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## 2017 Summer Flight Delay Study: Best And Worst Airports Ranked

With airlines set to carry a record 234 million travelers this summer, many fliers will learn the hard way that summer delays can often be more frequent than winter delays. And with load factors for domestic flights near all time highs, making taking an alternate flight harder, delays can compound quickly.

To get a better sense of which airports are chronically bad for summer travel, and not just having one bad year, MileCards.com aggregated and analyzed Department of Transportation airport on time arrival data for the last 10 summers (2007 – 2016) to come up with composite on time ratings for the 50 busiest airports in the country.

Key findings include:

**40%** of the top 50 airports have more summer than winter delays. Summer problems are worse than winter at airports across the country, including Atlanta, Boston, both Dallas area airports, New York – Kennedy, Orlando, San Antonio, and all three Washington, D.C. area airports.

**June is the worst month for summer delays.** 76% of the 50 busiest airports have more frequent delays in June than July or August.

Newark the worst major airport for summer delays. 5 of the 10 worst airports for on time summer arrivals are in the Northeast. The two worst are in the New York metro (Newark – Liberty and New York – La Guardia) with just 66.5% and 66.9% of flights arriving on time. New York – Kennedy (#4), Boston (#5), and Philadelphia (#6) round out the Northeast misery.

Kahului, Honolulu, Salt Lake City best overall. Hawaii should be no surprise at the top of the list with 88% of summer flights arriving on time in Kahului and 86.5% in Honolulu. Salt Lake City is #3 overall and the most reliable summer airport on the mainland with 85.3% of arriving flights on time, well outpacing #4 Orange County's 81.9% of arriving flights on time.

Minneapolis and Detroit are the best in the Midwest. If you must connect in a Midwest city, Delta's Minneapolis and Detroit hubs are the least delay prone. 79.6% of fights into Minneapolis were on time, similar to the 79.2% of flights arriving on time into Detroit. That compares to 72.3% of flights on time arriving Chicago O'Hare, the worst Midwest airport for summer delays.

The most reliable hubs of each airline. Among United Airlines hubs, Houston – Bush is tops with a 78.2% on time arrival rate. Phoenix is the least delay prone of the American Airlines hubs during the summer with 81.5% of flights on time. Among Delta Air Lines hubs, Salt Lake City is tops.



San Francisco is a pocket of misery. While San Francisco has mild, rain free summers, coastal fog and parallel runways conspire to create delays that r worst airport for summer delays with just 69% of flights arriving on time. San Jose and Oakland, in contrast, are the #8 and #11 best airports for fewe delays.

## Tips for summer fliers

Check for waived change fees before you check in. When severe weather is on the way, airlines often offer the option to change flights ahead of time, free of charge. Check a day or two before your flight to see if there's a waiver in place, and you can try to fly through a city with calmer weather or pick a different day. You won't always get an email or phone call telling you these waivers are in place, but they are always announced on airline websites. Here are the pages for American, Delta, Southwest, and United.

**Use inflight wifi to rebook en route.** When you're on a late flight with a tight connection pull out your phone and get on the wifi. Airlines give you free access to their websites, so you can check the status of your connection, see options, and sometimes rebook on the spot.

See delays before they're posted. American, Delta, and United let you check the status of your inbound aircraft via links from the flight status displays on their mobile apps. If your inbound flight is running late, there's a good chance your flight will depart late.

If that option isn't available in the app, try using FlightAware.com. It has a 'Track Inbound Flight' feature that lets you see if your inbound aircraft will arrive late. Don't stray too far from the gate though. Airlines sometimes swap out planes and crews if the incoming plane is running late, so your flight might not be delayed as long as it seems.

**Be selective with hubs and times.** Early morning flights are less likely to face delays, and you can use our airport rankings to keep an eye on airports to avoid if you have a choice of airports to connect.

**Get protected with the right cards.** Some travel credit cards offer compensation if your flight is delayed, as much as \$500 to cover things like hotel expenses or meals. Generally you need to purchase your ticket with the card to qualify. The Chase Sapphire Preferred, Citi ThankYou Premier, and United MileagePlus Explorer are among cards with flight delay coverage. MileCards.com has a comparison of coverage benefits here.



City	June	July	Aug	Summer	Fall	Winter
Newark - Liberty	63.8	65.3	70.2	66.5	75.2	65.8
New York - La Guardia	64.3	65.9	70.5	66.9	75.7	68.1
San Francisco	67.9	68.6	70.5	69.0	76.1	68.0
New York - Kennedy	69.3	67.9	70.6	69.2	80.3	72.2
Boston	70.5	71.2	74.5	72.1	81.4	74.2
Chicago - O'Hare	68.3	73.7	75.0	72.3	81.2	68.6
Philadelphia	71.7	73.1	75.3	73.4	80.6	74.3
Miami	73.0	72.9	74.6	73.5	82.9	76.2
Washington - Reagan	71.9	72.3	76.6	73.6	84.1	76.3
Columbus	71.9	73.3	76.4	73.9	83.3	73.5
Raleigh	73.2	72.5	76.2	74.0	83.6	75.4
Washington - Dulles	71.4	73.9	77.8	74.4	83.8	76.2
Fort Lauderdale	74.8	73.3	75.5	74.6	83.3	73.3
Pittsburgh	73.2	73.6	77.2	74.7	84.3	76.0
Indianapolis	73.3	74.5	78.1	75.3	84.6	75.0
San Antonio	73.9	74.5	78.7	75.8	83.8	76.1
Kansas City	73.8	75.3	78.8	75.9	84.3	75.0
Baltimore - Washington	75.1	75.5	78.6	76.1	85.4	78.5
Cleveland	75.1	75.4	78.5	76.1	84.6	74.3
Orlando	76.4	75.4	77.0	76.1	84.9	76.7
Nashville	74.4	75.2	77.0	76.2	84.6	75.9
Dallas / Fort Worth	73.4	76.1	79.2	76.3	83.9	
		75.2	79.4	76.4	85.2	77.1 77.3
Tampa	75.9					
Milwaukee	73.9	76.1	79.2 78.7	76.4 76.4	84.6 84.9	71.9
New Orleans	75.3	75.3				77.9
Atlanta	76.5	74.7	78.2	76.5	84.3	78.0
Austin	75.1	75.8	78.6	76.5	83.1	76.5
St. Louis	74.2	75.8	79.6	76.5	84.8	76.3
Houston - Hobby	74.6	75.5	79.6	76.6	84.0	77.8
Los Angeles	74.8	76.7	78.7	76.7	82.6	76.0
Dallas - Love	74.7	76.9 76.5	81.7 79.5	77.7	85.1 85.5	79.2 78.8
Charlotte	77.2			77.8		
Denver Houston - Bush	75.6	77.0	80.8	77.8 78.2	85.7	75.8
	75.7 76.0	76.8 78.6	81.9	78.2 78.3	85.7 84.1	77.9
Sacramento		78.6 77.5	80.4		84.1 85.4	77.0
Fort Myers	78.5		79.3	78.4		75.3
Chicago - Midway	76.7	78.9	81.0	78.9	85.7	76.3
San Diego	76.4	79.0	81.3	78.9	83.8	76.9
Detroit	77.4	78.8	81.4	79.2	86.9	76.5
Oakland	76.4	79.4	81.8	79.2	84.6	77.6
Las Vegas	77.7	79.3	81.4	79.5	84.5	77.9
Minneapolis	77.4	80.3	80.9	79.6	85.2	76.5
San Jose	77.8	80.7	82.8	80.4	85.2	78.9
Seattle	78.8	80.8	81.7	80.4	84.6	78.2
Portland	78.4	80.9	83.3	80.9	85.3	77.7
Phoenix	80.6	80.8	83.2	81.5	86.1	80.1
Orange County	79.8	82.3	83.7	81.9	86.0	80.4
Salt Lake City	84.4	85.0	86.4	85.3	88.9	79.0
Honolulu	86.7	86.3	86.6	86.5	88.9	83.6
Kahului	87.9	88.3	87.9	88.0	90.6	86.5

Source:

MileCards.com analysis of DOT monthly on time arrival data for 2007 - 2016 for the 50 busiest U.S. airports.



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