The Waitlist Explained

Admin & User Guide

PARKALOT

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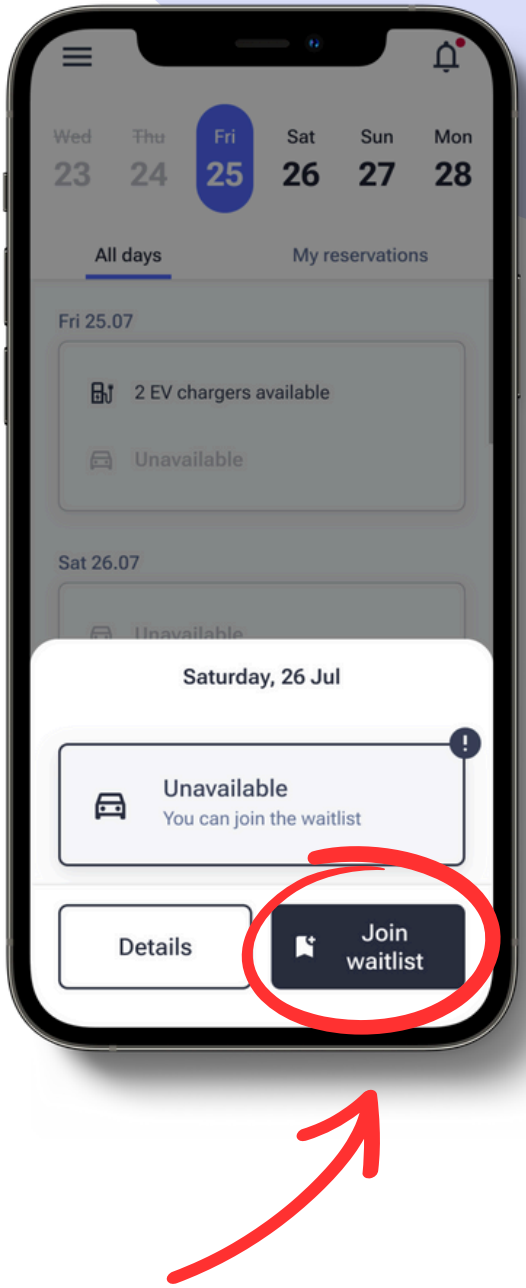
What is the waitlist?

Parkalot's waitlist is an **automated system that assigns available spots to users who have requested them.**

It ensures **fair and efficient allocation,** particularly for organisations facing high demand and limited spaces, such as when there are **more users than available spots.**

The waitlist prevents space allocation based on the unfair "first-come, first-served" rule.



What does it mean that the waitlist is a fair algorithm?

The waitlist in Parkalot is designed as a fair algorithm, meaning **it prioritises users based on their recent number of reservations**. Specifically, users who have joined the waitlist and have the fewest reservations during a selected time period are more likely to be allocated an available space.

This approach helps ensure **everyone has an equal opportunity, especially those who haven't had as many reservations recently**. The time period used for evaluating reservations can be customised. For example, you can choose a full week, specific days, or a different range—to best suit your organisation's needs.

How does the waitlist function?

The waitlist **automatically allocates available spaces to users until 8:00 AM each day.** This 8:00 AM cut-off time is the default in Parkalot, but can be changed upon request.

After this time, the waitlist stops assigning spots automatically. This helps avoid situations where employees decide to work from home and no longer need an office space. By stopping automatic allocations after 8:00 AM, the waitlist ensures that spaces are not reserved for people who won't use them.

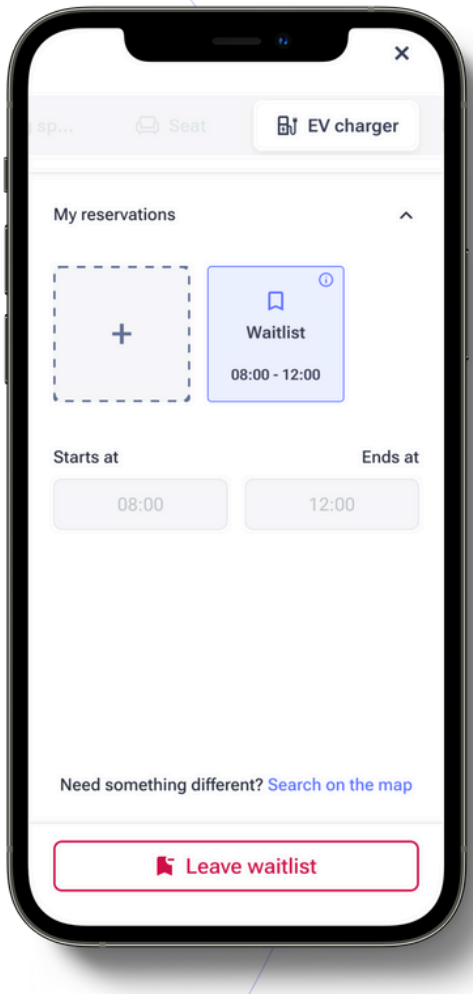
The cut-off also benefits users who want to book a space after 8:00 AM. Any remaining spaces after the cut-off remain available for manual booking, since the waitlist no longer assigns spaces automatically.

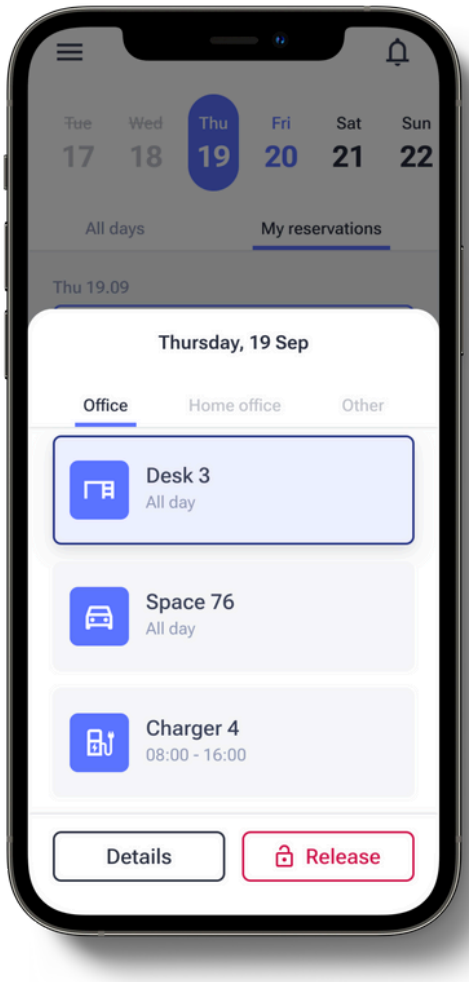
This approach guarantees a **fair allocation of spaces** early in the day while providing **flexibility for later bookings**.

THE WAITLIST USE CASES

The following sections of our waitlist guide present specific **scenarios** where the waitlist algorithm is applied.

These **real-life examples** will help you better understand **how the waitlist works in different situations.**





SCENARIO #1:
Two users join the waitlist for the same day

There are **no parking spaces available**. Pam and Jim join the waitlist. Michael (their boss) goes on a business trip and **releases his parking spot** in the Parkalot app so that others can use it.

The **waitlist detects that a spot has become available** and **automatically assigns it to the employee with the fewest reservations.** In this case, that's Pam, who hasn't managed to reserve a single spot all week.

SCENARIO #2: Booking opens at 7:00 AM, but the waitlist operates until 8:00 AM

In our car park, there is **a rule that allows placing reservations only after 7:00 AM**. Jim joined the waitlist the day before, while Pam did not and waited until 7:00 AM to try to reserve a space.

At 7:00 AM, the waitlist is still active. It recognises that the reservation rule preventing early bookings has lifted and **identifies Jim as the only user on the waitlist**. As a result, **it assigns the available space to Jim.**

During this process, Pam's interface shows that she must **wait until the waitlist is executed**, and that no parking spaces are currently available.

If she had joined the waitlist like Jim, she would have had a chance to secure a spot.

SCENARIO #3: Increasing chances of getting a spot from the waitlist

Tip: *Join the waitlist mainly for the days that are your priority, rather than for every available day.*

Jim joins the waitlist for the entire week, even though he only works in the office for two days. **By default, the system counts each day a user joins the waitlist as half a reservation**. (This setting can be changed upon request, but it is the recommended default.)

So, if Jim joins the waitlist for the whole week (Monday to Friday), it would count as 2.5 reservations (5 days × ½). This means Jim's chances of securing a parking space are lower compared to someone like Pam, who only joined the waitlist for Tuesday and Thursday.

SCENARIO #4: High demand for spaces only on specific days

At our company, employees are required to come to the office two days a week. **Most users join the waitlist for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday — the days with the highest demand** for parking spaces. **On Mondays and Fridays, the office is nearly empty.**

In this case, **we can exclude Monday and Friday from the reservation count** since there's no competition for spaces. This ensures employees who come on quieter days aren't penalised, as those reservations won't affect their chances on busier days.

For example, Jim has reserved a space for Monday and Friday and joined the waitlist for Wednesday. His chances of securing a spot on Wednesday are the same as Dwight's, who hasn't reserved any spaces that week. It's a 50/50 chance, so the luckiest person gets the space.

SCENARIO #5: Combining the waitlist with reservation rules

The waitlist always considers the reservation rules when allocating spaces.

Example: Reservation Restrictions by Group

Suppose the rules state that ***Customer* Support cannot make reservations before 8:00 AM**, and ***Sales* cannot make reservations before 9:00 AM**.

When the waitlist runs at 8:00 AM, only members of *Customer Support* are eligible for available spaces; members of *Sales* are not considered at this time.

If there are still spaces available at the next waitlist run—after both groups' restrictions have ended—members from both *Customer Support* and *Sales* will then be considered for those spots.

Congratulations

You now know how the waitlist works

Let’s stay in touch:

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Need more help?

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