device. In many cases, you get a choice of both. But imagine trying to do those before we had easy ways to contact and communicate with others? It really has been an idea waiting for the technology to catch up.

Parking Made Easy has built a large community in Australia, with renters all over the country, and are reaching further afield with the idea every day. There are others taking similar routes too, and you may find several options for apps and web platforms depending on where you live. By signing up renters, the systems build a database of available parking, and then provide the secure system for contacting and negotiating with them for a parking space to suit your needs.

The technology makes it easy to secure a parking booking in advance, knowing your parking needs are taken care of. The deal is always between you and the individual who owns the parking space, so you need to make sure that everything is in place beforehand in terms of agreed times, fees and so on.

Other Ways to Find a Space to Rent

If all that sounds a little complicated, there are other ways to find people to rent you a parking space too. You can simply try door knocking to ask if anyone in the area you want to park has a space you could use. There are some things to consider if you do try this approach though.

A weekend morning means more people will be around, and of course in broad daylight for the safety aspect of approaching

people you don't know. For the same reason, take someone with you if you can. If you do try this, another tip is that before you set out, have a price in mind that you would be happy to pay, because one of the first questions anyone interested will ask is 'how much will you pay me?'

You can also try flyers, just include your phone number, the kind of price you will pay for a parking spot and distribute them around the area you are looking to park. Posters work in the same way too, and if you can get them onto notice boards in apartment blocks with underground parking, you may find plenty of offers.

In either case, you will have to be a little bit flexible with location. You may have a particular place in mind but put out flyers and posters in a wider area, maybe a couple of blocks in either direction. That could mean a parking space that requires a short walk, but the more people that see your offer, the more likely it is you will find someone who want to do a deal.

Again, always have safety in mind with this process, if you do get someone who contacts you from a flyer or poster, arrange a meeting in daylight and take someone with you.

Who Can Benefit?

There are two types of people who benefit from this approach, the people who have spare car parking space, as they make money, and those looking for spaces. Of course, there are a wide variety of types of people who may be looking for a space. From individuals looking to secure reliable, regular parking for their daily needs, or maybe a fleet manager seeking to lower parking costs for their business.

There are others too, boat owners looking for berths during a trip, those with large machinery seeking space to store it and many more. But no matter who it is, what is clear about the idea of being able to book parking in advance can help a wide range of people avoid the stress and expense that modern parking systems bring.

Pros and Cons of Booking Your Parking

Booking your parking brings with it many advantages, although there are some issues to. We can begin by looking at the benefits of the system. Renters benefit with extra money from their spare parking, but drivers can enjoy several benefits, including:

- **Less Hassle** – With a parking space secured before you travel, you can have confidence that your journey end will be hassle free.
- **The Perfect Spot** – If you are travelling in a larger vehicle or require something specific such as flat ground for easier wheelchair access, you can make sure that is all in place before booking. That way, you know the parking is right for your needs, every time.
- **It's Cheaper** – Parking costs have gone up a lot in recent years. By booking with an individual, you can save money over the cost of a commercial parking space.
- **It's convenient** – You don't have to spend time finding a space on the day, you can book in advance when it is convenient. Using a web platform or an app, sorting out your parking is something you can do wherever

you are, whenever you want.

Nothing is perfect though, and there are a couple of issues to think about:

- **Availability** – Booking apps for parking are growing rapidly, but you may find that there is limited choice for your specific requirements, and sometimes no options at all.
- **Choosing the right platform** – Your experience in booking parking spaces will depend on the quality of the booking platform you use. At Parking Made easy we have spent many years refining our system for smooth, reliable booking across Australia, but not every system offers the same tools and community.
- **Not an Option Everywhere** – There are some cities and countries that do not have a reliable system in operation yet. The idea is popular though, and booking specialists are continually looking for new markets for their systems.

As with anything built on technology, it is places where that technology has been more readily adopted that see the most activity first. In this case, countries with high levels of internet access and severe issues with parking, including Australia, United Kingdom, United States, Europe and so on, but the idea is spreading fast.

[Flyer – print the top section]

Parking Wanted –

Share Your Parking Space When It's Empty

Offering \$400 per month!!!

Earn money and make the neighbourhood better for everyone.

As seen on parkingmadeeasy.com.au

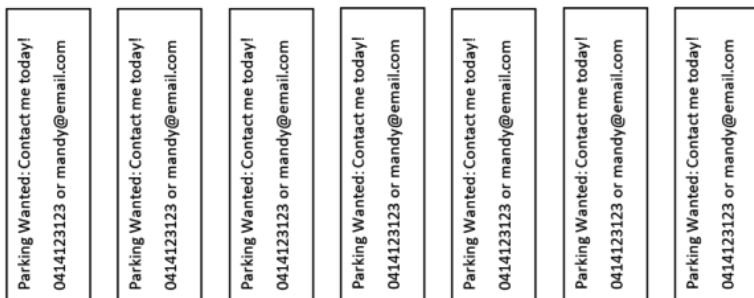
Seeking a driveway, car space or garage for long term rental.

Needed as a second space for home/work.

Contact me today:

0414123123 or mandy@email.com

[Poster – add below and cut vertically with scissors in the white space for tear-offs]



Downloadable at <https://www.parkingmadeeasy.com.au/Templates.docx>

Appealing Your Tickets – Avoid Those Parking Fines

One of the major downsides of the lack of parking, or parking that is just too expensive for daily use, is that you end up trying to park anywhere you can. The inevitable result is a parking ticket, and more expense. But it doesn't have to be a disaster, there are things you can do to avoid those expensive penalties, here are some tips in appealing your parking tickets and keeping that money in your pocket instead.

The first thing to remember is that everything can be challenged, so if you do get a parking ticket, collect your own evidence. From photos of the car and ticket to the time the ticket was issued, everything about it may be a way to appeal successfully. Always collect as much evidence as possible. Once you have that, you can think of how you want to appeal. There are a number of things you can try, at least one will be possible depending on the situation you find yourself in.

It Was an Illegal Ticket

This happens more often than you may think and is always worth disputing a ticket if you see an error in the way it was issued. A mistake on the vehicle registration, location or anything like that on the ticket can be contested and invalidate it. Likewise, if you can prove, with photos, the vehicle was not actually illegally parked, you can also contest the ticket in court.

There are a number of situations that can occur here, see if any of these apply:

- If you receive a penalty notice, check that the offence code refers to the offence described. If they don't match you may have a case. Also check that the description of the vehicle, including manufacturer and registration, are actually your vehicle.
- If the area is controlled by parking signs, can they be seen clearly from where your vehicle was parked? If not, you may be able to contest the fine.
- When using parking bays, check whether the road markings for the bay are easy to see and read. If they are worn or partially unreadable, you can use this in your defence.
- The same issue with road markings can apply to other issues too, so whatever the offence described, always look at warning markings and signs for that particular offence. If they are not clearly visible, you can use that to contest any fine.
- For any issue involving a parking meter, you need to check that the meter itself was working properly. If it isn't, was there a way to notify someone, a phone number on the meter or a sign clearly visible in the area to help you?
- Always keep your parking tickets, they can be valuable proof that you did not overstay your time and did pay for the parking.

There is normally a specific process outlined on the ticket if you wish to contest. With these kinds of challenges, if you have proof of the error, it is relatively straightforward. Take your proof with you and make your case. Results do vary with this,

however if you have solid evidence there is every chance you will succeed.

Appeal for Mitigating Circumstances

Sometimes, you may have no choice but to park as best you can. You may be struggling to get to a job interview, maybe you overstayed your meter because of a medical emergency or any number of personal reasons. These can be used to claim for mitigating circumstances for your illegal parking.

Not every excuse will be accepted of course, but the goal is to show that it was a situation out of your control, or the consequences of not parking would have a significantly bad effect on you that you were left with little choice. There are some things you will need to show here, and one of those is that there was no alternative, legal parking available to you.

If you are using a medical emergency or similar problem as your reasoning, you will need to offer witness testimony that it happened if you are to get the ticket erased, else everyone would claim it for every ticket.

The key to success with this type of appeal is to write a compelling letter. First outline the issue that caused the parking offence, then discuss its impact on you. The medical emergency ones are fairly self-explanatory, but if you are discussing an issue such as a job interview or other excuse, you need to explain why. For instance, you had to attend the interview as you need an income to keep a roof over your head, that kind of thing. The goal is to connect some kind of lifestyle damage to the reason why you had to park even though there were no legal spaces.

Use a Template

You will find a number of templates available online to use when creating your letter to contest the parking ticket. The Parking Made Easy website features a number of ideas, and you can find great letter examples on the internet that are free to use. Using templates helps you get all the information you need in place and make the entire process fast and easy. You may not be successful with every appeal, but given how high some parking fines can be, it is always worth appealing if you have a case, because you may win and save some money.

Tricks from a Pro

Some people make it their mission to help others avoid parking fines, and at Parking Made Easy we have done just that. Having spent years finding the best ways to avoid parking fines, we eventually went straight to the source, and talked to parking officers to find the best ways to get out of those annoying fines, which total around \$180 million a year in New South Wales alone.

On cheeky tip we heard, although the legality is fuzzy on this so take it as a bit of fun, is that if you get a fine, find a car nearby with a valid voucher/receipt on display of the dashboard and take a photo of that to send in. Given how greedy councils are getting with parking costs and fines, some would say that this is fighting back, but we'll leave it up to you to decide whether you agree with this approach.

We think that wanders into the realm of fraud, so would not recommend you try it.

However, there are plenty of less legally dubious approaches, and letters noting that the vehicle was parked legally, or that the

ticket has errors, are by far the most successful. While we have discussed those already, a key tip is to get that letter in early. You want to submit as quickly as possible, but definitely before the payment is due, because each reminder letter simply adds to the amount you will need to pay.

Here is our handy checklist for any parking penalty, go through this before you pay anything, and you may find yourself with more money in your pocket!

- Is the offence code used on the ticket the same as the offence stated on the ticket?
- Is the description of the vehicle including manufacturer and registration the same as your car?
- Were you clearly able to see the relevant parking signs from where you parked?
- Were the road markings for the parking bay readable?
- Was the offence on the ticket warned about in road signs or markings and were they easily visible?
- Did the parking meter work properly? If not, was there a way to contact someone to notify them of the fault?
- Have you kept your parking ticket? If so, does it prove you had paid for the time you were parked?
- If there was an emergency issue that caused you to park or overstay your time, such as a medical issue, are there any witnesses who can verify your story?

Once you go through your checklist, you will know whether you can contest the ticket and exactly how you can do so. It's a valuable tool, use it with any parking fine and you can contest them with confidence.

[Your address and full contact details]

[Date]

[Issuing authority address]

To whom it may concern,

I am contesting fine [Number] I received on [Date] at [Time], which states my car was parked at or near [Location]. I am writing to formally challenge this ticket for the following reasons.

According to [Law you allegedly violated; copy paste law here]. However, in my situation [explain the technicality or extenuating circumstance, for example: you did not commit the offence, you did not own the vehicle at the time, the parking meter was broken, there was a medical emergency, there was a vehicle breakdown, it was a public holiday, an apology and request for forgiveness].

To provide evidence in my favour I have attached [evidence: photograph; witness statement; etc.] to this statement.

For the aforementioned reasons, I am requesting my ticket be dismissed.

Regards,

[Your name and signature]

Downloadable at <https://www.parkingmadeeasy.com.au/Templates.docx>

Parallel Parking – The Ultimate Challenge?

There is perhaps no other phrase that can turn a confident driver into a terrified one like parallel parking. It is one of those things that even those who have been driving for years have trouble with, yet it is one of the most valuable skills you can learn for day-to-day driving.

Being able to manoeuvre into a parking space between two other vehicles with parallel parking is not just some cruel part of the learner test, but a genuinely useful skill that opens up a whole new range of parking opportunities.

Think about parking in general. You may go to a multistorey or underground parking lot most of the time, but what about when you park at the side of the road? That can be necessary at busy events for instance, where parking lots are full and you just need to park anywhere so you can get into the concert, sports event, even to see the Christmas lights, whatever it may be.

If you can't parallel park, this scenario is probably your worst nightmare for any type of parking situation, as you need to find a space that you can just pull straight into. That usually means a couple of empty spaces next to each other, maybe more. Even then, you can end up struggling, driving onto the footpath and just making parking into some major event.

But with parallel parking this are not just easier, but you find a space between two other cars, and you can slot right in. No drama, no fuss, and you are much more likely to actually find a suitable parking space in the first place.

So, there are some great benefits to parallel parking, and it is also a great skill to have in terms of confidence as a driver too, but what if you have always struggled with it and don't know how to change that?

Mastering Parallel Parking

For new drivers, the best advice is to pay attention when practicing for your learner's test, don't just think of the parallel parking section as something to get through, learn and understand what you are taught so that you can use it with confidence once you have your own vehicle.

However, for those who have passed and then forgotten everything about parallel parking, or who have never really been confident in parking this way, or even for those who have just avoided using parallel parking for so long they don't have the confidence to try again, all is not lost.

You can gain the skills to parallel park; anyone can do it with a bit of focus and practice. You can find that some driving instructors will offer catch-up lessons to help you renew skills like parallel parking, but it really is nowhere near as complicated as you think, so if you don't fancy lessons, you can get there by practicing yourself.

There are six steps to successfully parallel parking, these are:

1. Find the Right Parking Spot

While some people seem to be able to park in spaces little longer than their car, for most of us that is not what we want. Look for a parking space that is about one and a half times longer

than your car, this gives you plenty of breathing room for the manoeuvre.

1. Finding the right starting position

Every aspect of parallel parking is important, but it is here, where you begin the process, that is key to success. If you start in the wrong place, nothing you do after will be right, and you will end up having to pull out of the spot and start again.

So, you want the vehicle to be stopped next to the car you want to park behind. Your passenger mirror should line up with the drivers mirror of that car, and you should be more or less parallel to the vehicle.

1. Turning into the parking space

Put the car in reverse, turn the wheel fully so that the rear of the car will immediately turn into the space, and slowly go backwards. Don't be in a rush here, just go slowly and watch the vehicles position. With practice you can do this faster, but taking your time helps you get everything right.

Watch your drivers mirror as you reverse, when you can see the entire front of the vehicle behind the parking space, stop.

1. Approaching the kerb

Straighten the wheel and then begin reversing slowly again. This is positioning your car close to the kerb for a neat, completed parking process, and it is easy to know where you are by watching the car in front. Wait until your passenger mirror blocks the view of the taillight or brake light of the car in front,

this is a great guide to get you into the right position to be close to the kerb.

1. Lining it up

Now the rear of the car is in the parking spot and close to the kerb, the next stage is lining the car up parallel to the pavement. Turn the wheel fully in the opposite direction to the initial turn, this will swing the front end into the parking space.

Again, go slowly, and once the vehicle is in the right position, parallel to the kerb, stop and straighten the wheel. That's it, you are nearly done!

1. Finishing off

With some practice, this can leave you in the perfect spot, but more often than not you will be a little off centre in the parking space. So now just move slowly forward or back in a straight line to get the perfect position within the space, and you have successfully parallel parked.

Don't forget, if you are parked on a hill or even a smaller slope, turn the front wheels so that if the brakes fail and the car begins to roll, it will move into the kerb rather than the traffic.

By practicing and gaining confidence with parallel parking, you can give yourself new parking options that you would otherwise have to drive by. It can seem difficult, but with some practice can become second nature for you. However, even parallel parking is getting easier with the latest vehicles, and technology is definitely changing the entire parking experience. Next, we are

going to look at the gadgets and features that can help you become a master at parking.

Transforming the Parking Experience with Technology

Parking is perhaps the area of driving that people worry about the most. Driving down an open road, even new drivers feel like that have it all under control, but when it's time to park, the nerves kick in. It is understandable of course, parking is the time you are closest to other vehicles, and therefore the biggest chance of a mistake resulting in damage to your own or someone else's vehicle.

There is also pressure. None of us want to be that person, holding up the queue in a parking lot by going slowing in or out of the space, having to take a second go perhaps, and that is even worse with parallel parking. So, we try and go faster than we are probably comfortable with to avoid slowing everyone down, and as we all know, it is so much more likely we get it wrong when hurrying any of these manoeuvres.

As we discussed with parallel parking, the key to gaining confidence and speed is practice, but no matter how much you practice, parking still requires focus, and remains the place you are most likely to make a mistake. But with new technology, we don't have to do it all on our own, and as technology matures, there are gadgets that can really help, and cars that can do even more.

But what is available to help you with any parking you may need, let's look at the technology we can access and just how it can help you become a master at parking.

Cameras

One of the most challenging things with any parking manoeuvre is seeing where all the extremities of the vehicle are. Every vehicle has blind spots, some bigger than others, and cameras can help you get a clear view in areas that would otherwise be difficult.

Many modern vehicles have these built in, with some even including graphics showing where the vehicle will go when reversing or going forwards. If you follow those lines, it is almost impossible to get parking wrong. The latest technology in high end new vehicles is 360 degree systems. These use a number of cameras and clever software to provide a 3D view of the vehicle and everything around it, so you can clearly see any obstructions, the vehicle path and more all from the driver's information screen.

But cameras are not just for the latest vehicles, third-party systems are also available that can be added to any vehicle of any age. Not only is this great for older cars, but probably one of the greatest benefits is for vans or Utes. A rear-view camera can transform the parking experience for these kinds of vehicles, where rear visibility is minimal at best, no matter how much you use the mirrors and so on.

Parking Sensors

While the majority of new cars for the last decade have had parking sensors fitted from new, the technology is incredibly useful, and can be added to older cars as a third-party add on as well.

Parking sensors use sound waves to identify when a vehicle is near solid objects. Placed at the corners, front and rear of the vehicle, these unobtrusive sensors emit sound waves and measure

the time it takes for them to rebound back to the vehicle. Using this, the system alerts drivers when objects are close to the vehicle, using with a beep sound that gets faster the closer you are to an object.

They work well on their own, ensuring that you know when you are close to an object, giving you a chance to check and correct the parking move, but are even more useful when used in conjunction with cameras. The two together mean you always know when you are close to an object and can see exactly what it is too.

Like cameras, parking sensors give the driver confidence and reduce the chance of errors when parking in tight spaces. Whether using a parking bay or trying to parallel park, they help you know if you are close to hitting something in blind spots.

Automated Parking

When we looked at the future of parking, the idea of vehicles that will drive off and park themselves is one of the ways parking could be revolutionised. But technology advances in smaller steps, and the journey to autonomous cars has many stops along the way.

However, there are a number of modern cars now available that can actually park the car for you, as well as more that use versions of the technology to help you park in an easier way. The full system uses the 360 cameras and parking sensors we have discussed along with autonomous driving software to handle the entire parking process for you. If you struggle with parallel parking yourself and can afford a high-end Tesla, Mercedes and other

premium brand flagship vehicles, this may be the technology for you.

These are not autonomous systems though, and mostly require you to be in the driver's seat while it does its thing. Some systems rely on you to work the accelerator and brake while it steers, others can do all of it. The result is you can select a parking spot, and your vehicle will parallel park into it, or reverse into a parking spot in a carpark, some can even park in your garage too. The systems are so advanced, that in the case of parking in your garage, they can even remember to broadcast the signal to open an electric garage door before they park, all automatic based on GPS positions, so the vehicle systems know where it is.

While these systems are fitted to some of the more expensive cars on the market, the great thing about technology is that it gets cheaper over time. What we see in the high-end cars today will be the standard equipment of everyday cars in the future. Look at air conditioning, ABS brakes and so on, all started life in expensive cars, now it is hard to find a new car that doesn't have them. We are already seeing some aspects of these self-parking systems trickle down to more affordable vehicles, and these can make your parking experience much less stressful.

Take parallel parking. One of the first things you need to do is find a parking spot big enough to fit your car, but as you drive along this can be tricky, especially for those new to parking this way. But what if your car could scan the side of the road and tell you when you go past a space big enough to parallel park in? Systems that can do that have made their way to the Volkswagen Golf and other less expensive vehicles, and they go a long way to making parking a more enjoyable experience.

Will Technology take over?

With all this technology, whether as cheap aftermarket additions or as very sophisticated equipment fitted by vehicle manufacturers, it can be tempting to think that we don't actually need to spend much time thinking about parking skills anymore. After all, even parking sensors on their own take any guesswork out of the parking process and warn you if you get near other objects, so you won't hit them.

But you do still need the skills, because technology, no matter how good, is never 100% reliable. Even if you have a car capable of parking itself, there is a chance that the one time you need to parallel park in a busy road with queues of traffic building around you, that is the time the system stops working. You always need to be able to take control and park safely when needed. So, while technology is definitely making parking easier, it does not mean you never have to learn how to park.

That is not the only reason though, whether it is preserving the history of Commodore or loving older vans and vehicles that have been part of our own history, older vehicles are part of life. No matter how much technology moves on, those historic vehicles, or just older cars that can be kept going on a budget, are always going to be around. They are never going to have the latest technology, and if you get in one, you are always going to need to know how to park it yourself.

A World Without Parking – What Are the Alternatives?

The other way of avoiding parking hassle is to simply avoid parking altogether! But is that really something you can do, and how much hassle would it be to live like that? Some options still use cars to get you around, but avoid the parking aspect, while some require a change of thought process of what transport is. We can look at each in turn and see whether they can work for you.

Hire Cars

Whether it is a taxi, Uber or any other form of car and driver hire, the concept is the same. You need to get somewhere, you call a service or use an app, someone drives to your location, picks you up, takes you to your destination and leaves you there. The obvious benefit is no need for parking at all, but it can be a costly approach, especially if you need to travel a lot.

However, like parking, technology has really helped move hire cars on, and where it was once a hassle to get a taxi, today services like Uber mean a hire car is available at the touch of a button. It is not just the convenience of ordering an Uber either, with the app taking care of payments and even safety, it is a complete system that you really could use as your only motorised transport solution.

Cost remains an issue. No matter which provider you choose, you can quickly rack up a large bill for getting around. The question is, would it be more than the cost of running a car, including paying for parking? For most people the answer is

probably yes, Uber is more expensive, but if you just need vehicle transport from time to time, it is something to consider.

Public Transport

Some cities are built to get around on public transport. Take London, whether it is locals or those visiting for a few days, you can get around the city with ease on the tube and buses, all for one low price with day travel cards that cover all public transport in the city.

The issue is that not every city is like that, at least not yet. In Australia integrated public transport systems are something being worked towards but are probably not completely where they need to be right now. However, for regular travel such as a commute to work, there may be options available, and again would completely remove the need for parking.

While some systems are fully integrated and operate in a way that allows you to get where you want, when you want throughout the day, not all public transport systems are that comprehensive. If your transport needs can be met by the system where you live, that may be a viable option for eliminating parking from your daily life, however it could be a little too limiting in many cases.

Cycling and E-Bikes

Of all the ways we can get around under our own steam, cycling is probably the most common if we need to cover larger distances. Bikes today are robust, reliable and can cover quite large distances relatively quickly. E-Bikes and e-scooters do all that and offer electric power to help you pedal, so even if you are not

the fittest, you can still get around using one without too much trouble.

Technically there are still parking issues, as you have to leave a bike somewhere, but for a commute there is normally a space at work to leave cycles securely. It is not for everyone, and if the bad weather comes when you are going out, it can be a miserable experience, but cycling could be an option for some journeys, and has the benefit of being good for your health too.

A Bit of Everything

While these options let you avoid the need for parking, all have some challenges that mean they are not ideal for every situation. However, by combining the benefits of hire cars, public transport and maybe even getting around under your own power on a bike, you can have a transport alternative that can cope with every situation and avoid the need for parking.

Relying on all three as you need them is perhaps the best way of avoiding parking completely until the future cars that drive themselves appear. We have been waiting a while, and are not there yet, but when our own cars can drive us to work, drop us off and go and store themselves, that will be the end of parking. I suspect we will be waiting for a good while yet.

Disabled Parking – Taking Care of Everyone

Parking is something we all think about, and on any journey, we want to find a parking spot somewhere near to the event, store or workplace we are heading to, because it's convenient. But for some people, parking close to where they are going is not just about convenience, instead it is essential for them to be able to travel at all.

That is why we have disabled parking, so that those with mobility issues, whatever the cause, can have access to parking that minimises the challenges they face by getting them as close to their destination as possible. But while we all recognise the need for this kind of parking, the idea is a lot more valued than the parking itself.

There are around 4.3 million Australians with some kind of disability today, and with an aging population due to longer lifespans, those numbers are rising. This is happening throughout the world, not just in Australia. We live longer, but as we age health problems become more prevalent, and with that comes the mobility issues that make disabled parking so important.

But with demand ever increasing, for instance the number of disabled parking permits issued in Australia has risen by 60% since 2007, the number of dedicated disabled parking spaces is not keeping up, and this is presenting significant challenges.

Why Accessible Parking Spaces Matter

For anyone with disabilities of any kind, maintaining quality of life is a continual challenge. Mobility issues mean things we take for granted, like a trip to see a movie, can become a logistical nightmare, unless they can park a vehicle close by so that they don't have far to go to get to their destination. This may seem obvious for some people, if you see someone in a wheelchair for instance, you will understand why they need to park somewhere convenient. But not every disability is so obvious, and for many who struggle with mobility the challenges they face are not noticed by those around them.

Yet it is accessible parking spaces that allow anyone with a permit to travel in confidence, knowing that they will have a suitable parking spot, close to where they want to go, with the space they need to enter and exit a car comfortably. We have talked before about how stressful it can be to arrive somewhere and be stuck trying to find a parking space, it is doubly so for those with mobility problems.

That is why disabled parking matters. It is not just 'free parking' or whatever the latest talking point is, it is often the difference between being able to get out into the world or being stuck at home.

Accessible Parking Today

The increased demand for accessible parking is about so much more than somewhere to keep a vehicle, it is about giving everyone the freedom to go to a shopping mall, sports event, or any other activity, regardless of their mobility capabilities. The problem is, here in Australia and elsewhere in the world, the growing

need for accessible parking has not been met, and everywhere we find situations where there are simply not enough suitable parking spaces for the number of vehicles needing to use them.

There are a few reasons for this, some practical and others related to social attitudes to disability in general. If we look at the practical situation first, we need to go back to the way in which parking and city design are looked at. With a focus on creating more public space, parking facilities tend to be smaller than they used to be and try and fit as many vehicles in as possible. The goal is parking density, and here is where the challenge with accessible parking is found.

These parking spots take up more space than a traditional parking space, so each one included in a parking area means less parking spaces overall. Not only is space a challenge for the architects, but there is also social pressure too. Parking providers are also wary of a negative backlash from vehicle owners if there are a larger number of accessible spaces and no spaces left for drivers looking to park. This is driven by cultural changes and the questioning of the legitimacy of those receiving benefits of this kind by politicians and media, driving an 'us and them' narrative that has a negative effect on those with genuine needs too.

With disabled parking requiring more space and more investment, maintaining an increase in the spaces available to meet the growing demand is something that requires a cohesive strategy across public and private parking to alleviate. It is the same issue with increasing accessible parking capacity in existing parking facilities at malls and so on, but all these factors will need to be addressed moving forwards and will likely require some form of government intervention to mandate minimum levels of provision.

Applying for a Disability Parking Permit

The permit system across Australia is known as the Australian Disability Parking Scheme and replaced the previous system that had hundreds of different permits all issued by local government. The new, streamlined solution means that there is one system for permits no matter where you live or where you need to park, with a single permit design that is easy to recognise anywhere in the country.

You apply for your permit through your state or territory government, either for your own use or on behalf of an applicant if you are their designated carer or are their parent. You can find more details and links to each state or territory application from this official government page¹.

Although you apply to your local government, the process is the same, beginning with eligibility.

To be eligible for an Australian Disability Parking Permit, an individual must have one of the following conditions apply to their own mobility:

- Be unable to walk at all and require a wheelchair at all times.
- You have a severely limited ability to walk, either by a permanent medical condition or a temporary condition that will affect your mobility for at least 6 months.
- You have officially been diagnosed as legally blind, either permanently or temporarily for a period of at

1. <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-people-with-disability/australian-disability-parking-scheme>

least 6 months.

Applications cost \$19.10 at the time of writing but do vary from time to time so always check with the relevant site before applying. The application process itself is straightforward and can be completed online. Depending on your individual circumstances, you may be asked for medical certification of your condition before approval.

The Benefits of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme

After a successful application, you will receive your disability parking permit in the post not long after. This allows you to park in designated disabled parking bays that feature the universal sign for accessible parking, the blue sign with a white figure sitting in a wheelchair.

The permit is recognised country wide, even if issues locally, so you are free to travel across Australia and have use of those designated accessible parking bays wherever you may be. In addition to dedicated accessible parking, you may be able to park without charge in some paid parking bays, including metered spots. The exact rules vary from location to location, so check before travelling to make sure you know exactly what is involved and what the permit allows.

It is important to remember that just having a permit does not allow you to park as you wish free of charge. You must always display your valid permit so that it is clearly viewable from the exterior of the vehicle. For the hook type permits, that simply

means placing it over the rear-view mirror, for others, lay flat on the dashboard so it can be easily read through the windscreen.

If you fail to display the permit correctly, then you could be fined for illegal parking. If your permit has been obtained on behalf of your child, or someone you provide care to, then it can only be used for parking when that person is in the vehicle with you. Again, a failure to adhere to this can result in fines.

While there are issues with disabled parking in Australia, mostly with a lack of spaces being added, the scheme itself is both easy to apply for and use and is a vast improvement on the multiple systems that used to be in place. This is true for much of the world, with most countries adopting a national scheme that makes obtaining and using permits much less challenging. There is still a way to go to ensure accessible parking is ready for all who need it, but things are moving forward.

Congratulations – Now You Are a Parking Expert!

There is more to parking than most people realise, and I hope that this book has shown you why parking matters, and how it can help you too. As a parking expert, you know how car parks developed from carriage storage, where the first multi-storey parking was built, and who is responsible for the parking meters that have caused so much frustration over the years.

Importantly, this book has shown you how you can avoid that hassle, book your parking in advance, saving you money along the way. If you have a space on your driveway or in your garage, or even some land you don't have a use for, we have even shown you how you can earn some extra money every month by renting it out to those looking for parking spaces.

Because we are so reliant on transport for almost every aspect of life, parking is more important than we think, and a lack of parking at work or where we need to be can ruin a day very quickly. We have talked about the answer to this frustration, whether you are a parking space owner looking to rent it out or a vehicle owner looking to book a parking space from someone for short- or long-term use. But how do you take advantage of those systems, what comes next?

Parking Made Easy launched in 2012, one of the very first web platforms for connecting people with parking spaces with those needing to park. As a pioneer in the field, we have overcome many challenges along the way and built a vibrant community of renters right across the country. With both individuals

and businesses, Parking Made Easy has the best network of parking spaces available, and more people seeking spots than ever before.

Whether you are looking for the perfect parking solution or want to make money with your empty drive, lot or garage, Parking Made Easy is the simple and effective solution. You can sign up at Parking Made Easy¹ today for free and see how it all works, join the community and start renting parking space as soon as you want.

If you want to rent your space, sign up for a free trial and see how much you could make from your empty space. It's really easy to do and the team are there to help you every step of the way. Now you are a parking expert, join Parking Made Easy today and turn parking into something you look forward to.

Parking can be an income, or it can be something you learn to enjoy because it is all taken care of through Parking Made Easy. One thing is certain though, as a parking expert, you will never think of parking as a hassle or a problem again.

Take the next step in your parking journey, join Parking Made Easy today and be part of our wonderful community. Parking need never be an issue again, whatever the future holds for cars or car parking.

1. <https://www.parkingmadeeasy.com.au/>

About the Author

Daniel Battaglia is an Australian-Italian author who grew up in south Sydney and attended a Catholic School in the area. Moving on to the University of Wollongong, where he obtained degrees in Commerce and Arts. Following his education and inspired by his youth where he spent a year living in Italy, Daniel took the opportunity to travel further around the world, visiting around 30 countries as he explored different cultures and experienced the unending variety that they have to offer. He then went on to a career in banking and finance but found that he was never truly comfortable with the rigidity and formality of the environment.

Always someone more interested in people and communities, he left the banking industry to launch Parking Made Easy in 2012 and has never looked back. A business built around helping people solve parking needs by connecting those looking for parking with people who have spare parking spaces, it has become a huge, friendly community that has helped its members save time and money and find better solutions for parking today. In tandem with the growth of his business, Daniel has continued to be an advocate for parking, not just helping people through Parking Made Easy, but offering advice in challenging parking fines, which like the cost of parking itself, have spiralled in recent years.

Read more at <https://www.parkingmadeeasy.com.au>.

About the Publisher

Parking Made easy began as an idea, a way to help people overcome the sheer frustration, hassle and investment in time and money that using commercial parking systems has become. The goal was to help people find an answer to their parking needs. Quickly and easily, and by going direct, save money too. Since launching in 2012, the type of parking space available through Parking Made Easy has expanded, and our community has grown rapidly, and today it includes parkers can parking providers across Australia and beyond.

We have long championed parking rights and provide a range of tools and guides for our members to help them solve any parking problem they may have. Whether looking for a full-time parking solution for work or something more temporary, Parking Made Easy connects those looking for parking with those who have free space for parking. By empowering those looking for parking spaces, giving inspiration to those who can make money from parking in a new way, Parking Made Easy is revolutionising parking for everyone.

