

The Best Days to Book a Flight & When to Fly

By Meghan Coyle, Edited by Claire Tsosie
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The old rules around the cheapest and the most expensive days to fly have slightly changed over the past years. Believing there's just one optimal day of the week (and perhaps even a specific time of day) to save on flights is the stuff of legends. And like all good legends, there is some truth to it ... but it's not the whole story.

The reality is that flight prices change constantly and at all hours of the day, adjusting to real-time demand. Airlines don't restock on the same day every week like a grocery store, so you won't find deals by waiting until Tuesdays to book. However, you might find some modest savings if you're willing to fly on certain days of the week, when there's less demand than usual.

Here's what the data shows on the best days to book a flight and when to fly to score the best deals.

Best day to book a flight: Friday - You can find deals any day of the week since flight prices fluctuate with demand. That said, data provided to Nerd-Wallet by [Expedia](#) indicates that — if you have flexibility on when to book — Fridays are generally best.

That said, the day you book matters less than how far in advance you book. Airlines adjust prices constantly based on demand, competitor pricing and available inventory. Flexibility and lead time will always matter more than which day of the week you open your browser.

How early should you book your trip? - Don't want to book too far in advance. According to airfare deals site [Going](#), the best time to book flights with cash is one to three months in advance for domestic trips and two to eight months out of international trips.

What about if you're paying with points? Book those award tickets as soon as they become available — as inventory will likely run out before deals even have a chance to drop.

Best day to fly - Friday averages the overall cheapest flights by pretty much every metric.

The 2026 Expedia data ranks every day of the week by average cost. Here are the days of week, from cheapest to most expensive for domestic flights:

Friday (cheapest); Thursday; Tuesday; Wednesday; Saturday; Monday; Sunday (most expensive).

Flying on a Friday instead of Sunday can save up to 8%, according to Expedia's 2026 Air Travel Hacks Report. Tuesday is the cheapest day to fly in terms of raw average cost, coming in at about 14% less than Sunday departures.

Avoid Monday and Sunday departures - Sunday and Monday remain the most expensive days to fly domestically. If you can't fly on a Friday or Tuesday, midweek departures (Tuesday through Thursday) generally offer savings compared to weekend travel.

Do the same rules apply or international flights? - For international travel, the savings variation across days of the week tends to be smaller than for domestic routes, but midweek departures are still typically among the cheaper options.

Cheapest (and most expensive) months to fly - Picking the right month can make just as big a difference as the day of the week. **Cheapest** months to fly: August, September and January. **Most expensive** months to fly: December, June and July.

January and September are particularly strong for value. That's because demand drops sharply after the holidays and summer rush, and airlines respond with lower fares. If you have flexibility, these are the months to plan around.

When to book holiday flights for 2026 -Holidays are an entirely different beast. Sure, September is generally one of the cheapest months to fly — but the rules don't apply on Labor Day weekend. There are typically more people flying in the days around a holiday, so there are fewer airplane seats available and higher prices.

Here are our recommendations for when to fly around some of the major holidays based on recent checkpoint data from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA):

[The best days to fly around Memorial Day.](#)

[The best days to fly around Fourth of July.](#)

[The best days to fly around Labor Day.](#)

[The best days to fly around Thanksgiving.](#)

[The best days to fly around Christmas.](#)

The rules are also different around how far out to book holiday travel. Based on Google Flights' insights from four years of aggregated data, here are some guidelines on when to book flights for the winter holidays.

When to book Thanksgiving flights

Lowest prices: ~35 days before departure.

Sweet spot: 24–59 days out.

Action plan: Start looking in early October.

When to book Christmas flights

Lowest prices: ~51 days before departure.

Sweet spot: 32–73 days out.

Action plan: Start booking in mid-October through mid-November.

One underrated hack: flying on the holiday itself (Christmas Day, Thanksgiving Day) is almost always significantly cheaper than the surrounding days. [But who wants to do that?]