

APPLYING FOR A PASSPORT - STEP BY STEP

Source: [Travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)

First time Applicants (over 18 years of age)

1. Applicants must apply in person
 - **Make sure you must apply in person (Form DS-11).**
You must use the [DS-11 Form](#) if this is your first passport **or** your last passport was lost/stolen/damaged, issued when you were under 16, or issued more than 15 years ago.
2. **Fill out the DS-11—print single-sided, don't sign yet.**
 - Complete the form online or download it, print on single-sided paper, and **wait to sign** until the acceptance agent tells you to. You can request a passport **book**, **card**, or both. For mission trips, you'll only need a **Passport Book**.
3. **Gather proof of U.S. citizenship (original) + a photocopy.**
 - Acceptable examples include a certified U.S. birth certificate, a full-validity prior U.S. passport, Consular Report of Birth Abroad, Certificate of Naturalization, or Certificate of Citizenship. Digital/mobile documents aren't accepted; bring the physical original and a black-and-white photocopy.
4. **Bring photo ID (original) + a photocopy.**
 - A driver's license is typical. If the ID is from a different state than where you apply, bring a second photo ID. Photocopy front and back on 8.5"×11" paper (single-sided, black-and-white).
5. **Get one compliant passport photo.**
 - Color, taken within the last 6 months, **2"×2"** with a plain white/off-white background. No glasses; neutral expression; head size roughly **1–1⅜"** from chin to top of head. Printed on photo-quality paper. Don't staple it—your agent will.
 - You can easily get this taken at a local CVS or if applying at the Courthouse, they have an option of them taking it for you for a fee.
6. **Calculate and prepare fees (two separate payments).**
 - **Application fee** (paid to "U.S. Department of State" by check/money order):
 - Adult **book** \$130 • **card** \$30 • **book + card** \$160



- **Acceptance/execution fee** (paid to the facility): **\$35** (payment methods vary by location, typically credit/debit cards are accepted).
 - Optional: **Expedite** \$60; **1–2 day return delivery** \$22.05.
7. **Book an appointment and apply in person.**
 - Go to a passport **acceptance facility** (post office, clerk of court, library, etc.). The agent will verify your documents, give you an oath, and have you sign; they'll send your application for processing. (Use the [official locator](#) to find a site near you.)
 8. **Choose processing speed (current timelines).**
 - **Routine: 4–6 weeks**
 - **Expedited: 2–3 weeks** (add \$60)
 9. **Track your application.**
 - You'll get email updates; you can also check status online. Mailing to and from the agency isn't included in the processing time—build in extra time (mail can add ~2 weeks each way).
 10. **Watch your mail.**
 - Your **passport** and your **citizenship evidence** are returned in **separate** mailings (and sometimes on different days).

Passport Renewals

1. If you're renewing your expired passport, you can renew online or by mail.
2. For more information visit: [Passport Renewal](#)

Applying for an applicant under 16 years of age

1. Use DS-11 Form, and the child and **both parents/guardians must appear in person** (or provide proper consent paperwork if one can't attend: Form DS-3053). Bring proof of the child's U.S. citizenship, proof of parent/guardian relationship, both parents' photo IDs (plus photocopies), and one compliant photo.
2. For more information visit: [Minor Passport Application](#)