

What is Electronic Travel Authorisation(ETA)? Complete Guide - 2025



The Electronic Travel Authorisation scheme was first announced in the [March 2023 Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules \(HC 1160\)](#). This article describes the program, who is eligible for an electronic travel authorisation, and how to apply. The relevant immigration laws are included in the Appendix Electronic Travel Authorisation and the Appendix [ETA National List](#). Home Office guidelines are also available.

What is Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)?

To be able to travel to the UK for short periods, including for tourism or transit, visitors who do not currently require a visa and who do not already have an immigration status before travelling must now get an ETA.

It is roughly comparable to the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA), which is a fairly straightforward application submitted prior to travel to provide the government with your information so they can perform security checks on you before you arrive, for those who are accustomed to travelling to the United States.

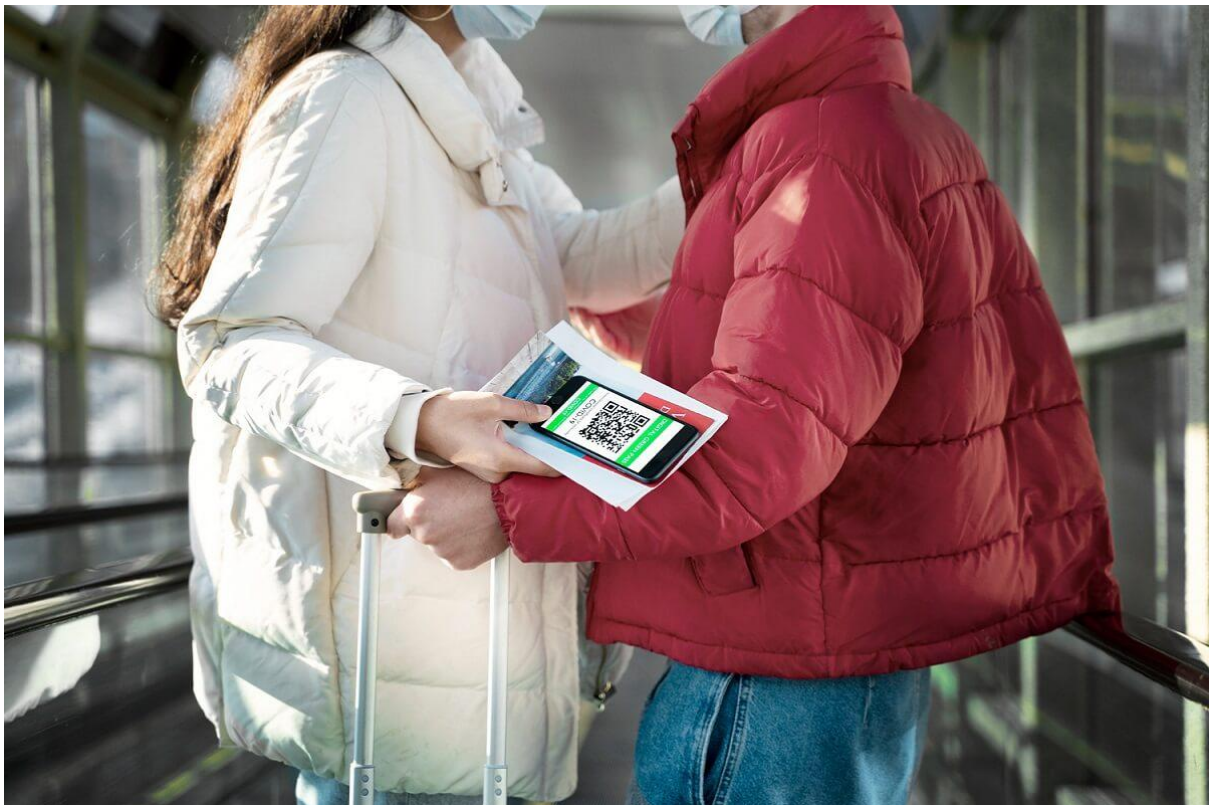
A "digital permission to travel," as compared with a visa, is what an ETA is. Although obtaining an electronic travel authorisation enables you to enter the UK, you may still be denied by UK border officers. A tourist to the UK must have an electronic travel authorisation if they want to do any of the following:

- Enter and remain in the UK for a maximum of six months as a tourist, including for study or business purposes.
- Enter the UK and stay there for no more than three months by using the creative worker visa waiver.
- Visit the UK for a paid engagement, which is permitted.
- Transit through the United Kingdom if passing through the UK border control.

The need for an electronic travel authorisation is temporarily waived for those who transit airside without passing through UK border control. We are continuing to review this exception.

Also Read: [UK Partner Visa to Skilled Worker Visa: Is It the Right Move for You?](#)

Who is eligible for the Electronic Travel Authorisation program?



The program will begin to apply to non-visa national visitors to the UK on April 2, 2025, including citizens of the [EU](#), [EEA](#), and Switzerland.

The nationalities that must get an ETA before visiting the UK are confirmed in the Appendix ETA Visa National List. There were phases to the introduction of the application process. First available to citizens of Qatar in October 2023, it was expanded to include citizens of Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, the [United Arab Emirates](#), and Saudi Arabia in February 2024.

Jordan was later added to the Appendix Visitor: Visa national list and removed from the Appendix Electronic Travel Authorisation. Therefore, Jordanian citizens must apply for a visa before visiting the UK. As of January 8, 2025, citizens of the 48 non-European nations mentioned in Appendix [ETA National List paragraph ETANL 1.1. \(c\)](#) were also included.

The Home Office's transition to digital immigration status, from [Biometric residence permits](#) to eVisas, coincided with this expansion phase, which prompted worries from ILPA. The final round of applications for European citizens who want to visit the UK on or after April 2, 2025, commenced on March 5, 2025.

All passengers, including infants and young children, must get an electronic travel authorisation.

For whom is an ETA not required?

According to the [guidelines](#), if you are a British citizen, a British national (overseas) passport holder, a British Overseas Territory Citizen, or an Irish citizen, you will not require an electronic travel authorization (unless you are subject to a deportation order, an exclusion order decision, or an international travel ban and need permission to enter the UK).

Additionally, if you are exempt from immigration control, have a valid visitation visa, or already have permission to reside, work, or study in the UK, you won't need an electronic travel authorisation (ETA).

There was a long-standing concern that citizens of Ireland who do not require a visa to enter the country would have to [apply for an electronic travel authorisation](#). Fortunately, they don't.

This is a very important move that safeguards the rights of non-visa holders and the Common Travel Area, especially in Ireland's border villages. Additionally, you won't need an ETA if you are a legitimate UK citizen travelling from Guernsey, Jersey, or the Isle of Man.

How can I submit an electronic travel authorisation application?



Applications can be submitted online or using the UK ETA app. Users are instructed to place their phones on the front covers of their passports in order to scan them when applying using the app. If scanning the front of the passport does not function, holders of US passports may need to position the phone on the inside of the rear cover.

Currently, applying online through gov.uk or the UK ETA app costs £10 per person. Starting on April 9, 2025, the price will be £16. While some websites might charge more, they are unable to make a decision more quickly.

Receiving a Result:

After you submit your application, you should receive a decision within three working days. An email confirming the approval of your application will be sent to you, together with your electronic travel authorisation. Your passport should be connected to your ETA application.

The ETA visa is good for two years or until your passport expires, whichever comes first. While it remains valid, the tourist can enter the UK many times; they do not have to apply for a new electronic travel authorisation for each visit.

Also Read: [What is a NTL Application to the Home Office](#)

Why is electronic travel authorisation (ETA) necessary?

The implementation of the ETA scheme is an extra border security precaution and a component of the Home Office's larger digitalisation strategy. The Conservative government stated that maintaining UK security and "strengthening the security of our border" were its top priorities in a factsheet released in February 2024.

Ensuring that everyone who wants to visit the UK has permission to do so is part of the plan, and the electronic travel authorisation process attempts to close any gaps. The program "helps prevent the arrival of those who present a threat to the UK," [according to a follow-up factsheet from March 2025](#).

The EU Entry/Exit System (EES) is scheduled to go into effect in October 2025. The final quarter of 2026 is when the [European Travel Information and Authorisation System \(ETIAS\)](#) is scheduled to launch. Having authorisation to travel to several countries outside of the UK will soon be standard practice.

Conclusion:

Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) is a new and essential requirement for visa-exempt travellers visiting the UK starting in 2025. Staying informed and prepared is key. [My Legal Services](#) can help you navigate the ETA process with ease, offering expert guidance to ensure a smooth and stress-free travel experience.

Original Source:

<https://mylegalservices.co.uk/electronic-travel-authorisation-eta-visa-uk/>