

Travel changes in 2025: How to get prepared and why it matters

REAL ID

Americans should make sure their identification is up to date sooner than later this winter, because **starting May 7, 2025**, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security will enforce the use of REAL ID at airports and some federal facilities.



PHOTO: Close Up of a person holding an American Passport at an airport. (STOCK PHOTO/Adobe Stock)

U.S. travelers must be **REAL ID compliant** in order to board domestic flights. Read more about the requirement here <https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/travel/story/new-real-id-requirements-110078396>

and see how to obtain your REAL ID on time.

Entering the UK with ETA

The expansion of the ***Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) program*** will impact U.S. and European travelers headed to the United Kingdom. Starting Jan. 8, 2025, ETA registration will be required by inbound travelers so that UK authorities can screen visitors before arrival, which was modeled after the U.S.' Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) system in an effort to reduce potential security risks and make border entry more efficient.



PHOTO: View of a UK/EU lane sign as air travelers proceed to Passport Control at a British Airport. (STOCK PHOTO/Adobe Stock)

The ETA, which costs approximately \$13, is not a visa and does not replace any existing visa requirements. The ETA is valid for multiple entries into the UK through a two-year period.

ETIAS entry and exit requirements

Though not yet operational, the European Union's ***European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)***, which has been postponed multiple times, is expected to take effect in May 2025.

U.S. passport holders who previously traveled to Europe without a visa will **now need to apply for authorization through the ETIAS platform** before visiting.



PHOTO: An airport employee stamps a passports of a passenger. (STOCK PHOTO/Adobe Stock)

Once granted ETIAS travel authorization, travelers will be able to enter participating countries multiple times for short-term stays — usually up to 90 days — over a 180-day period. The ETIAS is valid for up to three years, but if your passport expires, a new ETIAS travel authorization will be required.

[MORE: Americans will need Real ID to travel in 2025: Here are the requirements](#)

New protections for air travelers

Earlier this year, new federal regulations took effect that require airlines to make it easier for ***ticketed passengers to get their money back after flight cancellations or other significant changes.***

Under the new Department of Transportation rules, travelers can easily receive ***automatic refunds if they opt not to take a rebooked flight***, significant delays are clearly defined across all airlines, and travelers are eligible for ***refunds on bag fees if a bag is delayed for over 12 hours*** (or 15-30 hours for international flights), ***refunds on ancillary paid services*** that don't work such as WiFi, and 24/7 live customer service support channels.

New travel requirements taking effect in 2025 for domestic and international destinations originally appeared