



# I Am a U.S. Citizen

## How Do I... Get Information About Requirements for Traveling Abroad?



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

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**A5** Customer Guide

### Passports

U.S. citizens need a passport when traveling to, or returning from, most foreign countries. To find out the exceptions to this rule and to confirm current travel requirements, please check with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website at **www.state.gov** or by calling the National Passport Information Center at **1-877-487-2778**.

**The U.S. Passport Office issues all U.S. passports.** For information about requirements and how to apply for a passport, including a list of authorized passport acceptance offices, contact them or an authorized passport acceptance office directly. Applying for a passport is not a difficult process, and you can request expedited processing for an additional fee. Please be prepared to apply for your passport well in advance of any planned travel. Current passport processing times can be obtained on the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs' website or by calling the National Passport Information Center.

**Please note:** The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative requires U.S. citizens, age 16 and older, to present a valid, acceptable travel document, such as a passport, a U.S. passport card, a trusted traveler card (NEXUS, SENTRI, Global Entry or FAST/EXPRESS), a permanent resident card or an enhanced driver's license that denotes both identity and citizenship when entering the U.S. by land or sea. U.S. citizens under age 16 may present a birth certificate or alternative proof of citizenship when entering by land or sea. All travelers must have a passport book for international air travel.

**Please note** that hospital-issued birth certificates, voter registration cards, and affidavits cannot be used.

If you were not born in the United States, you can use your original Naturalization Certificate or Certificate of Citizenship.

### Visas

Many countries require that U.S. citizens have a visa issued by that country to enter.

For information about whether a country requires a visa, please contact that country's embassy or consulate well in advance of your planned travel. For more "Tips for Traveling Abroad," please visit **www.travel.state.gov**.

**Please note:** U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) does not issue U.S. passports or foreign visas. If you plan to travel abroad, please check with the U.S. Department of State for more information well before your planned trip.

## Key Information

### USCIS

• **On the Internet at: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)**

For more copies of this guide, or information about other citizenship and immigration services, please visit our website. You can also download forms, e-file some applications, check the status of an application, and more. It's a great place to start!

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, try your local library. If you cannot find what you need, please call Customer Service.

• **Customer Service: 1-800-375-5283**

• **Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service: 1-800-767-1833**

### Other U.S. Government Services—Click or Call

General Information	<a href="http://www.usa.gov">www.usa.gov</a>	1-800-333-4636
New Immigrants	<a href="http://www.welcometoUSA.gov">www.welcometoUSA.gov</a>	
U.S. Dept. of State	<a href="http://www.state.gov">www.state.gov</a>	1-202-647-6575
	<a href="http://www.travel.state.gov">www.travel.state.gov</a>	

**Disclaimer:** This guide provides basic information to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law and regulations, please visit our website. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. You may wish to be represented by a licensed attorney or by a nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals.