Grand Cayman

The one Caribbean port you should plan around rather than plan for. Everyone comes ashore by tender.

Facts checked against official sources on 24 September 2026

Getting ashore	Tender, always. Up to four ships anchor at once and passengers are ferried to one of three terminals, all about five minutes away.
The terminals	South Terminal, North Terminal and Royal Watler Terminal, all run by the Port Authority
Currency	Cayman Islands dollar, with US dollars used interchangeably. The official rate is CI$1 = US$1.227.
Seven Mile Beach	Public, about a ten-minute drive from George Town

At the Grand Cayman cruise port: what's there

Port facts checked on 30 October 2026. Shops, prices and opening hours change, so check on the day.

Grand Cayman has no cruise pier: every ship anchors in George Town harbour and you ride a tender to one of three small terminals on Harbour Drive. The last time we called here the water was choppy, the wait was long, and I had to step across quickly with a firm grip on the rail while the tender rocked, so I plan this port around the boat ride. Once you are ashore, though, the whole harbourfront is flat and close together, and you can have a perfectly good day without going further than the waterfront.

Port map: this port doesn't publish a map of its own that we could find, so we drew the simple walk below from the port's and cruise lines' own descriptions.

Book it from your phone

Tours in Grand Cayman: the bookings Granny uses, one scan away.

Point your phone camera at a code. Your phone opens the booking page. No camera app? Type the web address printed under the code.

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Check the official source

Rules, prices and hours change. Scan to open the official page and confirm before you go. These are not paid links.

Port information
Cayman Port Authority

Beach mat locations
Disability Council

Getting around
Visit Cayman Islands

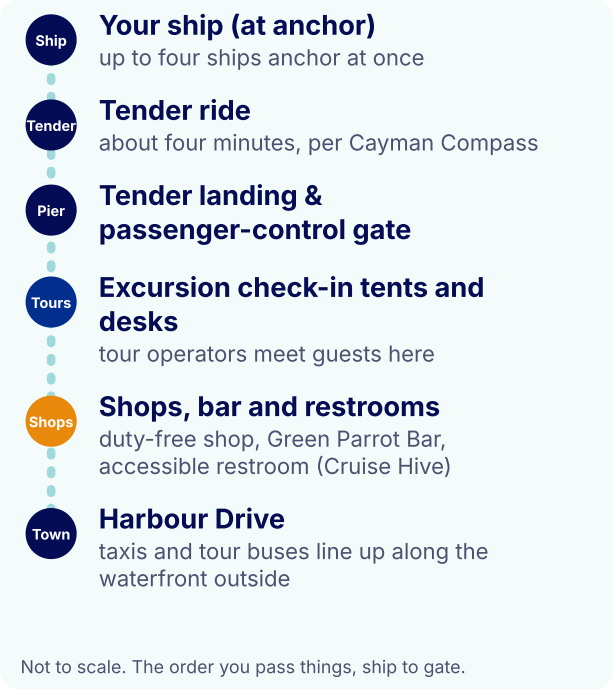
Full guide online: photos, live prices and the latest updates at **aicruisegranny.com/port-grand-cayman**

Booking codes are affiliate or travel-agent links: AI Cruise Granny may earn a commission at no extra cost to you. Prices, rules and availability are set by each company; check them before you book.

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From the ship: Royal Watler Cruise Terminal

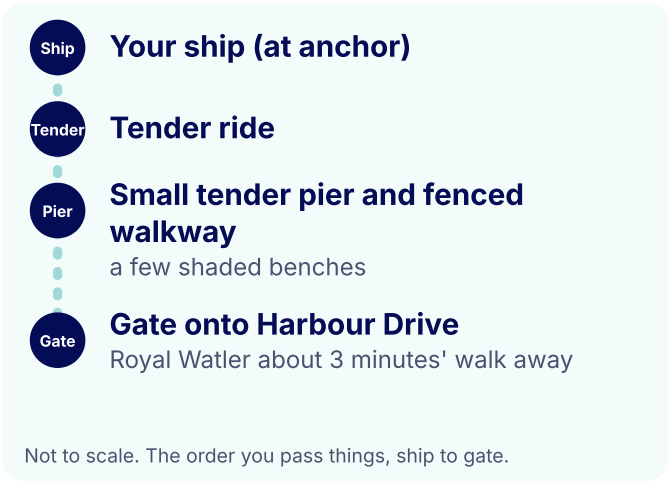
The largest and busiest of the three tender landings; Cruise Hive (2024, updated 2026) says most passengers arrive here. Beside the Fort George ruins, about 500 ft / a 3-minute walk from the North Terminal.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: North Terminal

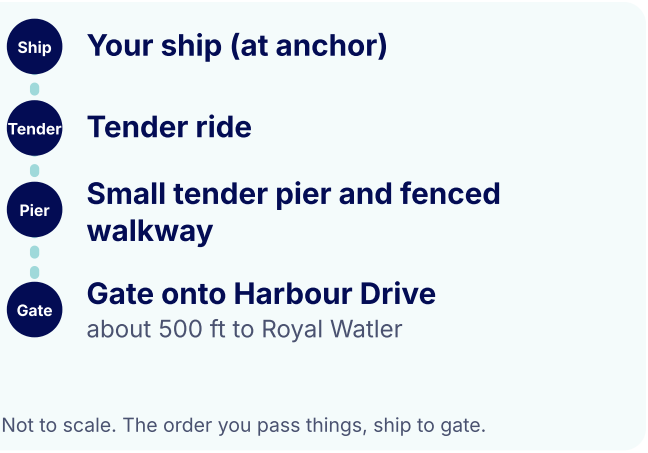
Overflow landing used when several ships are tendering. Cruise Hive describes a single small tender pier, a fenced walkway, a few shaded benches and a gate straight onto Harbour Drive; it lists no restrooms or shops at this terminal. Margaritaville is reported to be across the road.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: South Terminal

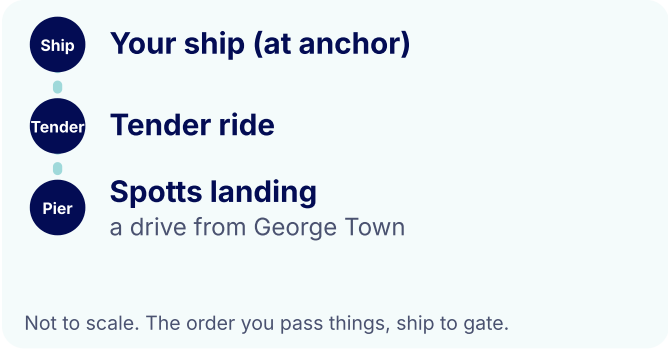
Overflow landing, like the North Terminal: a small tender pier, fenced walkway and gate onto Harbour Drive. Kirk Freeport is a few steps away and the Cayman Islands National Museum is reported to be across the road.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

From the ship: Spotts cruise facility (bad-weather alternative)

On the south shore. When George Town harbour is too rough, ships can reroute here and the tenders follow (Cayman Compass). No facilities are published.



Our own simple drawing, not the port's map.

Free things to do inside the port

Fort George ruins Free — What's left of an 18th-century fort, with two cannons, on the waterfront.
Beside the Royal Watler Terminal on Harbour Drive
Access: Seen from the pavement; flat street

Harbour Drive waterfront stroll Free — The main street, lined with duty-free shops, jewellers, cafés, bars and banks, all along the harbour.
Straight out of every terminal gate
Access: Flat, with sidewalk ramps (Cruise Critic)

Heroes Square Free — Civic square beside the main public bus depot.
Less than a minute's walk from Fort George · about 1 min walk from the ship

Cardinal Avenue Free — A pedestrianised shopping street that makes browsing easier, per the Caymanian Times (Jan 2025).
Just off the harbourfront in central George Town
Access: Pedestrianised

Free restrooms Free — Restrooms in a small building in the terminal area.
Inside the terminal area past the security gates · Royal Watler terminal; Cruise Hive reports none at the North or South terminals
Access: Cruise Hive says the Royal Watler restroom is fully wheelchair accessible

Pools and beaches

Margaritaville (reported) — A bar and restaurant with a pool on the harbourfront, reported by Adventure Begins (updated Nov 2025). No day-pass or chair prices are published, so ask at the door.
Across the road from the North Terminal · about 5 min walk from the ship

No beach at the terminals — There is no swimming beach at any of the three tender terminals. Seven Mile Public Beach is about a ten-minute drive.
By taxi or bus from Harbour Drive
Access: Seven Mile Public Beach has a Mobi-Mat and accessible restrooms (see our main Grand Cayman guide)

Food and drink

Green Parrot Bar and snack stand — Bar and snacks inside the main terminal, reported by Cruise Hive.
Royal Watler Terminal

Sandbar Daiquiri Bar & Grill — Waterfront bar and grill, reported by Cruise Hive.
Steps from the Royal Watler Terminal

Take-away coffee and bars — A few bars and coffee stands just past the tender landing.
Terminal area

Casanova Restaurant — Waterside Italian restaurant, reported by Cruise Hive.
North Church Street · about 5 min walk from the ship

Lobster Pot — Restaurant on North Church Street, reported by Cruise Hive.
About half a mile north of the port

Shopping

Duty-free shopping centres — Cruise Critic says each terminal has its own shopping area with duty-free stores; Cruise Hive is more cautious and places the shop at Royal Watler.
At the terminals and along Harbour Drive

Tortuga Rum (La Tortuga Liquor Store) — Rum and rum cake shop.
Right outside the terminal area

Kirk Freeport — Big duty-free store (jewellery, watches, cosmetics).
A few steps from the South Terminal

Souvenir stalls and vendors — Souvenir stalls and T-shirt shops by the landing.
Royal Watler Terminal

Del Sol and Cariloha — Branded clothing shops, reported by Adventure Begins.
Near Margaritaville, across from the North Terminal

Cayman Craft Market — Local crafts market.
About half a mile north (Cruise Hive)

Worth paying for (and what it costs)

Cayman Islands National Museum

US$15 adult, US$10 senior, US$10 child 6–12, under 6 free (visitor prices on museum.ky, checked Oct 2026)
— The national museum, with a gift shop. Closed Sundays except special periods; galleries may close at short notice. Open Mon–Fri 9am–5pm, Sat 10am–5pm.
Historic waterfront, reported to be across from the South Terminal
Access: The museum doesn't publish accessibility details; call (345) 949-8368

Restrooms, Wi-Fi, money and help

Restrooms Free — Cruise Critic says there are plenty of restrooms; Cruise Hive lists the public restroom at Royal Watler and none at the North or South terminals.
Royal Watler Terminal area
Access: Fully wheelchair accessible at Royal Watler (Cruise Hive)

Tourist information Free — A tourist information stand.
Royal Watler (Cruise Hive); CruiseMapper places tourist offices near the North and South terminals

Porters — Porters are available at the port, per Cruise Critic.
Terminals

Shaded benches Free — Small shaded waiting areas for the tender back.
All terminals

Banks and ATMs — Banks line Harbour Drive and ATMs are easy to find downtown, but no source places a cash machine inside a terminal. Currency is the Cayman Islands dollar; US dollars are widely taken, change may come in CI$.
Harbour Drive

Getting out of the port

Taxi stand — Taxis and tour buses line up on the waterfront outside the terminals; many are shared minivans that leave when full. Fares are set nationally per trip; use the government CI:GO app for a quote in both currencies.
Harbour Drive, just outside the terminal area (under 5 minutes' walk)
Access: No wheelchair-accessible taxi service is published

Public bus depot From CI$2.50 per ride — The main bus depot, for buses to Seven Mile Beach and West Bay. Fares from CI$2.50; US and CI dollars taken.
Heroes Square, a few minutes' walk from the waterfront

Excursion check-in — Coloured tents and desks where tour operators meet guests.
Terminal area, past the security gates

Rodney's Car Rental — Car hire, reported by Cruise Hive. Cayman drives on the left.
About a 10-minute walk from the port · about 10 min walk from the ship

A whole day without leaving the port

If I were spending the day at the port here, I'd take a mid-morning tender once the tour groups have gone ashore, then wander Harbour Drive slowly: Fort George by the Royal Watler Terminal, a browse through Kirk Freeport and the rum shop, and an hour in the National Museum out of the sun. Lunch on the waterfront, then a cold drink with the harbour view, and back to the tender early, because the return line can be long when four ships are anchored. Want a swim? There is no beach at the terminals, so that means a short taxi or bus ride to Seven Mile Public Beach.

At the port with a cane, walker or wheelchair

- Grand Cayman is tender-only. Every line has its own rules on steps into the tender and on wheelchairs and scooters (Norwegian, for example, needs devices to fold and limits the combined weight it will help with). Check with your own cruise line before you sail.
- In rough weather tenders may not run, or the ship may move to the Spotts facility on the south shore. Whether to tender is the captain's call on the day.
- Cayman Compass describes local tenders as roomy, with railings, carrying 250–300 people, and a crossing of about four minutes.
- Ashore, Cruise Critic calls all three terminals highly wheelchair accessible, with sidewalk ramps and flat ground, and porters on hand.
- Cruise Hive says the Royal Watler public restroom is fully wheelchair accessible. No accessible restroom is listed at the North or South terminals.
- No source publishes wheelchair or scooter rental at the port, or wheelchair-accessible taxis.

More on cruising with mobility & health needs. Rules differ by cruise line, so check with yours.

Questions about the port

▼ Is there a cruise pier in Grand Cayman?

No. Ships anchor off George Town and passengers ride tenders to the Royal Watler, North or South terminal, each about five minutes away. A cruise berthing project has been discussed for years but no pier has been built.

▼ Is there free Wi-Fi at the Grand Cayman cruise terminal?

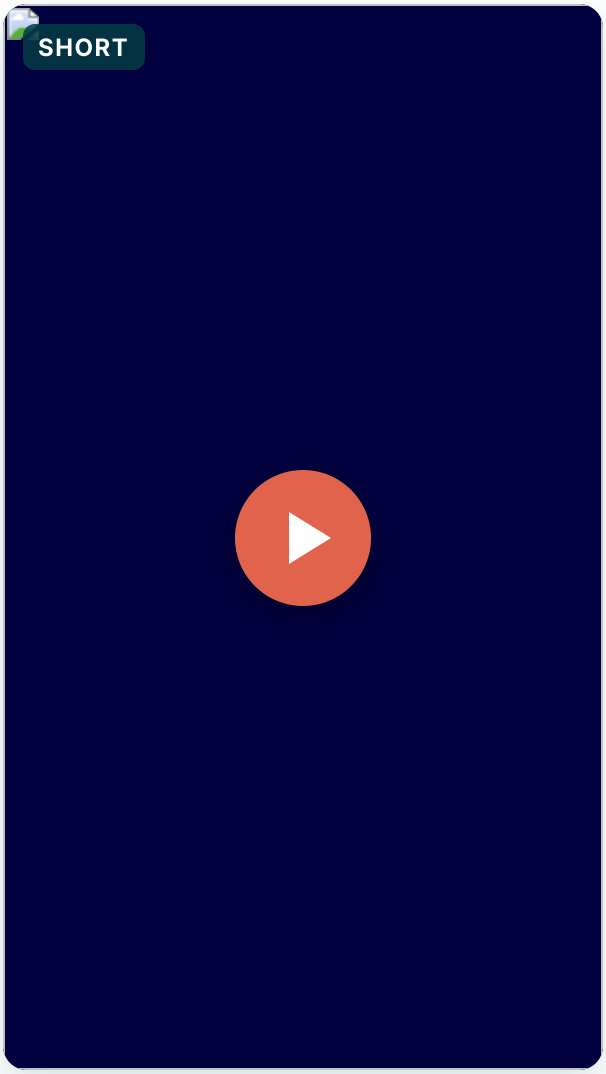
The reports disagree: Cruise Hive lists free Wi-Fi at the Royal Watler Terminal, while Cruise Critic says the port has none. Plan on buying something at a waterfront café that offers it.

▼ What is there to do at the Grand Cayman cruise port without a tour?

The harbourfront is flat and compact: Fort George ruins, duty-free shops, the National Museum, waterfront bars and the craft market are all within walking distance. For a beach you'll need a short taxi or bus ride to Seven Mile Beach.

Where the port facts come from: Cayman Islands Department of Tourism: Travel by ship (30 October 2026); Cayman Islands National Museum: Visit (30 October 2026); Cayman Compass: Tendering from ship to shore at George Town Harbour (30 October 2026); Caymanian Times: George Town welcomes passengers from five cruise ships (Jan 2025) (30 October 2026); Cruise Hive: Grand Cayman Cruise Port, Terminals, Tendering and Getting Around (30 October 2026); Cruise Critic: Grand Cayman cruise port terminal information (30 October 2026); Adventure Begins: Grand Cayman cruise port guide (updated Nov 2025) (30 October 2026); Cruise Dig: George Town, Grand Cayman cruise port guide (30 October 2026); CruiseMapper: Grand Cayman (George Town Harbour) (30 October 2026)

▶ WATCH THE SHORT



S1 E8 **What a tender day really feels like**

More from Season 1: Sails Anyway

What tendering means for you

The Port Authority's own annual report explains the position plainly: the harbour has no berthing for larger vessels, so tendering is how everyone lands. There is an alternate cruise facility at Spotts, listed by the Port Authority, used when conditions require it.

Whether tenders run at all on the day is the captain's call. Celebrity publishes that "the captain and crew will assess the conditions in any tender port and decide whether tender operations are safe." No official body publishes the sea state or wind threshold for cruise tendering, so nobody can tell you in advance.

If mobility is a factor, read this twice. Norwegian publishes that guests "may need to utilise steps or a staircase to access the tender," and that they cannot assist guests whose scooter or wheelchair plus occupant exceeds a combined 100 lb, with devices needing to fold. Every line has a version of this rule. Grand Cayman is the port where it bites.

Getting to the beach

Seven Mile Public Beach is public land managed by the Public Lands Commission, with parking, a playground, volleyball courts, bookable cabanas, a vendor area and a restroom block.

The accessibility find here is genuinely good. The National Council for Persons with Disabilities publishes Mobi Mat locations across the islands, and Seven Mile Public Beach has a mat 6.5 feet wide and 100 feet long, with accessible parking, a crosswalk, ramps and railings, and accessible restrooms and showers. Other mats are at West Bay Cemetery Beach, Governor's House Beach, Coe Wood and East End.

Taxis and buses

There is a taxi stand at the ship dock in George Town. Fares are set nationally, per trip for up to four passengers, but the published chart only shows airport-origin rows, so use the government's own CI:GO app, which quotes the fare in both currencies before you ride.

The cheaper option: public buses run from about 6am, fares start at CI$2.50, and they take both US and Cayman dollars. Routes connect George Town with Seven Mile Beach and West Bay.

Not published anywhere official: a dock-to-Seven-Mile taxi fare, terminal amenities at any of the three tender terminals, walking distance into George Town, wheelchair-accessible taxis, and beach wheelchair availability anywhere in Cayman.

Where these facts come from

- Visit Cayman Islands, travel by ship (https://www.visitcaymanislands.com/en-us/planning/travel-by-ship)
- **Port Authority of the Cayman Islands, 2017 annual report (PDF)** (/crew-library.html)
- Port Authority, port information (https://www.caymanport.com/port-information/)
- National Council for Persons with Disabilities, Mobi Mat locations (https://disabilitycouncil.gov.ky/mobi-mat-locations)
- Radio Cayman, Seven Mile Public Beach enhancement (https://www.radiocayman.gov.ky/news/seven-mile-public-beach-enhancement-project)
- Visit Cayman Islands, transportation (https://www.visitcaymanislands.com/en-us/things-to-do/transportation)
- CI:GO official fare app (https://www.cigo.ky/)
- Norwegian Cruise Line, tender ports and accessibility (https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/tender-ports)

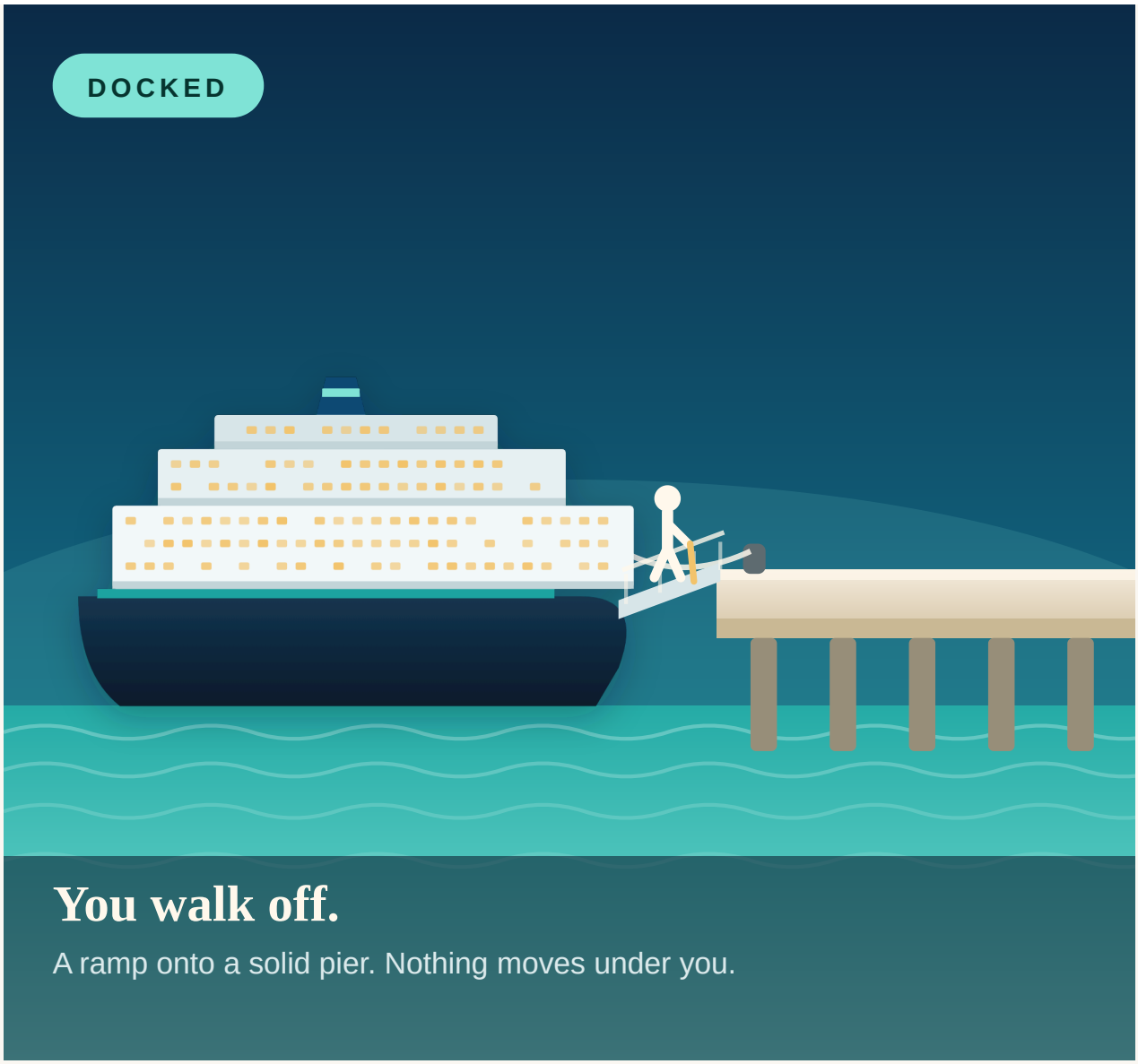
Ports change their rules and their prices. Check the official pages above before you sail.

Mobility & access *at this port*

From **Sails Anyway**, the accessible-cruising section of this site. Nothing here is medical advice — it is what the port and the cruise lines publish, so you know what to ask.

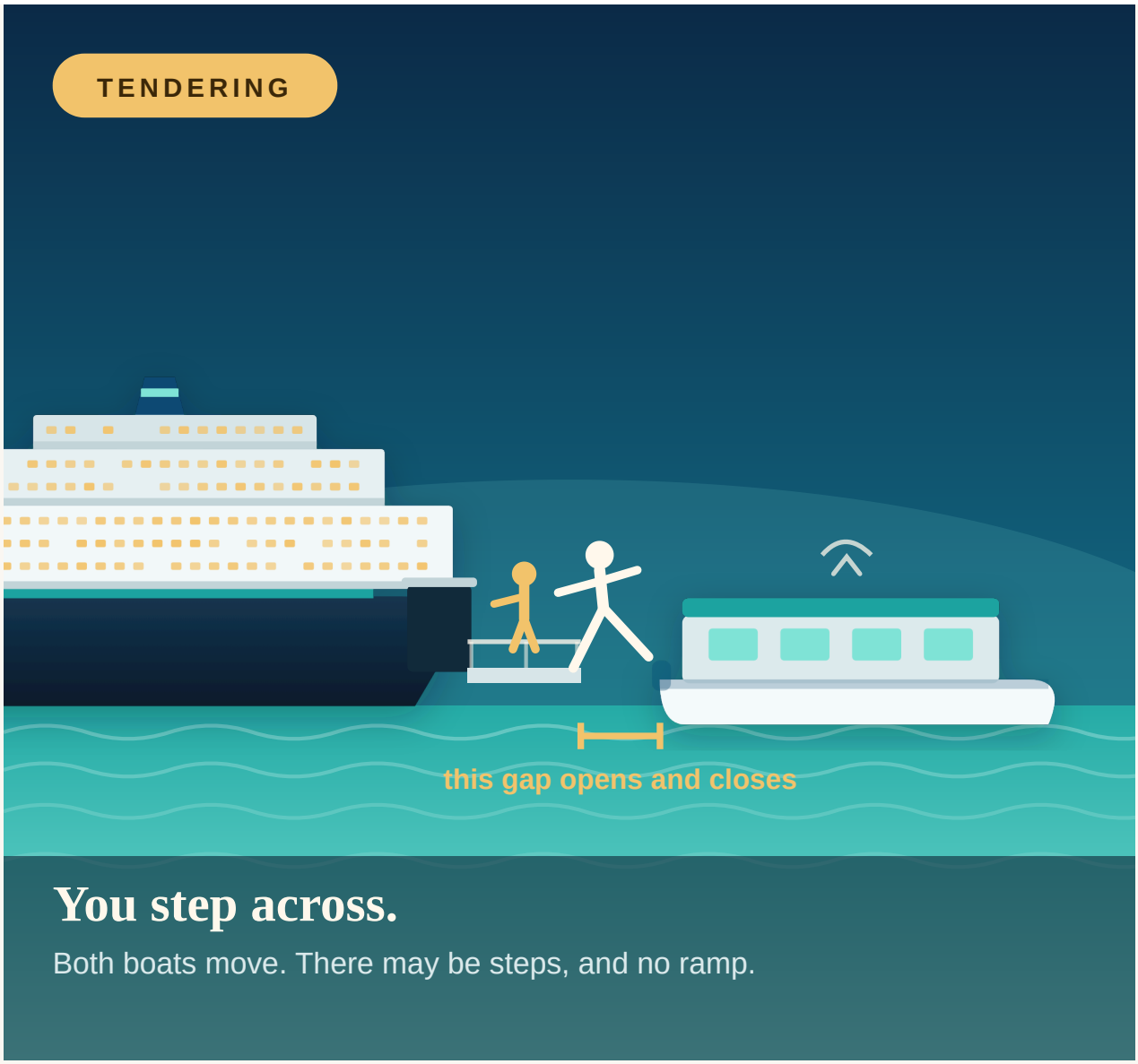
The short answer

Ashore	Always tenders
Free beach	A tender, then a taxi
Hardest part	Stepping across to a moving tender



You walk off.

A ramp onto a solid pier. Nothing moves under you.



Every other port on your itinerary is the picture on the left. Grand Cayman is always the one on the right.

What the day *asks of you*

Before anything else, the tender. The ship anchors offshore and a small boat carries you in. Both are moving while you step across.

- **Standing time.** Tender lines form in lounges and stairwells, often with nowhere to sit, and they are longest when several ships are in.
- **Grip and one-arm lift.** Boarding is a hand-to-hand transfer. Crew will steady you, but they are not permitted to lift you.
- **Steps and a moving gap.** The gap between ship and tender opens and closes with the swell.
- **A second transfer.** The free beach is a taxi ride from the tender landing, so reaching sand means two transfers, not one.

Work through the Port Fit Check before you decide on this port. It is the one where the honest answer is sometimes "stay aboard, and enjoy a quiet ship."

The risk nobody budgets for

If the seas are rough enough, tendering is cancelled outright. You paid for the port and you see it from your balcony. It happens here more than anywhere else on a Caribbean itinerary — and tenders may not accommodate wheelchairs or scooters even on a calm day.

0 **Piers at Grand Cayman.** Voters rejected a berthing facility roughly two to one, so every passenger goes ashore by tender.

The beach, *honestly*

Seven Mile Beach is genuinely one of the Caribbean's best, and it is public and free. But it is a taxi ride from the tender landing, so "free beach" doesn't mean "easy beach" here. Budget for transport both ways and agree the fare before you set off.

The low-effort version of this port

> George Town's waterfront is walkable, shaded in places and has seating. If the tender takes more out of you than expected, a slow morning by the water and an early tender back is a perfectly good day — and far better than losing tomorrow to today.

If you book an *excursion here*

This is the port where a refund guarantee actually earns its keep. Some tour platforms will refund you in full if your ship can't get into port, or if the tour is cancelled because the ship couldn't get in — which is exactly what goes wrong at Grand Cayman. That filter is usually off by default, so most people never find it.

Boat trips are low-walking once you're aboard, but boarding is the hard part. Ask how many steps or rungs are involved, and whether there is a ladder to climb back up when you're wet and tired.

> *“Sometimes the honest answer is: stay aboard, and enjoy a quiet ship.”*

Check with your cruise line

- **Ask how tender boarding works for your mobility aid** on your specific ship. Policies differ by line and by tender.
- **Ask whether priority tender tickets exist** for guests who need assistance, and how to request one.
- **Declare your need in advance** on your line's accessibility form. Crew can only plan for what they know about.
- **Ask what happens if you can't board the tender.** Knowing that answer before the morning is worth a lot.
- **Remember there is no refund** for a port missed on mobility or safety grounds. The Accommodations Guide explains the forms and deadlines that get you the help there is.

Questions people *actually ask*

▼ Is Grand Cayman wheelchair accessible?

Grand Cayman has no cruise pier, so every passenger goes ashore by tender boat. Tenders may not accommodate wheelchairs or scooters, and crew are not permitted to lift guests. If the seas are rough, tendering can be cancelled entirely.

▼ Does Grand Cayman have a free beach near the cruise port?

Seven Mile Beach is public and free, but it is a taxi ride from the tender landing, so reaching it means two transfers rather than one.

▼ Why does Grand Cayman always tender?

Voters rejected a berthing facility by roughly two to one, so there is no cruise pier and ships anchor offshore.

Accessibility details last checked 22 September 2026. How we check this →

More on cruising with mobility & health needs →

About the "I" on this page. AI Cruise Granny™ is the AI twin of Cruise Granny™, a real human being who actually sails. Every experience written here in the first person is hers. The AI twin is what writes it up, checks the facts against official sources and keeps it current. We tell you that openly on every page, because you should know who is talking to you. More about how this works.