Before You Book, Before You Fly

A two-page holiday travel checklist: compare fares on equal terms, then clear the ID check at the airport.

How to use it. Page 1 helps you compare fare options like for like before you pay. Page 2 is the night-before ID check. Tick a box only when you have actually checked it.

1 Before you book: ask the same questions of every fare

- ☐ **Total price.** Compare the full price at checkout, with taxes and fees, not the headline fare.
- ☐ **Bags.** Open the airline's own page for the exact fare you picked and read the carry-on and checked-bag rules.
- ☐ **Change and cancel.** Read the rules for that fare before paying. Note the deadline.
- ☐ **Flexible dates and airports.** Try the days around your dates and any nearby airport.
- ☐ **Names.** The name on the booking should match the ID you will show at the airport.
- ☐ **Going abroad?** Check the destination's entry rules and your passport's validity on the U.S. State Department's country page.

Compare up to three options on the same terms

	Option A	Option B	Option C
Airline / route			
Dates and times			
Carry-on bag included?			
Checked bag cost			
Change / cancel rule			
Total price at checkout			
Where I checked (page)			

My pick and why: _____

Booked on (date): _____

Confirmation code (keep this sheet private): _____

The Night-Before ID Check

What to confirm before you head to a U.S. airport.

Source and date. Rules below are from TSA's Acceptable Identification page, read on November 27, 2026. TSA says its list can change without notice, so re-check **tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification** before you fly.

- ☐ **Adults (18+)** must show an acceptable ID at the checkpoint.
- ☐ **Driver's license or state ID is REAL ID compliant** (or an Enhanced license/ID), or you are bringing another accepted ID such as a passport or passport card. Since May 7, 2025, licenses that are not REAL ID compliant are not accepted at airports. Not sure? Ask your state DMV.
- ☐ **Not relying on a temporary paper license.** TSA says a temporary driver's license is not acceptable.
- ☐ **Name on the boarding pass and ID line up.** TSA accepts a suffix (such as Jr.) on one and not the other.
- ☐ **Using a mobile ID?** TSA accepts certain mobile driver's licenses only from states approved for federal use, and the mDL must be based on a REAL ID, EDL or EID. TSA also lists some digital IDs as part of ongoing testing. Carry the physical card too, in case a phone battery dies.
- ☐ **Expired ID?** TSA currently accepts the listed IDs up to two years after expiration. Treat that as a last resort, not a plan.
- ☐ **Traveling with children under 18?** TSA does not require them to show ID for flights within the U.S. Ask the airline about its own rules.
- ☐ **No acceptable ID?** TSA offers an optional, paid ConfirmID process. TSA will attempt to verify identity, with no guarantee. Details at tsa.gov/confirmid.

2 Pack and go

- ☐ Physical ID is in the bag or coat I am wearing
- ☐ Boarding pass saved to my phone, or printed
- ☐ Bag sizes match what I paid for (see page 1)
- ☐ Phone and charger packed
- ☐ Departure time and airport checked
- ☐ Passport valid for the whole trip (if going abroad)

My trip

Flight		**Date**	
Leave home by		**Airline checked**	
ID I will show		**Backup ID**	

Prices and airline rules change; this sheet quotes no fares. General information, not legal or travel-agent advice. Made with AI assistance and reviewed before release. Free to print and share for personal use; please do not resell.