

What Is The Age Limit To Travel On Delta Air Lines?

Direct answer: Delta Air Lines has no upper age limit. The constraints are all at the young end. Children **aged 4 and under** may not travel alone and must be accompanied by a passenger at least **18 years old**. Children **aged 5 to 14** travelling without an adult must be enrolled in Delta's Unaccompanied Minor Program, which costs **\$150 each way and covers up to four children** on the same itinerary. For ages **15 to 17**, enrolment is optional — a teenager may fly as an ordinary adult passenger with valid identification, or a parent can request supervision at the same fee. Unaccompanied minor bookings cannot be completed in the app; call **1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)** to arrange one.

Two Delta-specific details are worth knowing up front: the accompanying-adult age is 18, not 16 as on some carriers, and the \$150 fee covers up to four children rather than being charged per child.

The age brackets

Child's age	Travel alone?	Unaccompanied Minor Program	Flights permitted
Under 2	No	N/A	Lap infant or purchased seat, with an adult 18+
2 to 4	No	Not available	Must travel with a passenger aged 18+
5 to 7	Yes	Mandatory	Nonstop flights only
8 to 14	Yes	Mandatory	Nonstop and connecting flights
15 to 17	Yes	Optional, fee applies if requested	Nonstop and connecting flights

A useful edge case: a child aged 5 to 14 travelling on the same flight as a ticketed adult who is seated in a **different cabin** must still be enrolled in the programme. The fee, seating and routing restrictions do not apply in that scenario, but the enrolment does.

Another: if a 15-to-17-year-old is travelling with a sibling aged 5 to 14, the whole group follows the **most restrictive** routing rules that apply to the youngest child. An older teenager does not unlock connections for a six-year-old.

What the Unaccompanied Minor Program includes

Delta's version of this service is among the more developed in the U.S. industry.

- A **trackable wristband** for the child
- A dedicated Delta escort guiding the child through the airport
- Priority boarding ahead of general boarding
- Handover to cabin crew, who are informed the child is aboard
- Escort between gates on approved connections
- Access to **Sky Zone lounges** — supervised, kids-only lounge areas at select hub airports during layovers
- A verified identity handover at the destination to the named adult, who must present matching photo identification

What it does not include: continuous one-to-one supervision in flight. Cabin crew check on the child but have a full aircraft to work. Delta also does not administer medication.

The fee

\$150 USD, CAD or EUR each way, in addition to the ticketed fare. CAD applies departing Canada, EUR departing Europe, and the USD figure converts to local currency when collected elsewhere.

The genuinely useful feature: **one fee covers up to four children travelling together** on the same itinerary with the same drop-off and pick-up contacts. They do not even need to be on the same booking reference, provided the contact details match. Sending four siblings costs the same \$150 each way as sending one.

Payment timing differs by itinerary type:

- **Domestic itineraries** (within the U.S., or between the U.S. and Canada): payable one-way or round trip, at check-in **or in advance** through reservations
- **International itineraries**: payable at check-in only — Delta Reservations cannot take the fee in advance

The fee is non-refundable once flown.

Routing restrictions

This is where itineraries fail, and Delta's rules are unusually specific.

Only Delta and a defined partner set. Unaccompanied minors may travel on flights operated by **Delta, Delta Connection, Aeromexico, Air France or KLM**. Any flight operated by another airline is not permitted, and itineraries containing other-airline codeshares are rejected outright.

Ages 5 to 7: nonstop only. Connections are not permitted at all. Through flights are allowed only where there is no change of aircraft.

Ages 8 to 14: connections allowed, but only onto Delta, Delta Connection, Air France or KLM flights.

Last flight of the day. For ages 8 to 14, the last nonstop of the night is permitted only if it departs before 8:59pm or is under two hours' flight time. The last flight of the day **from a connecting city** is not permitted at all, with narrow exceptions for Alaska, Hawaii and international connections.

Red-eye flights. Domestic red-eyes departing between 9pm and 5am and longer than two hours are not permitted. Exceptions exist for Alaska and Hawaii routes and international nonstops — but if an earlier qualifying flight exists in those markets, the earlier flight must be booked.

No overnight layovers.

The logic behind all of it is the same: Delta will not create a situation where a child could be stranded overnight in an airport. Build the itinerary around a morning nonstop and most of these rules never bite.

Lap infants and young children

Infants under 2 may travel on an adult's lap. Within the United States a ticket is required even for a lap infant; outside the U.S., a ticket is usually required at roughly 10% of the adult fare, with country-specific variation.

Practical points:

- If the child turns 2 during the trip, a purchased seat is required for the return leg — the system checks age against travel date
- Agents may request a birth certificate or passport when a child appears close to the cut-off
- An infant in a purchased seat should be in an approved child restraint system, which is materially safer than a lap on a long flight

Children aged 2 to 4 require their own ticket and their own seat, and must travel with a passenger aged 18 or older.

Documents and paperwork

For an unaccompanied minor, have all of this ready:

- **Proof of the child's age** — birth certificate or passport
- **Completed unaccompanied minor form**, with the child's details and full contact information for the adult delivering the child (TBBB, "to be brought by") and the adult collecting (TBMB, "to be met by")
- **Photo identification for the drop-off adult**, who must stay at the airport until the flight has departed
- **Photo identification for the pick-up adult**, matching the name on the form exactly
- **Passport and any visa** for international travel
- **A parental consent letter** where the child crosses a border without both parents — many countries require it

The name-match rule at the destination is absolute. If the collecting adult's identification shows a different name from the form, the handover stalls. Fix that before departure, not at the gate.

Departure day

- 1 **Arrive at least two hours before a domestic flight**, three internationally. Unaccompanied minor check-in is a counter process and cannot be done online or at a kiosk.
- 2 **Complete the form** and pay the fee if it has not been paid in advance.
- 3 **Request a gate pass** so you can escort the child through security. Bring your own identification.
- 4 **Board with the child** during pre-boarding and meet the crew member responsible for them.
- 5 **Stay at the gate until the aircraft has departed** — not just until it has boarded. If the flight returns to the gate, the child comes back to you.
- 6 **Send a charged phone plus a written card** with the collecting adult's number, in case the battery dies.
- 7 **Make sure the collecting adult arrives early** at the destination, with identification, and gets a gate pass of their own.

Teenagers aged 15 to 17

At 15 a young person can fly Delta as a regular passenger with valid identification — passport, driving licence or state ID — and handle boarding, deplaning and connections independently.

Whether to enrol them anyway is a judgement call. The service is worth the \$150 on a first solo trip, on any itinerary with a connection, and on international travel with immigration and customs to navigate. It is usually unnecessary for a confident 17-year-old flying a familiar nonstop.

One argument for enrolling that gets overlooked: an unenrolled teenager whose flight cancels at 11pm is managing the rebooking queue alone. An enrolled one is Delta's responsibility.

If you want a 15-to-17-year-old to travel unsupervised, tell the agent at the time of booking so it is noted in the record.

Common mistakes

Trying to book online. Unaccompanied minor bookings require an agent.

Building an itinerary through a non-permitted airline. Only Delta, Delta Connection, Aeromexico, Air France and KLM qualify. A cheap connection on a codeshare partner invalidates the whole booking.

Choosing the last flight of the day from a connecting city. Not permitted.

Assuming the collecting adult can wait at baggage claim. They need a gate pass, obtained at the counter with identification, and time to clear security.

Leaving the airport once the child boards. Stay until wheels up.

Forgetting the fee applies each way.

Preparing a child for the flight

The programme handles logistics. The rest is preparation, and it makes a substantial difference to how the day goes.

Pack a carry-on the child can manage alone. Not a bag an adult would pack — one the child can lift, open and close without help. Everything essential goes in it: medication, a change of clothes, a charged device with headphones, a book, snacks, and a water bottle to fill after security.

Write the contact details down on paper. Phones lose charge. A card in a pocket with the names and numbers of the drop-off and pickup adults, plus the child's own name and flight number, costs nothing and solves the worst-case scenario.

Walk them through the sequence in advance. Who they will meet, what the wristband is for, that a Delta employee stays with them, where they will wait during a connection, and that the pickup adult will need identification. Children handle the day far better when nothing about it is a surprise.

Discuss the delay scenario explicitly. Tell them what happens if the flight is late: they stay with Delta staff, the pickup adult is contacted, and nobody is going to leave them anywhere. This is the fear that actually keeps children anxious, and naming it directly defuses it.

Feed them beforehand. Onboard catering on a short domestic flight may be minimal, and a hungry child manages a delay badly.

Agree on communication. Many parents ask the child to send a message at each stage. Set that expectation before departure rather than worrying mid-flight.

Costs beyond the fee

The \$150 each way is the headline number, but plan for a little more.

Because ages five to seven are restricted to nonstop flights, the routing that works may not be the cheapest routing available. Parents sometimes find that the only compliant nonstop is on a more expensive day or from a further airport. That constraint, rather than the fee itself, is often the larger cost.

Add to that the practical expense of the drop-off and pickup adults: parking at both ends rather than curbside drop-off, since the drop-off adult must remain at the airport until the flight is airborne. On a delayed departure that can be a long wait.

For a family sending several children together, the economics improve sharply — the fee covers up to four children on the same itinerary sharing the same contacts, so the per-child cost falls with each additional child.

Where to get help

Contact	Number	Best for
Travel reservations and minor bookings	1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)	Booking an unaccompanied minor, checking whether a routing is permitted, adding the service to an existing ticket, changing a minor's flight
Delta Reservations	Published on delta.com	Direct ticket servicing and advance fee payment on domestic itineraries
Airport counter	In person	Gate passes, forms, international fee payment, day-of-travel changes

Frequently asked questions

What is the youngest age a child can fly alone on Delta? Five, on nonstop flights only, enrolled in the Unaccompanied Minor Program.

How much is Delta's unaccompanied minor fee? \$150 each way, covering up to four children travelling together on the same itinerary with the same contacts.

Can a 12-year-old connect through a hub on Delta? Yes, provided the connection is on Delta, Delta Connection, Air France or KLM, and is not the last flight of the day from the connecting city.

How old must the accompanying adult be? At least 18.

Can a 15-year-old fly alone on Delta without the programme? Yes, with valid identification. Enrolment is optional at that age.

Is the service available internationally? Yes, with additional documentation and with the fee payable at check-in rather than in advance.

What are Sky Zone lounges? Supervised, kids-only lounge areas at select Delta hubs, available to enrolled unaccompanied minors during layovers.

Is there a maximum age to fly on Delta? No.

The takeaway

Delta's age rules break cleanly: under 5 means no solo travel at all; 5 to 14 means mandatory enrolment with a strict routing framework; 15 to 17 is a parental choice; 18 is the minimum age to accompany someone younger.

The routing rules matter far more than the fee — no partner airlines beyond the Delta, Aeromexico, Air France and KLM set, nonstop only for under-eights, and nothing that risks an overnight strand. And the \$150 covering four children makes Delta one of the better-value options for families sending siblings together.

To confirm whether a specific route works for a child of a specific age, and to make a booking that cannot be completed online, **1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)** can check eligibility and set it up correctly first time.