

Title:

Who Needs a Passport?

Word Count:

456

Summary:

Are you traveling overseas? Do you need a passport?

Keywords:

passport, child, certificate, united, united states, passports, states, citizenship, countries, birth, need, birth certificate, requires, country

Article Body:

A U.S. citizen needs a passport to depart or enter the United States and to enter and depart most foreign countries. Exceptions include short-term travel between the United States and Mexico, Canada, and some countries in the Caribbean, where a U.S. birth certificate or other proof of U.S. citizenship may be accepted.

Your travel agent or airline can tell you if you need a passport for the country that you plan to visit. The embassy or consulate of the country where you plan to travel can also advise you about its entry requirements.

Please Remember!

Even if you are not required to have a passport to visit a foreign country, U.S. Immigration requires you to prove your U.S. citizenship and identity to reenter the United States. Make certain that you take with you adequate documentation to pass through U.S. Immigration upon your return. A U.S. passport is the best proof of U.S. citizenship.

Other documents to prove U.S. citizenship include an expired U.S. passport, a certified copy of your U.S. birth certificate, a Certificate of Naturalization, a Certificate of Citizenship, or a Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States. To prove your identity, either a valid driver's license or a government identification card that includes a photo or a physical description is adequate. Check for the latest requirements.

With the number of international child custody cases on the rise, several countries have instituted passport requirements to help prevent child

abductions. For example, Mexico has a law that requires a child traveling alone, or with only one parent, or in someone else's custody, to carry written, notarized consent from the absent parent or parents. No authorization is needed, if the child travels alone and is in possession of a U.S. passport.

A child traveling alone with a birth certificate requires written, notarized authorization from both parents.

Beware of a Passport That Is About to Expire!

Certain countries will not permit you to enter and will not place a visa in your passport, if the remaining validity is less than 6 months.

All U.S. Citizens Must Have Their Own Passport.

Since January 1981, family members are not permitted to be included in each other's passports. Even newborn babies need their own passports to travel.

When to Apply

Every year, demand for passports becomes heavy in January and declines in August. You can help reduce U.S. Government expense and avoid delays by applying between September and December. However, even during those months, periods of high demand for passports can occur. Apply several months in advance of your planned departure, whenever possible. If you need visas, allow additional time - approximately two weeks per visa.