



# Passport Readiness Checklist

Plan your U.S. passport around your actual trip date.

Welcome! This guide gives you a clear, practical head start on the passport process - whether you're applying for the first time, renewing, replacing a lost passport, or racing a deadline. No invented fees or dates - just a plan, and pointers to the official source for anything that changes.

## What's inside

- A practical guide to choosing standard, expedited, or emergency service
- A step-by-step readiness checklist you can follow start to finish
- What to bring to your passport appointment
- Where to go next if your trip is close

### Try the free tools at [passports.id](https://passports.id)

AI Timeline Calculator - plain-English guides - trusted expediting resources

# The practical guide

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Every passport situation is a little different. Use this to figure out which lane you're likely in - then confirm the current details at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov).

## **Standard service**

The default option, generally lower-cost, with the longest general timeframe. Best when your trip is still months away.

## **Expedited service**

An official faster tier for an additional fee. Worth strongly considering once your trip is a couple of months out.

## **In-person / emergency appointment**

Reserved for imminent travel or genuine life-or-death emergencies, generally requiring proof of travel and an appointment at a Passport Agency.

## **Private expediting services**

Companies that specialize in shepherding urgent applications through the process, for a service fee on top of government fees - useful when time is genuinely tight.

## Step-by-step readiness checklist

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- ☐ Confirm which category applies to you: renewal, new application, minor's passport, or replacement
- ☐ Check your current passport's expiration date and remaining validity
- ☐ Gather proof of citizenship (birth certificate or prior passport)
- ☐ Gather proof of identity (driver's license or other government ID)
- ☐ Take a compliant passport photo (plain background, neutral expression, no glasses)
- ☐ Complete the correct application form for your situation
- ☐ Confirm the current fee for your service type at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)
- ☐ Decide: standard, expedited, in-person, or a private expediting service
- ☐ Submit your application and keep copies of everything
- ☐ Track your application and plan your travel dates with a buffer

## What to bring to your passport appointment

- ☐ Completed application form
- ☐ Proof of citizenship (original, plus a photocopy)
- ☐ Proof of identity (original, plus a photocopy)
- ☐ One passport photo meeting current requirements
- ☐ Payment for applicable fees (check current accepted payment methods)
- ☐ Proof of travel (for expedited or emergency appointments)
- ☐ For minors: both parents/guardians or required consent documentation

## Questions worth asking yourself

- Does my destination require extra passport validity beyond my travel dates?
- Do I need any visas in addition to my passport?
- Is my situation a renewal, or does it require a new application?
- How much buffer do I have before non-refundable travel is booked?

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*Educational only. Not affiliated with the U.S. Department of State.*

*Confirm current requirements, fees, and processing times at [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov).*