

**Passport Information:**

Almost any foreign travel requires you to have a passport authorized and issued by the U.S. Department of State. There is no such thing as applying "too early". Getting an early start, even 6 months before a trip is not too early and will save you time and stress. Please check the expiration dates, too! Many destinations require that your passport still be valid six months after your return. So your "expiration date" is actually six months prior to the expiration date written on your passport document.

Onsite Applications:

First-time applicants, or those with lost, stolen, or damaged passports, must go to a passport office. There are over 5,000 offices in the U.S. Check online for your nearest location and their specific office hours. If the passport was lost or stolen, you must complete the DS-64 form in addition to the DS-11 application. Do not sign the DS-11 form ahead of time, it must be signed at the passport office. You will also need to bring a proof of U.S. citizenship (birth certificate); personal identification such as a driver's license or military ID; two passport photos taken within the last six months; and a payment of \$85 if you're 16 or older (\$70 if younger). Check the Department of State's website for more information.

Last-minute Applications:

You may apply at a passport agency if you are leaving within 14 days (additional fees apply). See the Department of State's website for details on expedited services and fees.

Mail-in Renewals:

If you just need to renew your passport, you can avoid a lot of the headache by mailing in your old passport (note that the old passport must be undamaged and issued less than 15 years ago. With the passport, include a DS-82 form (available on the State Department's website, at post offices, or from travel agencies), two identical passport photos, and a \$55 check made out to the U.S. Department of State. If you have changed your name, include the legal document identifying the change (marriage licenses, adoption papers, divorce decrees, etc.).

Mail to: National Passport Center, P.O. Box 371971, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-9971

Passport Copies:

Always make copies of your passport and carry one of them with you in case of an emergency and leave one with a family member, friend or Dive Travel.com agent. In the event your passport is lost or stolen abroad, one of these individuals will be able to provide a fax copy.

Travel Visas:

Many countries require travelers to obtain a visa. A visa is formal authorization for your travel and is usually stamped in your passport, which means you need a passport to get your visa (another reason to jump on the passport application early). To check if your destination requires a travel visa go to Zierer Visa Service. Since governments vary in strictness and regulations, the processing time varies for visas, so check the information on your specific destination.