

Which Terminal Is Southwest Airlines At JFK?

Direct answer: none — Southwest Airlines does not fly to John F. Kennedy International Airport. There is no Southwest terminal, check-in desk or gate at JFK, and there never has been a significant one.

Southwest's New York area presence is narrower than most travellers assume:

- **LaGuardia Airport (LGA) — Terminal B.** The only Southwest airport within New York City itself, with a relatively limited schedule.
- **Long Island MacArthur Airport (ISP) in Islip.** A substantial Southwest presence, roughly 50 miles east of Manhattan on Long Island.
- **Newark Liberty (EWR) — no service.** Southwest previously flew from Newark but withdrew, and does not serve it today.

So if a search is returning LaGuardia when you asked for JFK, the search is right and JFK is not an option. **1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)** can confirm which New York airport your itinerary uses and compare the alternatives.

Why Southwest is barely in New York

New York is the weakest point of coverage in Southwest's entire network, and there are structural reasons for it.

JFK and LaGuardia are slot-controlled. They are two of only three fully slot-controlled airports in the United States, alongside Reagan National. Takeoff and landing rights cannot simply be acquired by an airline that wants to fly more. The incumbents — Delta, JetBlue and American at JFK — hold the dominant positions, and slots change hands rarely and expensively.

The market does not naturally suit Southwest's model. New York is heavily weighted toward premium business travel and international connections, neither of which was historically Southwest's strength. The airline built its network on point-to-point domestic leisure and price-sensitive travel.

Newark was traded away. Southwest previously served Newark, including transcontinental flying from California, and gave up the operation — a decision widely regarded as a strategic error, since Spirit subsequently took over its former gates in Terminal A.

The result is that Southwest connects LaGuardia mainly to its larger cities across the country, serving relatively few destinations from the New York area compared with its presence almost anywhere else.

LaGuardia Terminal B

Southwest operates **exclusively from Terminal B** at LaGuardia — both arrivals and departures. There is no need to check which terminal on the day; it is always B.

Terminal B was rebuilt as part of LaGuardia's wider redevelopment and is now a genuinely pleasant airport building, a dramatic improvement on its predecessor. It features a modern security checkpoint, substantially expanded dining and retail, and public art installations.

Other airlines in Terminal B include American, United, JetBlue and Air Canada. Delta operates from Terminal C.

Practical notes:

- Check-in counters typically open early in the morning, from around 4:30 a.m.
- The terminal is well signposted; follow signs for Terminal B rather than trying to navigate by airline
- Allow the usual margins — LaGuardia's road access can be slow at peak times

LaGuardia's weakness

There is no rail link to LaGuardia. This remains the airport's persistent shortcoming. Options are bus connections to subway lines in Queens, or taxi and ride-share, which typically take 30 to 50 minutes to Manhattan outside rush hour.

LaGuardia is the closest of the three major airports to Manhattan, so ground transport costs are usually lower than from JFK or Newark despite the absence of a train. But it is also the least predictable in heavy traffic.

Long Island MacArthur (Islip) — the overlooked option

If you live on Long Island, or your trip takes you east of the city, **Islip is frequently the better choice** and is often missed entirely.

Southwest has a large presence at Long Island MacArthur Airport, and the airport is a fraction of the size of JFK or LaGuardia — which translates into short security queues, easy parking and a genuinely quick airport experience.

The trade-off is location: roughly 50 miles east of Manhattan. That works well if you are travelling to or from Long Island, and poorly if your destination is Midtown. The Long Island Rail Road serves nearby Ronkonkoma, connecting to Penn Station, though it involves a transfer.

For anyone in Nassau or Suffolk County, Islip is often faster door to door than fighting traffic to LaGuardia, and Southwest's presence there is far more substantial than at LGA.

Which New York airport should you use?

If you are...	Use
Flying Southwest to or from Manhattan	LaGuardia Terminal B
Flying Southwest and based on Long Island	Long Island MacArthur (Islip)

If you are...	Use
Looking for Southwest at JFK	Not available — Southwest does not serve JFK
Looking for Southwest at Newark	Not available — Southwest withdrew
Needing rail access to Manhattan	Newark or JFK on another airline; LaGuardia has none

That third row is the one people arrive at this question with. There is no workaround, no partner arrangement and no seasonal service. Southwest does not fly to JFK.

Getting to and from LaGuardia

Taxi and ride-share. The most common option. 30 to 50 minutes to Manhattan outside peak times, considerably longer in rush hour. Ride-share pickup operates from designated areas rather than the arrivals curb.

Bus to subway. Public bus routes connect LaGuardia to subway lines in Queens. Cheap, slower, and workable if you are travelling light.

Driving and parking. Terminal B has parking, at typical New York rates. For pickups, the cell phone lot is the sensible arrangement rather than circling the terminal.

Allow more time than the distance suggests. LaGuardia is close to Manhattan in miles and often far in minutes.

What has changed about flying Southwest itself

If your last Southwest flight was a few years ago, the airport experience at Terminal B will be less familiar than you expect — not because of the terminal, but because of the airline.

Assigned seating replaced open seating on 27 January 2026. There is no A-B-C boarding position, no stanchions to line up at, and no advantage to checking in exactly 24 hours before departure. You have a specific seat, chosen at booking on Choice fares and above, or assigned to you on a Basic fare.

Eight numbered boarding groups replaced the old letter-and-number system, ordered by seat location, fare bundle and Rapid Rewards status. Basic fares board last.

Checked bags cost money since 28 May 2025, ending more than fifty years of Bags Fly Free. The first bag is \$45 and the second \$55 following an April 2026 increase.

The carry-on is still free, on every fare including Basic — a full-size carry-on plus a personal item, with no overhead bin restrictions by fare class. This remains genuinely better than United's domestic Basic Economy.

No change fees still apply on Choice fares and above, which continues to be Southwest's strongest advantage over the legacy carriers.

The practical effect at LaGuardia is that arriving early no longer buys you a better seat. It buys you a calmer morning, which at LaGuardia is worth something on its own.

Practical advice

- **Confirm the airport code on your booking**, not the city. LGA, ISP, JFK and EWR are entirely separate airports.
- **Do not book separate tickets across two New York airports.** If a delay on the first leg makes you miss the second, there is no protection whatsoever.
- **Consider Islip seriously** if you are anywhere on Long Island — it is usually the faster experience.
- **Remember Southwest's own changes.** Since May 2025 checked bags are no longer free, and since January 2026 seats are assigned. If your last Southwest flight predates those, budget and plan accordingly.
- **Terminal B is always the answer at LaGuardia**, which at least removes one variable.

Inside LaGuardia Terminal B

Since Terminal B is where Southwest passengers actually go, it is worth knowing what to expect from it.

The terminal was rebuilt from the ground up as part of LaGuardia's redevelopment, and the result has been widely praised — a genuine reversal for an airport that spent decades as a byword for decrepitude. The building is bright, the ceilings are high, and the wayfinding is clear.

Dining and retail are substantially expanded over the old facility, with a mix of national names and New York operators rather than the usual generic airport concessions.

Amenities. Free Wi-Fi throughout, charging at most gate seating, nursing rooms and family facilities. Public art installations are a notable feature of the terminal's design.

Security. A modern consolidated checkpoint, which moves considerably faster than the old arrangement, though it still backs up at peak morning departure times.

Accessibility. Wheelchair assistance is far more reliable when requested in advance through your booking than when requested on arrival.

The walk. Terminal B uses pedestrian bridges connecting the head house to the concourses. It is a well-designed layout but not a short one. If you have limited mobility or a tight timeline, allow for it rather than assuming you can cover the distance quickly.

Parking and drop-off at LaGuardia

Terminal B has its own parking garage, with rates typical for the New York region — which is to say high. Longer-stay options exist but the economics rarely favour leaving a car for more than a few days.

For **drop-off**, the departures roadway backs up badly at peak times. Build in extra time rather than assuming you can pull up at the curb immediately.

For **pickup**, the cell phone lot is the sensible arrangement. Circling the terminal in LaGuardia traffic is a poor use of anyone's evening.

Ride-share operates from designated pickup areas rather than the arrivals curb. Follow the airport signage rather than the app's initial instruction, which is often out of date.

Because LaGuardia has no rail link, all of this matters more than it would at Newark, where you can simply step onto a train. Factor the ground journey into any comparison between airports rather than treating the airfare as the whole cost.

Where to get help

Contact	Number	Best for
Travel reservations and airport confirmation	1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)	Confirming which New York airport your itinerary uses, comparing LaGuardia against Islip, finding alternatives where Southwest does not serve your preferred airport
Southwest Airlines Reservations	Published on southwest.com	Servicing Southwest-issued tickets
LaGuardia airport information	Published by the Port Authority	Terminal B facilities, parking, ground transport
Long Island MacArthur Airport	Published by the airport	Islip parking and access

Frequently asked questions

Which terminal is Southwest Airlines at JFK? None. Southwest does not operate at JFK. Its New York City flights use LaGuardia Terminal B.

Does Southwest fly to JFK? No. Southwest has no service at JFK and no announced plans to begin any.

Does Southwest fly to Newark? Not currently. Southwest previously served Newark but withdrew, and Spirit subsequently took over its former gates.

Which terminal is Southwest at LaGuardia? Terminal B, for both arrivals and departures.

What other airlines are in LaGuardia Terminal B? American, United, JetBlue and Air Canada, among others. Delta operates from Terminal C.

Is there a train to LaGuardia? No. LaGuardia has no rail link. Options are bus connections to the Queens subway, or taxi and ride-share.

Does Southwest fly anywhere else in the New York area? Yes — Long Island MacArthur Airport in Islip, roughly 50 miles east of Manhattan, where Southwest has a substantial presence.

Should I use LaGuardia or Islip? LaGuardia if you are heading to Manhattan. Islip if you are on Long Island, where it is usually faster and easier.

Why doesn't Southwest fly to JFK? JFK is slot-controlled and dominated by Delta, JetBlue and American, and the market is weighted toward premium and international travel that has not historically suited Southwest's model.

The takeaway

There is no Southwest terminal at JFK because Southwest does not fly there, and it does not serve Newark either. Within New York City, its only airport is **LaGuardia, always Terminal B** — a rebuilt and genuinely improved facility, though one still lacking a rail connection to Manhattan.

The option most travellers overlook is **Long Island MacArthur in Islip**, where Southwest's presence is considerably larger than at LaGuardia. For anyone on Long Island it is usually the quicker and less stressful choice, and it is worth pricing before defaulting to LGA.

If you are planning a Southwest trip to New York, the useful habit is checking the **airport code** rather than the city, and remembering that Southwest's own product has changed substantially — assigned seats since January 2026 and paid checked bags since May 2025.

To confirm which airport your booking uses, or compare LaGuardia against Islip for your journey, **1-888-374-4490 [US] (OTA)** can sort it out before you set off for the wrong one.