

India Domestic Flights Guide

What to know about booking, baggage, and airport logistics before flying between cities in India — so your multi-stop itinerary runs smoothly.

WHY THIS GUIDE

India's domestic flight network is extensive and often the fastest way to cover its distances, but the booking quirks — baggage allowances that differ from international norms, ID requirements, and airport arrival timing — rarely make it into general trip-planning advice. This guide covers what's specific to flying domestically within India.

BOOKING & ID REQUIREMENTS

Domestic flights in India have a few requirements that surprise first-time visitors.

- Carry a valid passport for ID at security and check-in — domestic flights still require government-issued photo ID
- Book through major domestic carriers' own sites or established booking platforms rather than unfamiliar third-party sites
- Fares fluctuate significantly with booking lead time — booking well ahead generally costs less than last-minute
- Print or save a digital copy of your boarding pass and ID; some airports still ask for a printed itinerary at entry
- Double-check the airport code and terminal, especially in cities like Delhi and Mumbai that have multiple terminals serving different airlines

BAGGAGE & SECURITY

Baggage rules on Indian domestic carriers can differ from what international travelers expect.

- Checked and cabin baggage allowances are often lower than international long-haul norms — confirm your fare's specific limits before packing
- Power banks and spare lithium batteries generally must go in cabin baggage, not checked luggage
- Liquids, gels, and aerosols in cabin baggage follow standard international security limits
- Security lines can be slow at peak hours — budget extra time, especially at major hub airports
- Each piece of checked baggage typically needs a printed tag stapled to your boarding pass before security, separate from the airline's own tag — check current procedure at check-in

TIMING & AIRPORT LOGISTICS

- Arrive at least two to three hours before domestic departures at busier airports, especially during peak travel seasons
- Factor in significant ground-travel time to and from the airport in large cities — traffic is the biggest variable, not flight time
- Build a buffer of a few hours between connecting flights if you're routing through a hub city
- Weather delays are common during monsoon season (roughly June to September) and around winter fog in northern India (December–January) — keep onward plans flexible during these windows
- Re-confirm your flight status the morning of travel, particularly in fog or monsoon season

Specific airline names, fees, and baggage allowances change frequently — confirm details directly with your carrier when booking.