

# The hitchhiker's guide to the web



*Hitchhiking is getting a 21st-century makeover as a clutch of ride-sharing websites and apps give a new generation of web-savvy travellers the chance to find lifts online*

Car pooling is not just for commuters. Finding someone who is going your way and catching a lift is an increasingly common way to save some cash while travelling. If you're lucky, you might even find a driver willing to share some local insight along the way.

Although sometimes referred to as virtual hitchhiking, lift-sharing sites offer more than just the equivalent of raising a thumb in the air. Many allow readers to leave references for one another, or view social networking profiles to see if you have interests (or maybe even friends) in common.

Other sites insist on checking members' driving licenses for added security, and a few have launched their own apps to make them more compatible with life on the road.

If you've used them, or something similar, we'd love to hear your thoughts and experiences, good or bad. Have you ever travelled a great distance at a bargain cost or struck up a lasting friendship? Have you been left in the rain by a no-show or had to nod politely as a particularly opinionated driver waffled on? Or maybe you are a former hitchhiker who has adopted the new way? Let us know in the comments below. Let us know!

## **CoSeats.com, Australia**

CoSeats has a rather rudimentary set up, where users do the groundwork. With no whistles or bells, it's more like a honed Craigslist: you simply post your route, add your contact details (phone or email) and other users contact you directly. Drivers and riders can link the profile to Facebook, and there's a "girls only" filter for women who want to travel together. Interestingly (and handy in a country of this size), there is also a subsection, where you can pick up your own campervan for a bargain price (often with prepaid fuel). How? The site teams with rental companies that need quick relocation to other parts of the country. A sample deal would be Brisbane to Cairns for £54. They post relocation deals in the US here, too.