Making your journey easier

Advice and tips for travelling with children and vulnerable passengers.
Introduction

At Gatwick we understand how stressful the airport journey can be for many people, especially if you are unsure of what to expect on the day.

We’ve created this booklet to help parents and carers travelling with children and vulnerable adults prepare for each stage of the journey though Gatwick, whether departing or arriving.

We’ve also included some tips you may find helpful and also some games for children at the back of the booklet.

At Gatwick we’re always here to answer any questions you may have, if you have a question that we haven’t answered in this booklet please email us at enquiries@gatwickairport.com and we will do our best to help you.
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At Gatwick we have two terminals, the North Terminal and the South Terminal. Each terminal has the desks where you check in with your airline, trolleys you use for your bags and a wide range of shops and restaurants where you get food and drink.

Don’t forget to take a look at Gatwick’s new Google indoor maps and street view. These will give you an inside view of the terminals and help you plan your journey through the airport. You may like to look at the maps and inside view alongside the photos of the journey through Gatwick in this booklet before your visit.

Arriving at the airport

South Terminal upper level

North Terminal upper level

South Terminal lower level

North Terminal lower level

Special Assistance Reception drop off

Car park

Special Assistance call points
Special Assistance

We extend a warm welcome to all our passengers at Gatwick. For passengers who need extra assistance on their journey through the airport, we have a dedicated team here to help.

You should always pre-book with your airline if you require assistance at the airport. Please follow these simple steps:

- At the time of booking your flight or up to 48 hours in advance of travelling, please contact your airline directly or your travel agent to pre-book assistance.
- You should also tell your airline if you intend to travel with your own mobility aid such as wheelchair or scooter.
- For more information about the help we can give you at Gatwick, please call +44 (0)844 892 0322 and select option 2.

Check in

Once you are in the terminal you approach your check-in desk where you wait in line to show your passport, tickets and hand over your bags. You put the bags onto the conveyer belt and are handed your boarding passes to keep for later.

Once you have been to the check-in desk you can go to the security area by following the signs for departures, you may need to take a lift or use an escalator to get to the right floor.

Departures

Check in area – finding your check in desk

South Terminal when arriving from the Train station

Self check in

Check in desk

PRM Special Assistance

www.gatwickairport.com/at-the-airport/passenger-facilities/
When in the security area there are screens that show all the information you need to help you prepare yourself for going through the security search process. There are tables where you put all your liquid items into clear plastic bags ready for the security checks. You join a queue and put your belongings including coats, belts and glasses into a large tray. You then walk through an archway metal detector, one person at a time and meet someone from our security team on the other side. This person may give you another search using a hand held security scanner or their hands. There are lots of noises from people talking, the trays and also the machines beeping. You may also be asked to take off your shoes so they can go through a separate scanner.
Once past security you walk into the departure lounge where there are lots of shops and places to eat and drink. In the lounge there are also large screens where you view your flight information and places to sit down while you wait for your gate number to appear. We have lots of shops where you can buy anything you may need for your journey. When you buy something you also need to show the shop assistant your boarding card.
Getting to the departure gate

Once the departure gate number appears on the flight information screens you start walking to your departure gate. Sometimes you walk for up to 25 minutes, there are large signs above telling you where you need to go and other passengers will also be walking to the departure gate at the same time. When you reach the departure gate you sit down and wait with the other passengers until your flight is ready for boarding.

In most gate rooms there are vending machines where you can buy cold drinks and snacks. Sometimes you walk through a tunnel called an air bridge to get onto the plane. Sometimes you will get on a bus and go for a short ride and walk up some steps onto the plane.

Your gate

Gate room

Air bridge

Aircraft
Arriving into Gatwick

When your flight lands all the people get their bags from the overhead compartments and get ready to leave the plane. You may go through an air bridge or down a set of steps onto a bus.

Once you are in the airport you go to the Border Control hall, sometimes there are a lot of other people waiting in the queues with you ready to show their passports when they get to the front of the line. We do also have a separate Family and Assistance lane which gives you more time for border force to complete their checks.

Once you have shown your passport you walk to the Baggage reclaim hall to collect your bags. There are lots of different baggage belts inside the hall and also some information screens where all the passengers will wait to see what belt their bags will arrive on. You may also use a trolley to put your bags on if they are heavy.

You will need either a pound coin or Euro to use one of the trolleys, the coin is released once when the trolley is returned.

Once you have collected your bags you walk through a Customs area, where you might see some staff in their uniforms.

Follow the signs ahead that take you into the arrivals area of the terminal where you can continue your journey.
Before travelling to the airport

Getting ready for your journey

Here are a few tips to make your journey easier

• Ensure that you have your passport, visas, tickets and money in your hand luggage. Please double check the name on your tickets against the names on your passports to ensure they match exactly.

• Make photocopies of all important documents such as passport, visas, tickets, European Health Card (EHIC), travel insurance and driving licence and keep separate from the originals.

• Take a look at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for up-to-date issues relating to the country you're travelling to.

• Weigh your baggage at home to ensure you are in compliance with the guidelines set out by your airline.

• Take a look at the Gatwick website www.gatwickairport.com for any special information notices, we will show these clearly on the front page if needed.

• Remove all liquids, gels and pastes in containers over 100ml and sharp, metal items from your hand luggage.

• If packing medicines, please ensure that they are in their original prescription packaging with prescription label or you have a letter from your doctor.

• Don’t gift wrap presents as they will need to be unwrapped by security staff when you reach the security area.

• Always allow plenty of time to reach the airport so that you will arrive two hours prior to departure for international flights and one hour prior to take off for domestic flights.

• There is a journey planner you can use on the Gatwick website to help plan your journey to and from the airport using whatever method of travel you prefer.

• We recommend at least doubling your travel time to account for traffic jams and travel delays.

• If you are driving to the airport you can book your parking in advance using our website, the earlier you book the cheaper this may be.

• If arriving by taxi please book this in advance and ask them how long they expect the journey to take at the time of day you are travelling.

• If taking a train or coach, ensure that you have your tickets if you have booked these in advance.

• If you struggle with long walks we have a Special Assistance service you can use. Please book this service in advance through your airline and use one of the call points to tell us you have arrived on the day. You can also book assistance on our website, however we always recommend you notify your airline.
At the airport

- Keep your baggage with you at all times and alert any member of airport staff to any unattended package.
- Never look after baggage belonging to other people or carry anything onto the aircraft for someone else.
- Keep a close eye on the flight information boards for your gate number. Some of the walks at Gatwick can take ten minutes for an able bodied passenger so please leave enough time to reach your gate.

Travelling with children

- You can take an additional item of hand baggage even when travelling with a child who has no seat assigned to them, but please do always check baggage restrictions with your airline.
- Baby milks in containers over 100ml can pass though security when travelling with a baby but half of the containers will need to be opened and tested, so please keep this in mind if travelling with cartons. The milk doesn’t need to go inside the clear plastic bag provided at security, however all other liquids, gels and pastes need to be placed in the bag. The plastic bag must be sealed and you can take one bag per passenger. Please place the bag into the tray with your other items.
- You may carry milk powder and there are no limits for how much of this you can take.
- Wet wipes are fine but all baby creams and lotions are included in the 100ml regulation.
- You can buy ready-to-drink infant formula after security from Boots and this can be ordered in advance by calling: 01293 569606 (North Terminal) and 01293 569353 (South Terminal).
- Pack extra snacks, drinks, colouring books, crayons and their favourite cuddly toy.
- At security if travelling with two adults, one adult can walk through the archway metal detector first so the child can see what to do. The child can then meet their parent on the other side once they have walked through the archway metal detector.
- To help your child cope with the aircraft noise during take-off and landing you may consider using some headphones. There are also headphones which have been designed to shut out all surrounding noise including the sounds of aircraft engines.
- It’s likely that your baby will need a passport and a ticket if you are travelling internationally, please double check to ensure that your baby is covered by your travel insurance.
- Most airlines do have sky cots on the aircraft however they are not always available and are only available in a few sections of the aircraft. Please speak with your airline before you travel if you are concerned.
- Please ask a flight attendant about heating up bottles or providing hot water, or if you don’t have a cooler bag and need something chilled please ask for ice. We can’t guarantee your airline will be able to provide these services so please check in advance.
Vulnerable passengers and their carers

• The airline may be able to let you board first or last depending on what would be most beneficial and possibly seat you either in the front or back row of the plane where there is often more room. This would enable you to disembark the aircraft as quickly as possible upon landing. Please speak with a member of staff at the gate and explain that you or the person you are travelling with experiences issues with crowds due to their particular condition, staff will always try to help when they can.

• Remember to give the airline advance notice if there are any special dietary requirements, particularly if someone is following the gluten or casein-free diet as this may take longer to organise.

• Sometimes coming to visit the airport to have a look around before the day you travel can help, especially with young children. You will be able to see the check in desks and also view the security area.

• Ensure children or vulnerable adults have identification, this can be discreetly pinned onto their clothing if needed, please include a mobile contact number for yourself.

• At security we’ve created special assistance lanes for both departing and arriving families. Our separate security lane gives families travelling with young children and vulnerable passengers more time when passing through the security checks. Simply follow the signs for assistance lanes or ask a member of staff who will be able to direct you towards the correct area. Please advise staff of any relevant condition when arriving in the assistance lane so we can do our best to help you.

• Following on from the success of our security assistance lanes, we’ve also introduced assistance lanes through border control to help families arriving back at Gatwick. Our staff will be on hand during busy times to give some extra help.

• If you would like to wait in the quietest surroundings possible we have lounges that can be booked in advance. There is a charge to use the lounges as they also include complimentary food and drink. Please see the lounges section of our website for more information on these facilities.

• If you have a hearing or sight impairment please explain this to the cabin crew on the plane so that they can keep you informed of any important announcements such as delays or emergency landings.

Tips from the ADHD foundation

Children and young people with ADHD are very susceptible to anxiety and find any change to their normal daily routine potentially stressful.

To ensure you and your family have an enjoyable flight, please follow these guidelines.

• Make sure your child is well prepared for the journey. If they have never flown before explain to them it’s safe and that it’s a fun experience.

• Have several discussions about what to expect in the weeks before you start your journey.

• If your child receives medication for their ADHD, ensure it is taken at the appropriate time and with food.

• If the flight is over four hours, it may help to ask your doctor for a prescription of melatonin which will help your child adjust to a new time zone.

• Explain to your child that they must remain seated on the plane – this can be difficult for a child with ADHD.

• Plan lots of sitting activities such as games, puzzles, colouring pens and books, music with headphones and if your child has one, an Ipad / Ipod/ nano / Gameboy etc.

• On the day of your travel, get up extra early to ensure there is no additional and unnecessary stress by having to rush.

• Make a poster for your child to put on their bedroom wall and perhaps on the fridge detailing all the things they need to remember for their trip.

• Make clear to your child the ‘rewards’ of positive behaviour by asking them what ‘they would choose’ to do as part of your holiday

• Reward positive behaviour through repeated praise about how pleased you are with them.

Finally if your child is restless or anxious on the flight you can do some progressive muscle relation with them. Beginning with the feet and working your way up through the body and including the muscles in the face, ask them to tense each muscle group one by one, hold it for ten seconds then gently relax. Remember to encourage them to breathe very slowly after each muscle group is relaxed. This should take about fifteen minutes or more and will help relax your child.
What to do if you need help

We have many staff within the terminals who are there to help passengers every day. If you have any questions or issues whilst in the airport please ask any member of staff for help. You can also use one of the white phones on the walls or pillars to call various areas of the airport such as Special Assistance.

Travelling with and administering medication

Please refrain from using injectable medication within the toilets at the airport and speak with a member of staff who can provide you with a quiet, private room within the terminal.

You can take your essential medicines on your flight. Medicines in containers under 100ml should be placed in the transparent, re-sealable plastic bag with any other liquids. If the container is larger than 100ml it should be presented at security for x-ray inspection. There is no limit on the amount but you may be asked to verify the liquid by tasting or by providing proof such as a doctor’s letter.

Any other medical item that you may need during your flight including insulin and needles, asthma inhalers, Epi Pen, angina sprays etc. can be carried but only the amount necessary for your trip. The rest should be put in your checked-in baggage.

If you are concerned about the effect of the temperature in the aircraft hold on your medicine please speak with your airline directly.

Items such as blood pressure monitors can be carried in hand baggage as long as they fit within the size limits.
Q&A with our Security Team

Q: What training do staff in your team have on how to assist vulnerable passengers?
A: All of our staff have completed customer service training to a City & Guilds level, they also have life skills and experience which enables them to understand the passenger’s needs.

Q: How can vulnerable passengers make themselves known to your team when they enter your area?
A: Any security officer is able to assist and we have staff situated before and after the security lanes.

Q: What process is there for this type of passenger and their carer?
A: We have a dedicated Family and Assistance security lane which allows passengers to take their time when completing the security checks.

Q: Do you have any advice or instructions for these passengers to make this process easier for them and your staff?
A: Please bring doctor’s letter to accompany medication which is essential for the flight and advise staff of the passengers condition when arriving into the assistance lane so we can assist.

Q&A with our Special Assistance Team

Q: What training do staff in your department have on how to assist vulnerable passengers?
A: Training given to staff explains that they should take their cues on how to assist people from the passenger themselves or from the carer travelling with them. We would not presume to know what the passenger needs and we would always encourage that the carer is present because they will be familiar to the vulnerable party.

Q: How can passengers make themselves known to your team when they enter the Special Assistance area?
A: When entering the assistance area our concierge staff will be there greeting passengers. They will want to know how they can help and what assistance the passenger requires, however they do not need to know the specific reason for the assistance. Please book this assistance in advance though the airline.

Q: What process is there for a vulnerable passenger and their carer?
A: With such a wide spectrum of needs the help will be dependent on the passenger’s needs. Staff will let the group or passenger know what is going to happen, where they can wait (if they want to) and when to come back to get assistance to their flight. Staff will provide mobility assistance if this is needed but if not they can direct the passengers to the gate.

Q: Do you have any advice or instructions for these passengers to make this process easier for them and/or your staff?
A: Come along and see us at your earliest opportunity so that we can make sure we have received your booking for assistance and know your requirements, this may help you or the passenger feel more at ease. Although we have excellent Special Assistance facilities in both departure lounges, there may be people who don’t need to use these and want to relax elsewhere in the terminal before their flight. If we’re familiar with the passenger and aware of what they need in advance we can make arrangements to provide the right help.
Dot to dot

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

3

2

1

Colouring

- Seashells
- Fish
- Starfish
- Shells
This is a thing we build from sand
We mould it into shape by hand
You should always pre-book with your airline if you require assistance at the airport. Please follow these simple steps:

At the time of booking your flight or up to 48 hours in advance of travelling, please contact your airline directly or via your travel agent to pre-book assistance.

You should also tell your airline if you intend to take your own mobility aid such as wheelchair or scooter.

For more information about the help we can give you at Gatwick, please call +44 (0)844 892 0322 and select option 2.