

# Advice: Booking flights

This guide is to help families who are booking flights for family members using a Refugee Family Reunion entry visa.

## Where to start

Do your family have all the documents required to travel?

For some families this includes exit permits, cancelling refugee status in the country they are in or paying penalties for overstaying. If possible make sure this is done before you book the flight so you do not lose the tickets.

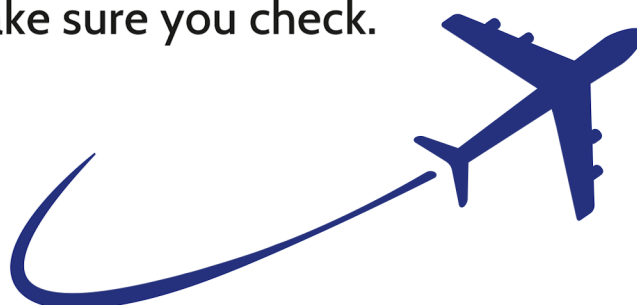
What are your family's main requirements?

If they need assistance when they travel, are travelling with children or have lots of luggage think about what they will need. This may affect the route they want to take or the airline you choose.

What route are they allowed to take?

For many EU countries an additional visa is required even for peoples staying in the airport on their journey. You can check which countries would require your family to have this visa here: [www.schengenvisainfo.com/transit-schengen-visa/](http://www.schengenvisainfo.com/transit-schengen-visa/).

Some nationalities, for example Eritreans, may require an airport transit visa for all EU countries and some nationalities, for example Sudanese, will be allowed to travel through some countries but not others. Make sure you check.



What is the plan for when they arrive?

If your family cannot stay in your current housing, you will need a plan for the first day they arrive and where they will live. If you are going to present as homeless to the council, it may be easier to arrive in the morning to give the council time to find you housing. Most councils will not find you housing until your family arrive. If they are arriving at the weekend many services will be closed.

Have you thought of all route options?

It is often difficult to get flights to regional airports in the UK, for example Newcastle, Birmingham or Edinburgh. Flights to these airports can be much more expensive and result in more stops on the route. In some cases, it might be cheaper and easier to fly to a larger airport and travel to the final destination by train or taxi.

Can they travel directly from their country of origin?

If they have to travel to a third country to fly to the UK how long will this take? Is it possible they will be denied entry or need a visa? Can they travel to the country they will fly from before you book the ticket? How long will they be able to stay there?



# How to find a low cost flight

Flight costs for one route may vary significantly.

These factors might affect the flight cost:

- Date
- Airline
- Time of day
- Route
- Baggage

Google have a tool that allows you to find the lowest cost options: [www.google.com/travel/flights](https://www.google.com/travel/flights)

When you search it will allow you to check different dates to find the best price. As you can see in the example below there is a large difference in the price you might pay.



Remember some airlines will have a higher baggage allowance than others. It may be worth checking this on their website. A ticket with a budget airline, for example 'Pegasus' or 'Jet2' might look cheap but have additional costs for baggage.

# How to book

When you have found a date, airline and route you need to think about booking. In most cases it is cheaper to book directly on the airline's website. Sometimes it is cheaper to book from the country of origin, so book online from the departure country or in an airline office there.

Beware of travel agents who will add on a fee to the booking, however it may be worth paying this if you cannot book yourself.

Before booking:

- Double check visa requirements for all stops on the route
- Check how long your family will have to transit. Will they have enough time to get to the second flight?
- Look for any hidden costs, baggage etc.
- Check what terms and conditions say about changes, transfers or cancellation

## Where to go for help

Speak to friends and family members who may have made similar journeys about what did and didn't work for them.

Together Now can try and advise based on their experience. Please also contact us if you don't think your family can travel without assistance.

You can contact us at [enquiries@togethernow.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@togethernow.org.uk).