

# It's About Time

Avoid long waits when you travel with these pretrip strategies

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## BREEZE THROUGH IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS.

Global Entry is the easiest way to skip long passport control lines after an international vacation. Self-service kiosks at more than 40 major airports—including Boston-Logan International Airport (BOS)—scan passports and fingerprints of prescreened Global Entry members before sending them on their way. Cost: background check, an in-person interview, and a nonrefundable \$100 application fee. Duration: good for five years. [globalentry.gov](http://globalentry.gov).

**USE TSA PRECHECK.** The Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) PreCheck program—available at more than 100 U.S. airports, including Portland International Jetport (PWM) and Manchester-Boston Regional Airport (MHT)—enables precleared passengers to go through expedited screening. You typically walk through a metal detector and put your carry-on bags through an X-ray machine, but you don't have to take off your shoes or remove liquids or your computer from your carry-on. You can apply for PreCheck by filling out an online application, then verifying your identity and providing fingerprints at a TSA PreCheck enrollment center. The nonrefundable application fee is \$85 for a five-year eligibility period. If you're a member of Global Entry, you automatically qualify for PreCheck. [tsa.gov/tsa-precheck](http://tsa.gov/tsa-precheck).

## HASTEN HOTEL CHECK-IN.

Although hotels have express checkout down to a science, speedy check-in remains elusive, especially if you arrive during a rush. To bypass the queue, consider properties that let technology lend a helping hand. At many Hyatt hotels, swipe your credit card at a check-in kiosk or use their Passbook app on your iPhone to access your reservation. Once you confirm that everything is correct, the machine prints out a receipt with your room number and dispenses your keys. At all Walt Disney World-owned hotels in Florida and Disney's Aulani Resort on O'ahu, you can check into your room online up to 10 days before arrival. Simply stop by the Online Check-In Desk upon arrival to pick up your keys.

## GRAB THE KEYS AND GO!

Major car rental agencies offer some sort of free express service to avoid lines and paperwork. For example, Hertz's and Alamo's self-service, touch-screen kiosks allow you to review rental info, upgrade, or add optional items, such as child safety seats. Enroll in Hertz's Gold Plus Rewards (free for AAA members) or Budget's Fastbreak and, depending on the location, flash your driver's license or access a check-in monitor to receive the keys. Simply show your receipt, driver's license, and credit card to an exit booth agent.

## SEND STUFF AHEAD.

It's true that shipping luggage to your destination will help you avoid the dreaded baggage carousel wait, but many baggage-delivery companies are pricey. If it absolutely, positively doesn't have to be there overnight, consider the U.S. Postal Service. A Priority Mail Large Flat Rate Box (what one postal worker calls the "four pairs of blue jeans" size) costs \$16.85, regardless of weight, up to 70 pounds. For larger loads, the UPS Store sells reusable cardboard luggage boxes with sturdy handles.

Denver-based Laura Daily writes about consumer travel strategies.

