

Published based on [Applying For United States Passports - What You Should Understand](#)

# **Applying For United States Passports - What You Should Understand**

When applying for a passport for the first time, the rules you must follow are very specific. The first time applicant must provide information and follow a procedure that is different from the process to renew an expired one. Rules will also vary based on the age of the applicant, especially those aged under the age of 16 and those aged 16 and 17 years old.

### Apply In Person

Applicants must apply in person for their first one if they live in the United States. You must also apply in person if you are currently under age 16, received your original one before age 16, if it was issued more than 15 years ago or if it has been stolen, damaged or lost. You should also plan to apply in person if your name has legally changed and you cannot provide legal documentation of this change.

### Child Passports

Regardless to age, everyone in the United States is required to have a passport when traveling out of the country. Minors that do not have the required ID can apply for theirs with the assistance of a parent or legal guardian provided the guardian has the appropriate photo ID. Handwritten or other types of parental or guardian consent will typically be required.

### Form DS-11

As an adult filling out your first application, you must apply in person. You will begin by filling out the necessary form known as DS-11. This form can be found on the Internet and filled out and printed or it can be filled out by hand. Do not sign the form until you apply and the agent asks you to sign it. You must provide your social security number to prevent any delays or potential denial of your application.

### Proof Of Citizenship

You will also need to provide proof of United States citizenship. This may include a birth certificate that has been certified, certificate of citizenship or a naturalization certificate. Bring these items with you when you appear to file your application. If this is not your first application you may also use your old passport provided that it has not become damaged.

### Valid ID

A valid form of ID, preferably with a photograph, will also be required. If a driver's license or military ID with a photo is not available, items such as a credit card, employee ID, or library card, when used in conjunction with each other, can be suitable as replacements. Another option, the DS-71 form, can be filed by a friend. If this form is used, it must be filled out and signed in front of an agent when you apply.

### Fees

Application fees will be due and payable at the time that the application is filed. These fees depend on the type of application and age of the person applying. Additional fees may also be due. These may include execution fees and optional fees such as fees for faster delivery.

So, [applying for a U S passport](#) can be a lengthy process. If you know that will need one soon, you should apply as soon as possible to avoid paying extra fees to receive it quickly. Many locations offer [expedited US passport services](#) including local post offices.

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