

SEVENOAKS SCHOOL

Guidance for families travelling to the UK: New ETA Visa Rules

What is an ETA?

The UK has introduced an **Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)** for visitors from certain countries. This is a new entry requirement that must be obtained **before** travelling to the UK. It is similar to travel authorisations in place in other countries, such as the USA's ESTA or Canada's ETA.

Who needs an ETA?

- [This list](#) details nationalities that currently need an ETA, and those that will from 2 April 2025. In general, any country that previously did not need a visa will now need an ETA.
- It will be gradually expanded to other visa-exempt travellers.
- **Children require their own ETA**, regardless of age.

Who does NOT need an ETA?

- UK and Irish passport holders.
- Travellers with a valid UK visa (eg a Child Student Visa or Leave to Remain).
- British residency permit holders.

How to apply

- Applications must be completed [online](#) or via mobile app.
- Required information includes a **valid passport, recent photo and travel details**.
- A small fee is payable per applicant.

Processing time

- Most ETAs are approved within 72 hours, it is advised to apply **well in advance of travel** in case of issues.

How long is the ETA valid?

- Once approved, an ETA is usually valid for two years or until the passport expires (whichever comes first).
- It allows multiple short visits to the UK (typically up to six months per visit).

Important notes for parents

- **Each child must have their own ETA** (parents cannot apply for a family group under one application).
- All **passports must be valid** for the duration of travel.
- Without an ETA, boarding a flight or entering the UK **will not be permitted**.
- For the latest updates and to check if your country is included, visit the [UK Government's official guidance](#) before planning your trip.

Summary

Who needs an ETA?

- European nationals, US nationals, citizens of other countries participating in the programme who are travelling to the UK for tourism, business or transit.
- Anyone without a UK visa or residence permit.

How to apply?

- Apply online via the official [UK government website](#).
- Processing time: Up to 72 hours (but can be longer if UKVI have queries or concerns).

Without an ETA you will be unable to enter the UK after 2 April 2025.