

Published based on [Obtaining A Child's Passports](#)

Obtaining A Child's Passports

Just as every U. S. adult must present a valid passport for international air travel, so must each child have their own passport. At one time, children under a certain age could travel on their parent's passport but that law has changed and now each must have their own. The requirements for a [minors passport](#) are similar to that of getting an adult passport except for a couple of major particulars to which careful attention must be paid.

Every child under the age of 16 must apply in person with the application for a new passport, DS -11. DS-11 is the standard application for a new passport. The form DS-11 should be filled out but should not be signed until the agent requests it.

The child also must have acceptable proof of citizenship which can be a certified birth certificate, naturalization certification, consular record of birth abroad or citizenship certificate. If it is not possible to access these primary documents there are some secondary documents that can be used such as baptismal certificate, public school records, public records or family bibles. However, secondary documents will require a combination of documents rather than one.

Both parents present must submit identification as well as proof of their relationship to the child. Government issued identification may be sufficient to prove who they are but they must also be listed as parents on one of the documents submitted to identify the child. This measure has been implemented in order to provide increased protection for children.

Minors aged sixteen or seventeen have slightly different requirements than younger children applying for passports. They too must apply for their passport in person and submit an ID or have their parents submit their identification if they have not yet gotten one. They however do not require their parents to be present to apply for the passport unlike children younger than sixteen.

There are circumstances wherein children might be able to travel to a foreign country without the necessity of a passport. A cruise ship which leaves from a US port and whose destination is a port in the Western Hemisphere might not require the passengers have a valid passport. On the other hand, it is important to know that the country where the ship arrives may require visitors to have one.

In addition, some changes were made as of June 2009 and groups of children from the US and Canada who are traveling with a school, religious or sports organization may not require a passport for travel to countries adjacent to their own. For sea or land travel they may require only a birth certificate or other documentation. International air travel though will still require the passport.

When applying for a childrens passport, it will normally take four to six weeks for the passport to arrive. If the passport is desired sooner, an [overnight passport](#) might be requested which can shorten the wait time to two to four weeks. If the passport is required within two weeks, a passport agency can issue a passport on the day the application is made in person or if that is not convenient, an expediting service might be used.

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