



STETSON LAW

NEW!!

ELECTRONIC TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION (ETA) – [Effective January 8, 2025]

As of January 8, 2025, the primary new UK travel requirement is that most non-European passport holders, including US citizens, need to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) before traveling to the UK for short-term visits, even if they don't typically need a visa; this includes transit through UK airports.

Key points about the new ETA requirement:

- **Who needs it:** Citizens from countries that usually don't require a UK visa, like the US and Canada.
- **Purpose of ETA:** Allows for short stays in the UK for tourism, business, family visits, or short-term study.
- **Application process:** Apply online for an ETA before traveling.
- **Effective date:** January 8, 2025.

From the State Department:

Location: United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, and British Overseas Territories

Event: New Entry requirements for US citizens traveling or transiting through United Kingdom airports – Effective January 8, 2025.

Starting January 8, 2025, U.S. citizens traveling to the United Kingdom for short visits, tourism, or business, including those just passing through UK airports, will need an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) if they do not have a UK visa or legal residency in the UK or the Republic of Ireland. This requirement applies to all parts of the UK, including Northern Ireland and British Overseas Territories. The ETA is similar to

the U.S. ESTA system and acts as a pre-clearance for travel. This change is part of the UK's move towards a digital border system.

An Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA):

- May take up to three working days to process.
- Costs £10 (\$12.75).
- Is required for travelers of all ages.
- Is valid for two years or the remaining period of validity on a passport, whichever is shorter; and
- Does not require travel details.

One does not need an ETA if they already have a visa, an exempt vignette, or have a British or Irish passport. Other nationalities that ordinarily require a visa to visit the UK will continue to do so and should not obtain an ETA.

For more information – and to apply for an ETA – go to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-an-electronic-travel-authorisation-eta>.