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http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html#

Visa Waiver Program (VWP)

Important Notice:

International travelers, who are nationals of Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries, seeking to travel to the United States without a visa, should review this important information on passport requirements for travelers under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). **All VWP travelers, regardless of age or type of passport used, must present individual machine -readable passports. Previous one-time exemptions for first-time VWP travelers without MRPs ended June 26, 2005. In addition, depending on when VWP travelers' passports were issued, other passport requirements apply:**

- **Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended on or after 10/26/06 – requires integrated chip with information from the data page ([e-Passport](#)).**
- Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended between 10/26/05 and 10/25/06 – requires digital photograph printed on the data page or integrated chip with information from the data page.
- Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended before 10/26/05 – no further requirements.
- Temporary, emergency, official and diplomatic passports are exempted from biometric digital photo and chip requirements, but must be machine-readable.
- Italian, French and Temporary German [Passports](#)

If a traveler cannot meet all of the requirements, he/she must obtain a visa for entry to the United States, and cannot travel without a visa on VWP. See [Visa Waiver Program](#) on the DHS, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) website for additional information.

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Overview – what is the Visa Waiver Program?

The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) enables nationals of certain countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. The program was established in 1986 with the objective of eliminating unnecessary barriers to travel, stimulating the tourism industry, and permitting the Department of State to focus consular resources in other areas. VWP eligible travelers may apply for a visa, if they prefer to do so. Not all countries participate in the VWP, and not all travelers from VWP countries are eligible to use the program. VWP travelers are screened prior to admission into the United States, and they are enrolled in the Department of Homeland Security's [US-VISIT](#) program.

Which countries participate in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)?

Currently, 27 countries participate in the Visa Waiver Program, as shown below:

Visa Waiver Program - Participating Countries.

Andorra	Iceland	Norway
Australia	Ireland	Portugal
Austria	Italy	San Marino
Belgium	Japan	Singapore
Brunei	Liechtenstein	Slovenia
Denmark	Luxembourg	Spain
Finland	Monaco	Sweden
France	the Netherlands	Switzerland
Germany	New Zealand	United Kingdom

Which travelers may use the Visa Waiver Program to enter the United States?

Nationals of the 27 countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program may use VWP if:

- The purpose of their stay in the United States is 90 days or less for tourism or business (if in doubt, travelers should check with the nearest Embassy or Consulate to verify that what they plan to do is considered tourism or business. Transit through the United States is generally permitted. Note that foreign media representatives planning to engage in that vocation in the United States are not eligible, as the purpose of their stay does not qualify as “business”. These professionals must obtain a nonimmigrant media (I) visa.
- They present a machine-readable passport (MRP) valid for six months past their expected stay in the United States (unless [country-specific agreements](#) provide exemptions). This includes all categories of passports -- regular, diplomatic, and official, when the traveler is seeking to enter the United States for business or tourist purposes, for a maximum of 90 days
- Depending on when VWP travelers' passports were issued, other passport requirements will apply. These passport requirements are:
 - **Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended on or after 10/26/06 – integrated chip with information from the data page (e-Passport)**
 - Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended between 10/26/05 and 10/25/06 – requires digital photograph printed on data page or integrated chip with information from the data page

- Machine-readable passports issued or renewed/extended before 10/26/05 – no further requirements

- They have complied with the conditions of previous admissions under the Visa Waiver Program, and have not been found ineligible for a U.S. visa; and
- If arriving by air or sea, they are traveling on an approved carrier (almost all major airlines and cruise ship companies are currently approved carriers - copies of carrier lists may be requested from the Department of Homeland Security's National Fines Office at 1525 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA. 22209), and have a return trip ticket to any foreign destination.*; or
- They can demonstrate the intent to stay 90 days or less in the United States and demonstrate sufficient funds to support themselves while in the United States.

* VWP travelers who have been admitted under the Visa Waiver Program and who make a short trip to Canada, Mexico or an adjacent island generally can be readmitted to the United States under the VWP for the original admission period. See the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) website for additional details. Also VWP nationals resident in Mexico, Canada or adjacent islands are generally exempted from requirements to show onward travel to other foreign destinations.

When does a national of a VWP country need to apply for a visa instead of using the VWP?

Nationals of VWP countries must meet the conditions noted in the section above (**Which travelers may use the Visa Waiver Program to enter the United States?**) in order to seek admission to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. Travelers who do not meet these conditions must apply for a visa. In particular, a visa must be requested if the traveler:

- Wants to remain in the United States for longer than 90 days, or envisions that they may wish to change their status (from tourism to student, etc.) once in the United States;
- Wants to work or study in the United States, wants to come to the United States for other purposes not allowed on a visitor visa, or intends to immigrate to the United States;
- **Does not** have a machine-readable passport (MRP) issued or renewed/extended before 10/26/05, or is unable to meet other requirements outlined above for passports issued on or after October 26, 2005 or October 26, 2006.
- Intends to travel by private aircraft or other non-signatory air or sea carriers to the United States;
- Has been refused a visa or admission to the United States before, or did not comply with the conditions of previous VWP admissions (90 days or less stay for tourism or business, etc.); or
- Has a criminal record or other condition making them ineligible for a visa

What do I need to enter the United States under the VWP?

To request entry into the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, travelers must meet the requirements listed in **Which travelers may use the Visa Waiver Program to enter the United States?** Each VWP traveler must present his/her own valid machine-readable passport. See **What do I need to know about VWP machine-readable passport (MRP) and e-Passport?** and **What is a machine-readable passport (MRP)? What is an e-Passport?** for additional details. In addition to their passport, VWP travelers must also present a completed and signed I-94W Nonimmigrant Visa Waiver Arrival-Departure Record to U.S. officials at the port of entry. I-94W forms are free and often provided by travel agents, airlines or cruise ships prior to arrival, but may be picked up and completed on arrival at the U.S. port of entry. Travelers may also be asked to provide evidence of onward travel or other documentation on the purpose of their stay in the United States. Travelers entering through land ports of entry must pay a small land border fee as prescribed in 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1).

the person to whom the passport was issued can be made. You can readily identify an e-Passport, because it has a unique international symbol on the cover.

What should I know about machine-readable passports and family travel?

Families seeking to enter the United States under the VWP need to obtain an individual machine-readable passport for each traveler, including infants. Machine-readable passports typically have biographic data for only one traveler in the machine-readable zone. Because of the October 26, 2004 requirement that passport data be presented in machine-readable format, children included in family or parents' passports may be denied visa-free entry into the United States since only the primary traveler's biographic data is included in the machine-readable zone of the passport.

Entering the United States under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) – what happens at the port of entry?

Detailed information about admissions and entry to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program can be found on the DHS Customs & Border Protection website at [Visa Waiver Program](#) and [Admission to the United States](#) . Since September 30, 2004 VWP travelers have been enrolled in the [DHS US-VISIT](#) program when they arrive at U.S. ports of entry. Travelers should be aware that by requesting admission under the Visa Waiver Program, they are generally waiving their right to review or appeal a CBP officer's decision as to their application for admission at the port of entry. Likewise, if the traveler is later found to have violated the conditions of admission under the Visa Waiver Program, they do not have the right to contest a removal order

Is there a fee to use the Visa Waiver Program (VWP)?

There is a small land border fee for VWP travelers arriving at land ports of entry, per 8 CFR § 103.7(b)(1).

What about Canadian, Mexican or Bermudan citizens and VWP?

Canada, Mexico and Bermuda are not participants in the Visa Waiver Program. The Immigration and Nationality Act includes other provisions for visa-free travel for nationals of Canada and Bermuda under certain circumstances. See [Citizens of Canada, Mexico and Bermuda](#) . Since they are not part of the Visa Waiver Program, VWP requirements for machine-readable or biometric passports do not apply to nationals of Canada, Mexico or Bermuda. Also, it should be noted that some nationals of Canada and Bermuda traveling to the United States require nonimmigrant visas.

Is there a reference under U.S. law for the recent VWP passport requirement changes?

Yes. The USA-PATRIOT Act legislated that each Visa Waiver Program traveler must have a machine-readable passport. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP) began full enforcement of this policy on June 26, 2005. Additionally, the 2002 Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act created a requirement that VWP travelers present machine-readable passports (MRP) which are tamper-resistant and incorporate biometric identifiers in compliance with guidelines established by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

How can I get additional information? Additional information on the Visa Waiver Program is available from the Department of Homeland Security [Customs & Border Protection](#) website.

(October 2006)