

Entering the UK

1. Overview

Your identity document (for example your passport or identity card) will be checked when you arrive at a UK port or airport to make sure you're allowed to come into the country. It should be valid for the whole of your stay.

You may also need a visa or electronic travel authorisation (ETA) to come into or [travel through the UK \(/uk-border-control/layovers-and-transiting\)](#), depending on your nationality.

[Check which documents you'll need to come to the UK \(/uk-border-control/before-you-leave-for-the-uk\)](#).

What you can bring with you

What you can bring with you depends on where you're travelling from. You must declare to customs:

- anything over your [duty-free allowance \(/duty-free-goods\)](#)
- [banned or restricted goods \(/duty-free-goods/banned-and-restricted-goods\)](#) in the UK
- goods that you plan to sell
- [more than €10,000 \(/bringing-cash-into-uk\)](#) (or its equivalent) in cash, if you're coming from outside the EU

You and [your baggage may be checked \(/uk-border-control/baggage-checks\)](#) for anything you must declare.

2. Before you leave for the UK



Check what documents you'll need to enter the UK.

You're a British citizen

You can enter the UK with one of the following identity documents:

- a valid UK passport
- a Gibraltar identity card

If you're travelling from Ireland to Northern Ireland

You do not need any documents to enter.

If you're travelling from Ireland to England, Scotland or Wales

A Border Force officer may ask to see proof of your identity and nationality. You can use any documents that show your identity or nationality, for example:

- a passport (current or expired)
- proof that you've been given British citizenship - such as a UK citizenship certificate
- a Gibraltar identity card (current or expired)
- a copy of your passport or Gibraltar identity card that clearly shows your identity and nationality

You can use more than one document - for example, a driving licence with a citizenship certificate. If you're using an expired passport or identity card, it must be recent enough that it's clear that it's yours.

You're from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein



You can enter the UK with one of the following identity documents:

- a passport
- an Irish passport card

You may also be able to enter the UK with a national identity card issued by an [EU country \(/eu-eea\)](#), Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. Check before you travel.

Your identity document should be valid for the whole of your stay.

You may also need a visa if you're planning to stay in the UK - for example, to work or study.

[Check if you need a visa to come to the UK \(/check-uk-visa\)](#).

If you're travelling with a passport or national identity card, it should be [registered on your UK Visas and Immigration account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details\)](#) if any of the following are true:

- you have settled or pre-settled status
- you used the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document when applying for a visa

You may be delayed at the border if your passport or national identity card is not [registered on your UK Visas and Immigration account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details\)](#).

Check if you can travel with a national identity card

You can only use a national identity card from an [EU country \(/eu-eea\)](#), Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein to enter the UK if one or more of the following is true:

- you have settled or pre-settled status under the [EU Settlement Scheme \(/settled-status-eu-citizens-families\)](#), or Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man's settlement schemes



- you have an EU Settlement Scheme family permit, or the equivalent from Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man
- you have a Frontier Worker permit
- you are an S2 Healthcare Visitor
- you are a Swiss national and have a Service Provider from Switzerland visa
- you are an EU, EEA or Swiss national aged 18 or under [travelling as part of a French school group using a France-UK school trip travel information form \(/guidance/visit-the-uk-as-part-of-a-french-school-trip\)](#)

If you're waiting for a decision on your application for settled or pre-settled status

You can use your EEA or Swiss national identity card to enter the UK if all of the following are true:

- you've applied for settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme, or Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man's settlement schemes
- you've been issued with confirmation your application is valid
- you're not applying as a joining family member

You may also need to [show evidence that you were living in the UK by 31 December 2020 \(/guidance/eu-settlement-scheme-evidence-of-uk-residence\)](#).

If you have not applied for settled or pre-settled status but are planning to

You must enter the UK with either:

- an [EU Settlement Scheme family permit \(/family-permit\)](#)
- a visa



Your family permit or visa could be issued by the UK, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man.

[Check if you need a visa to come to the UK \(/check-uk-visa\)](/check-uk-visa).

If you're travelling from Ireland to Northern Ireland

You do not need any documents to enter Northern Ireland.

You may need a visa if you're planning to stay in the UK - for example, to work or study.

If you're travelling from Ireland to England, Scotland or Wales

A Border Force officer may ask to see proof of your identity and nationality.

If you're an Irish citizen, you can use any documents that show your identity or nationality. For example:

- a passport (current or expired)
- proof that you've been given Irish citizenship - such as a certificate of naturalisation
- an Irish passport card (current or expired)
- a copy of your passport or Irish passport card that clearly shows your identity and nationality

You can use more than one document - for example, a driving licence with a certificate of naturalisation. If you're using an expired passport or Irish passport card, it must be recent enough that it's clear that it's yours.

If you're not an Irish citizen, you'll need to use either a passport or a national identity card, if you're eligible.

Find out more about [travelling to the UK from Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man \(/guidance/travelling-between-the-uk-and-ireland-isle-of-man-guernsey-or-jersey\)](/guidance/travelling-between-the-uk-and-ireland-isle-of-man-guernsey-or-jersey).

You're from outside the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein



You must have a valid passport to enter the UK. It should be valid for the whole of your stay.

You may also need a visa or an electronic travel authorisation (ETA), depending on which country you're from and the reason for your stay.

[Check if you need a visa or ETA to come to the UK \(/check-uk-visa\)](/check-uk-visa). You must have your visa or ETA before you travel to the UK.

! You may also need a visa or ETA if you're [‘transiting’ or travelling through the UK \(/uk-border-control/transiting-at-a-uk-airport\)](/uk-border-control/transiting-at-a-uk-airport), for example you're changing flights at a UK airport.

If you need a visa, you'll need to show your airline or transport provider (your 'carrier') either:

- a valid visa
- a 'visa exemption document' such as an [EU Settlement Scheme family permit \(/family-permit\)](/family-permit)

Before you travel, check that your visa is valid and will not expire before you enter the UK.

All BRPs have now expired and have been replaced by eVisas. You can no longer use a BRP for travel.

If you have online proof of your immigration status (an eVisa)

You will usually have an eVisa if you have permission to stay in the UK for longer than 6 months or have been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

If you do not already have a UKVI account, you need to [set up access to your eVisa \(/get-access-evisa\)](/get-access-evisa).

[Sign in to your UKVI account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details/update-your-ukvi-account\)](/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details/update-your-ukvi-account) to check:

- your details are up to date



- your eVisa is linked to your current passport or travel document - unless it's a Home Office travel document, which you cannot link

You'll still need to carry your current passport or travel document with you.

You should also:

- [get a share code to prove your immigration status \(/view-prove-immigration-status\)](/view-prove-immigration-status) before you travel - a share code is valid for 90 days
- carry any valid physical immigration document which shows you have permission to travel to the UK

If you do not have a way to show your permission to travel

You can no longer apply for a replacement BRP or BRC.

Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to apply for:

- a temporary visa
- EU Settlement Scheme travel permit
- Returning Resident visa

A temporary visa is a short-term sticker (vignette) in your passport. It costs £154 and will let you re-enter the UK once only. [Apply for a temporary visa \(https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/brp-vignette-transfer\)](https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/brp-vignette-transfer).

An [EU Settlement Scheme travel permit \(/euss-travel-permit\)](/euss-travel-permit) is free. It lets you return to the UK if you have settled or pre-settled status through the EU Settlement Scheme.

You may be able to get a [Returning Resident visa \(/returning-resident-visa\)](/returning-resident-visa) if you've been out of the UK for over 2 years. It costs £637 and will let you re-enter the UK once only.



If you're travelling from Ireland

You do not need any documents to travel from Ireland to Northern Ireland. You should [check if you need a visa or ETA to come to the UK \(/check-uk-visa\)](#).

If you're travelling from Ireland to England, Scotland or Wales, a Border Force officer may ask to see your passport. It should be valid for the whole of your stay.

Find out more about [travelling to the UK from Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man \(/guidance/travelling-between-the-uk-and-ireland-isle-of-man-guernsey-or-jersey\)](#).



If you're travelling from Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man

You only need to show your documents if you're stopped by a Border Force officer. They may ask to see proof of your:

- identity
- permission to come to the UK, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, if you need it - for example, a visa, biometric residence permit (BRP) or work permit

You do not have to use a passport, Irish passport card or identity card to prove your identity. You can use other documents instead - for example, a driving licence or armed forces identity card.

Find out more about [travelling to the UK from Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man \(/guidance/travelling-between-the-uk-and-ireland-isle-of-man-guernsey-or-jersey\)](#).

Travelling with children

You may be asked at the border to prove the relationship between yourself and any children travelling with you, if you do not seem to be the parent, for example if you have a different surname.

You can prove this with:

- a birth or adoption certificate showing your relationship with the child
- divorce or marriage certificates if you're the parent but have a different surname from the child
- a letter from the child's parent giving permission for the child to travel with you and providing contact details, if you're not the parent

Before you board

Your carrier will check your passport and other travel documents. They'll send this information electronically to [Border Force \(/government/organisations/border-force\)](/government/organisations/border-force).

You can [ask to see the information about you \(/government/publications/personal-information-use-in-borders-immigration-and-citizenship\)](/government/publications/personal-information-use-in-borders-immigration-and-citizenship) that's been sent by carriers.

3. At border control

You'll need to show your identity document, such as your passport or national identity card.

You must:

- have your identity document ready - remove it from a holder or wallet if you use one
- remove your face covering or sunglasses, if you're wearing them
- move through passport control together if you're in a family

If you're travelling from Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, you'll only need to show your documents if you're stopped by a Border Force officer. [Check which documents you'll need to come to the UK \(/uk-border-control/before-you-leave-for-the-uk\)](/uk-border-control/before-you-leave-for-the-uk).



Arriving by bus or coach

You have to leave the bus when you arrive at border control.

Make sure you:

- are ready to get off the bus when you arrive
- have your travel documents ready

Read the [guidance for school parties and groups coming to the UK by coach \(/government/publications/school-parties-visiting-the-uk-by-coach\)](/government/publications/school-parties-visiting-the-uk-by-coach).



If you're a British citizen

You can use the UK/EEA channel to get your passport or Gibraltar identity card checked - this is usually faster than the other channels.

You can use automatic ePassport gates at some airports if your passport has a 'chip' on it and you're 10 or over. If you're between 10 and 17, you must be accompanied by an adult.

These gates use facial recognition technology to check your identity against the photo in your passport.

If you're from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein

You can use the UK/EEA channel to get your passport, Irish passport card or national identity card checked - this is usually faster than the other channels.

Your passport or national identity card should be [registered on your UK Visas and Immigration account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details\)](/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details) if either of the following are true:

- you have settled or pre-settled status
- you used the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document when applying for a visa

You may be delayed at the border if your passport or national identity card is not [registered on your UK Visas and Immigration account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details\)](/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details).

You can use automatic ePassport gates at some airports if your passport has a 'chip' on it and you're 10 or over. If you're between 10 and 17, you must be accompanied by an adult.

These gates use facial recognition technology to check your identity against the photo in your passport.

If you're from outside the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein

Your passport (and visa if you have one) will be checked at border control. You'll usually be asked why you're coming to the UK.

You can use the UK/EEA immigration lanes and the automatic ePassport gates if you're from:

- Australia
- Canada
- Japan
- New Zealand
- Singapore
- South Korea
- United States

If you have an eVisa, [sign in to your UKVI account \(/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details/update-your-ukvi-account\)](/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details/update-your-ukvi-account) to check that it's linked to your current passport or travel document before you travel.



When you must not use an ePassport gate

You must see a Border Force officer and get a stamp in your passport if you are entering the UK with a [Temporary Work - Creative Worker certificate of sponsorship \(https://www.gov.uk/creative-worker-visa/creative-worker-concession\)](https://www.gov.uk/creative-worker-visa/creative-worker-concession) for up to 3 months (and you want to enter without a visa).

You cannot get a stamp if you use the ePassport gates. Without a stamp you will not be allowed to carry out the activities you came to the UK to do.



Registered Travellers

You can use the UK/EEA immigration lanes and the automatic ePassport gates.

If you have an Israeli passport, you cannot currently use the ePassport gates.

Travelling with an eVisa or UK biometric residence permit (BRP)

Your fingerprints may be checked at border control. They'll be checked against the ones on your eVisa or BRP.

If you're refused entry

You'll be told in writing:

- why you've been refused entry to the UK
- if you can appeal against the decision

- when you will be removed from the UK

You'll usually have to leave the UK immediately.

You may be allowed into the UK temporarily (usually for up to a week) but your passport will be taken from you and you must report to immigration officers at set times.

4. Baggage checks

You must co-operate if you're stopped and asked about your baggage.

! If you break [the rules for bringing goods into the UK \(/duty-free-goods\)](/duty-free-goods) your goods and any vehicle you use to transport them may be [seized by customs \(/customs-seizures\)](/customs-seizures).



If your baggage is checked

Your baggage is usually checked in front of you.

Customs officers keep a record of:

- all baggage they open and check
- any damage to your baggage or belongings during a check

If your things are damaged

You may be offered compensation if your baggage or belongings are damaged during a customs check.

Making a complaint

You can:

- ask for the duty manager if you want to complain about a customs check while you're at the border
- [send your complaint to Border Force \(/government/organisations/border-force/about/complaints-procedure\)](/government/organisations/border-force/about/complaints-procedure) if you want to complain later

5. Layovers and transiting through a UK airport

Passing through a UK airport while on the way to another country is called 'transiting'. Some travellers call it a 'layover'.

There are 2 types of transiting:

- 'airside' - you do not pass through UK border control before you leave on your connecting journey
- 'landside' - you do pass through UK border control, but come back through it and leave the UK within a short amount of time (usually 24 hours)



[Find out if you need a UK visa or electronic travel authorisation \(ETA\) \(/check-uk-visa\)](/check-uk-visa) for your layover.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) travel rules

You do not need to take any COVID-19 tests or fill in a passenger locator form if you transit through the UK. This applies whether you are fully vaccinated or not.

The country you're travelling to from the UK might still have COVID-19 entry rules in place. Check the rules for the country you're travelling to before you go.



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