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In recent years, the United States has released an alternative to the passport. This is what a [U S passport card](#) is. It's a document for travel that's used to get into the United States at land crossings and ports of entry by sea from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and Bermuda. This form of ID is cheap and smaller than the passport book. It is a convenient 2nd option for people who do a bit of traveling between these countries by sea or by land. It became available starting July 14th, 2008 and has already been issued to more than 2,700,000 United States citizens.

You must also understand that although the booklet allows for travel between international countries via airplane, the card will only allow for automobile travel and travel by boat. It was made for citizens living on the North and South borders of the US. Those who travel to Mexico and Canada enough require a more convenient form of identification to travel between each country. This card makes it easier to do so without having to apply for an urgent USA Passport.

Inside each one is a chip called the "RFID chip". This is a chip that is read by vicinity through a certain frequency implanted inside of it. This chip helps to speed up the amount of time it takes for the government to process your ID. It doesn't have any personal info on it, just a specific number that IDs a government database record.

For those of you that are worried about security, take comfort in the fact that laser engraving and state of the art security features minimize the possibility of counterfeiting and forgery. The card comes with a protective sleeve that prevents the card from being read while not in use. The United States government takes forgery very seriously and has taken all the necessary precautions to protect its citizens from identification theft.

If you want to apply for one, please gather all the required documents. You're going to need proof of identity and citizenship. Proof of citizenship includes an older, unharmed United States passport, a birth certificate certified by the county, city, or state, a birth abroad consular report or a birth certificate, a certificate of naturalization or a citizenship certificate.

Acceptable ID includes older undamaged passports, certificates of naturalization, driver's license, government identification whether state, city, or federal or a recent military ID. In addition to these papers, you're going to need to bring a photo that is 2 by 2 inches. Only one photo is required. If you're ready to fill out your application, print out form DS-11 and fill it out. Then visit one of several application facilities across the nation. Simply search for one in your search engine of choice.

The fee for the application itself is thirty dollars. The execution fee is twenty-five. For minors under the age of 16, the application fee is fifteen dollars and the execution fee is twenty-five.

Once you successfully submit your application, it will typically take four to six weeks to process and be shipped out to you. If you choose the expedited service, it will take two to three weeks. This service typically costs extra.

Be sure to plan your vacation early and apply for your new passport card ahead of time. You don't want your travel date to come and not have the proper identification, even after applying for an [urgent United States passport](#). Happy traveling!

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