

The Top 10 U.S. Airports With The Most Delays, Ranked

(Courtesy of Matt Moffitt, SMARTERTRAVEL)

As travel continues to soar towards—and past—pre-pandemic levels, air travelers are once again getting familiar with busier skies and more crowded airports. In fact, 1 out of every 4 flights landing at New York City's Newark airport arrives more than 15 minutes late.

The good news is that travelers sometimes have the option to choose from multiple airports in a single destination (for example, between O'Hare and Midway in Chicago). So it's helpful to know which airport is statistically more likely to get you where you need to be on-time.

We've crunched the data provided by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). A delay is defined as a flight arriving 15 minutes or more past its scheduled arrival time. The information below is for flights that operated in the 2021 calendar year across the 30 busiest airports in the country.

Which US Airports Have The Most Arrival Delays?

If you can, you might want to avoid these airports the next time you fly.

1. Newark (25% of flights delayed)
2. Orlando (24% of flights)
3. Fort Lauderdale (23% of flights)
4. Dallas/Fort Worth (22% of flights)
5. Las Vegas (21% of flights)
6. Denver (21% of flights)
7. Chicago Midway (21% of flights)
8. Tampa (21% of flights)
9. Baltimore (20% of flights)
10. New York JFK (20% of flights)

What Destinations Have the Worst Delays?

It's worth noting that 8 out of the 10 most-delayed airports are in the eastern half of the country, so passengers flying in or out of that region might want to leave extra time for connections or transfers.

Which US Airports Have The Most On-Time Arrivals?

If you're hoping for an on-time (or early!) arrival, try flying into one of these airports.

1. Atlanta (12% of flights delayed)
2. Minneapolis/St Paul (12% of flights delayed)
3. Honolulu (13% of flights delayed)
4. Charlotte (14% of flights delayed)
5. Detroit (14% of flights delayed)
6. Salt Lake City (of flights delayed)
7. Seattle (16% of flights delayed)
8. New York LaGuardia (16% of flights delayed)
9. Washington Dulles (17% of flights delayed)
10. San Francisco (17% of flights delayed)

Which Airline Should You Fly to Arrive On-Time?

Six out of the top 10 on-time airports are Delta hubs; in fact, Delta has the second-best on-time ranking out of the 13 major airlines operating in the US (after leader Hawaiian Airlines).

For travelers in the New York area, LaGuardia has the best on-time performance of the three major airports in the city

If you're in Washington DC, Dulles International Airport (IAD) ranks better for on-time performance than Baltimore and Reagan National

Even with its frequent fog, San Francisco is still in the top third of airports for on-time arrivals

Which Airport Has The Most Delays In The World?

It's important to keep things in perspective. Whilst a 25% delay rate for New York's Newark Airport is definitely not ideal, there is a major hub in Asia at which almost half of arriving flights are delayed.

That prize goes to the Indonesian capital Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, which has a 48% (!) delay rate. Rounding out the top 5 are Mumbai, Hong Kong, Seoul Incheon and Paris Charles de Gaulle.

In fact, no US airport makes the list of the top 10 worst international airports for delays; it's solely airports in Asia and Europe that round out that ranking.