

What you need to know: Airline cleanliness & hygiene: Europe

November 5, 2020

In an effort to reassure travelers that they are doing all they can to protect them against COVID-19, airlines are implementing new and improved cleanliness and hygiene processes. In some cases, these measures may differ from the hygiene procedures implemented by individual airports.

This report summarizes what European airlines are doing.

Major carriers

Air France

Air France has put special measures in place to guarantee the safety of its passengers.

At the airport

- Signage to facilitate social distancing
- Protective Plexiglass screens on all counters
- Regular disinfection of counters and self-service kiosks
- Provision of hand sanitizer throughout the airport
- Reorganization of check-in and boarding to reduce physical contact

Boarding

- All passengers on international flights have their temperatures checked using a non-contact infrared thermometer

Inflight

- Wearing a surgical mask is compulsory on all flights
- All aircraft are equipped with HEPA filters, with cabin air refreshed every 3 minutes
- Aircraft are thoroughly cleaned before every flight, including vacuuming carpets and all seats, disinfecting of all hard surfaces (tables, arm rests, screens, remote controls and toilets)
- Blankets systematically changed and cushions removed on short- and medium-haul flights
- Crew have access to cleaning wipes, vinyl gloves, disinfectant sprays, protective masks and cleaning kits
- Beverage and dining suspended on domestic and short-haul flights within Europe
- Sealed or individually wrapped snacks served on long-haul flights

British Airways

To welcome passengers back on board, British Airways has introduced new protective measures on the ground and in the air and also provides passengers with safety and hygiene advice.

Before the flight

- Download the BA app to check in online and download up to eight boarding passes
- Keep contact details up to date in Manage my Booking
- Minimize luggage
- Download the PressReader app for digital magazines and newspapers to read on the flight

At the airport

- Passengers must wear a face mask at all time, allowing each mask to last for 4 hours
- Observe safe distance markers throughout the airport to minimize social contact
- Arrive no earlier than 3 hours before a long haul and 2 hours before a short haul flight
- Check local airport for any measures to follow
- Use self-service bag drop (where available)
- Have boarding pass ready when being security screened

Boarding:

- Only go to the departure gate when boarding is “open”
- Listen carefully to the boarding process to minimize queuing at the gate
- Have boarding pass and passport ready to self-scan at self-boarding gates (where available)
- Remove essential items from hand baggage to reduce movement during the flight

Onboard

- Passengers must wear a face mask at all times and stay seated if possible
- Each passenger receives a personal protection pack comprising an antibacterial wipe and hand sanitizer
- Inflight food options and service have changed to reduced physical contact with crew

Clean aircraft

- Every surface is disinfected after every flight with deep cleaning every day
- Key surfaces are sanitized before every flight, including seats, screens, seat buckles and tray tables
- Air is completely replaced every 2 to 3 minutes passing through HEPA filters

Iberia

Iberia has implemented the health and safety recommendations of both EASA (European Union Aviation Safety Agency) and AESA (Spain Aviation Safety Agency) to protect the safety of passengers and staff.

Before the flight

- Download boarding pass to mobile phone

At the airport

- New queuing system introduced to increase distance between people
- Protection screens at check-in and customer service desk
- Enhanced cleaning

Boarding:

- Boarding aircraft from back to front to minimize passenger movement
- Boarding by groups suspended, including priority boarding
- Wherever possible, use of jet bridges prioritized over buses for boarding and disembarking flights

Inflight

- All staff wear personal protective equipment
- Medical face masks are compulsory during boarding and throughout the flight
- All aircraft are equipped with HEPA air filters
- Where permitted by occupancy levels, Iberia ensures maximum distance between passengers
- On-board sales suspended and all paper-based material removed

KLM

Until at least August 31, passengers must wear a face mask from the first boarding call until passing through arrivals at the destination airport. Passengers without a face mask are not allowed on board KLM flights.¹

Pre-trip

- Passengers are advised to check the health and entry requirements at their destination

At the airport

- Passengers should follow airport staff instructions about hygiene and social distancing Guidelines vary
- KLM has closed some airport lounges and reduced opening hours at others
- Depending on the destination, passengers may have their temperatures checked
- Anyone showing signs of illness (at Amsterdam) will be referred to Airport Medical Services for a health check and a fit-to-fly certificate

Boarding

- KLM has for the most part resumed the regular boarding process, with Business Class and SkyPriority passengers boarding first
- KLM uses zone boarding at many airports
- Until at least Aug. 31, passengers must wear a face mask from the first boarding call until passing through arrivals at the destination airport. Passengers without a face mask are not allowed on board KLM flights.

On board

- Every day, aircraft are thoroughly cleaned with approved disinfectants
- Aircraft are equipped with HEPA filters which capture 99.99% of viruses and bacteria, including coronaviruses
- Catering service has been adjusted to limit physical contact between passengers and cabin crew
- Whenever possible, KLM creates as much space around passengers by keeping seats empty
- To care for passengers taken ill during a flight, aircraft carry coronakits containing personal protective equipment for passengers and crew to limit the risk of infection

Lufthansa

Lufthansa has introduced special measures and advice to protect its passengers from COVID-19.

Pre-flight

- Passengers should review and observe entry requirements at both departure and destination airports
- Check-in via Lufthansa's website or app is strongly recommended
- Passengers should confirm they are not experiencing any common COVID-19 symptoms
- At check-in, passengers must confirm no contact with a COVID-19 infected person or a positive test within the last 14 days

At the airport

- Passengers must wear a face mask at all times
- Check in bags using contactless self-service kiosks
- Lounge access has been limited

¹ [KLM](#), We are ready to get you there

Boarding

- Only one item of hand luggage allowed
- Passengers are boarded by groups
- Each passenger receives a disinfectant wipe to clean the surfaces in and around their seat
- Automatic boarding gates are available for contactless boarding

Onboard

- Passengers and crew must wear a face covering
- Aircraft cabins thoroughly cleaned before and after each flight
- Air is refreshed every 3 minutes
- High air quality combined with mask wearing means it is not essential to maintain minimum distances between passengers. If occupancy is low, seats will be allocated as widely as possible throughout the cabin
- Onboard service has been simplified

Deplaning

- Passengers should maintain social distancing when disembarking

Passengers arriving from at-risk countries like the U.S. must self-isolate in quarantine for 14 days. Lufthansa has started to offer an on-site COVID-19 test at Frankfurt airport. The test, certified by German health authorities and paid for by travelers, comprises a throat swab, with results available within 4-5 hours. A negative result enables passengers to avoid the 14-day quarantine.

Lufthansa plans to expand COVID-19 testing for passengers, introducing antigen testing from October 2020. Unlike polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing, antigen testing can be processed outside of a lab, with results available in as few as 15 minutes, compared to several hours for the PCR tests. As availability of antigen tests will be limited, they will initially be offered only to premium customers.²

Other carriers

Aer Lingus

Since May 21, all passengers flying with Aer Lingus (and cabin crew) have been required to use a mask or suitable face covering from the point of boarding the aircraft until they are inside the destination airport.³ The requirement remains in force until August 31, 2020.⁴

Aer Lingus has also introduced enhanced cleaning processes on all aircraft. Hospital-grade disinfectant is used to treat all hard surfaces. Tray tables, arm rests and windows are deep cleaned by hand. The interior of every aircraft is thoroughly disinfected daily. Aircraft are equipped with state-of-the-art air filtration technology.

Passengers board and disembark aircraft in small groups and according to seat row numbers. Customers must scan their own boarding card and show ID/passports to ground staff.

² [Business Travel News](#), September 23, 2020

³ [Aer Lingus](#), Flight Disruption Information

⁴ [Aer Lingus](#), May 29, 2020

Aer Lingus encourages passengers to check in online, to self-check in luggage and use self-service kiosks where available. The airline has suspended food and drink services on short-haul flights and reduced it on long-haul services.

Air Europa

With caring for customers and employees it's number 1 priority, Spanish airline Air Europa is working to ensure a comfortable and healthy flight experience.⁵

Cleanliness and hygiene

- Protective screens placed at check-in and customer service desks in Madrid and Palma airports
- Boarding and disembarking processes changed to ensure social distancing
- Passengers must pass documentation through electronic readers themselves, and attach luggage tags and place bags on check-in belts
- Hand sanitizers available for passengers to use
- Transfer buses are subject to enhanced cleaning
- All Air Europa personnel wear masks and gloves
- Number of in-depth cleanings of aircraft increased, using specific hospital-grade disinfectant
- Aircraft are fitted with HEPA or highly efficient recirculation filters
- Each aircraft carries a sterilization kit comprising protective clothing, gloves, masks, protective goggles to manage any suspected COVID-19 cases onboard

Adapted experience

- Newspapers and magazines have been removed from aircraft to reduce unnecessary contact points
- Meals cooked at very high temperature and served in sealed bags
- Blankets removed after each flight, washed and dried by industrial cleaning machines, and repacked in plastic bags
- Airline will try to adhere to the recommended social distancing protocols onboard aircraft
- Air Europa is in regular contact with health authorities in the countries where it operates, to ensure it adheres to travel restrictions and health advice

Alitalia

Alitalia wants the travel experience to be as comfortable and safe as possible, both on the ground and on board. It has implemented safety solutions in coordination with health authorities.⁶

In the airport

- Body temperatures may be measured before departure at some airports. Passengers may be prevented from flying or require medical certification
- Temperatures are measured at the final destination airport in Italy. Passengers should not wear headgear
- Passengers are encouraged to check-in online or use fast check-in kiosks at the airport
- Masks must be worn from the moment passengers enter the airport
- Airports regularly clean common areas, with Alitalia cleaning dedicated areas
- Boarding is in groups of rows starting from the rear of the aircraft. Priority boarding has been temporarily suspended
- All Casa Alitalia lounges are temporarily closed

⁵ [Air Europa](#), We are ready

⁶ [Alitalia](#), Flying Safely

- Passengers must complete a self-certification form before boarding, confirming no contact with people diagnosed with COVID-19. These forms should be printed and completed before arrival

In flight

- All aircraft are sanitized with high-powered disinfectants
- HEPA filters renew cabin air every three minutes and ensure it is 99.7% pure
- Wearing a protective mask is mandatory. They should be changed every four hours
- Only one item of hand baggage is allowed
- The use of overhead bins to store items of clothing is forbidden
- On busy flights, hand baggage may be put in the hold
- Onboard service has been reduced to minimize crew movement in the aisle
- Boarding and disembarking takes place in an orderly manner, with passengers asked to follow crew instructions

Austrian Airlines

Austrian Airlines offers passengers a mix of advice and new measures to ensure a pleasant and safe trip.

Before the trip

- Passengers should check their destination's entry regulations
- Passengers with COVID-19 symptoms, or who have been in contact with a COVID-19 case within the past 14 days should not travel
- Provide contact details
- Passengers and crew must wear a face mask. It must cover the mouth and nose and must not have a valve. Visors are not permitted on board. Exceptions are only granted on presentation of a negative PCR test result (not older than 48 hours) and a medical certification printed on the Lufthansa Group form.

At the airport

- Check in using Austrian's digital and mobile services
- Check in hand luggage (free of charge)
- Drop bags off contact-free at self-service kiosks

Boarding and on board

- Passengers should wait until their group is called for boarding
- Contactless boarding is possible at Vienna Airport via Quick Boarding gates
- Filters remove contaminants such as dust, bacteria and viruses
- Onboard services have been simplified to minimize contact between passengers and crew
- Aircraft are deep-cleaned and more frequently
- Seatback tables, armrests, seat belts and door handles are sanitized

At the destination airport

- Passengers should maintain their distance during disembarkation
- Destination entry requirements must be observed

From October 2020, Austrian Airlines started to trial pre-flight COVID-19 tests for passengers, in an attempt to restore travel freedom even before a vaccination is widely available.

Brussels Airlines

Brussels Airlines has introduced a number of hygiene measures, while still allowing passengers to travel in comfort.⁷

At home

- Check entry rules for the destination
- Travelers must confirm they are on good health
- Ensure contact details are up to date
- Check-in online

At the airport

- Wearing a face mask covering mouth and nose is mandatory
- Passengers traveling from Brussels Airport will have their temperatures checked before being allowed into the terminal. A temperature above 38⁰c could see a passenger denied entry
- Floor stickers and courtesy lines remind passengers to social distance
- Only electronic payments are possible at ticket and check-in counters
- Check-in staff are protected by plexiglass screens
- Vending machines sell face masks
- Only the LOFT at Brussels Airport is open, and only on weekdays between 06:30 and 18:30. All other Brussels Airlines lounges are closed
- Self-scanning devices enable touchless pass-through
- Hand sanitizers are widely available, with additional cleaning and disinfection of touchpoints and toilets

On board

- Enhanced disinfection and hygiene measures
- To support social distancing, a maximum one item of hand luggage; passengers traveling on European flights may check in hand luggage (for free)
- Boarding row by row
- Passengers scan own boarding pass
- HEPA filters ensure clean air on all Brussels Airlines aircraft
- Modified inflight service – meal and drink service suspended on European flights; electronic payment only for service on intercontinental flights
- Mandatory wearing of face mask covering mouth and nose

CSA Czech Airlines

For flying during the time of coronavirus, CSA has introduced a number of measures to protect passengers and employees, which also apply to subsidiary Smartwings.⁸

Before travel

- Passengers should check the current rules and regulations in their destination country
- Check-in online

⁷ [Brussels Airlines](#), Our measures for carefree travel

⁸ [CSA](#), Flying during the time of coronavirus

At the airport

- Because of changes to general procedures and at checkpoints, passengers should arrive at the airport ahead of time
- Passengers should maintain a two meter gap from other travelers when boarding or disembarking aircraft

Measures on board

- All passengers must wear a face covering at all times. This may be a disposable face mask, respirator, home-made cotton face mask, scarf or shawl
- Crew members wear face coverings and gloves
- Aircraft interiors are thoroughly disinfected before and after each flight, with seats, tray tables, seat pockets, overhead lockers and toilets cleaned to the strictest hygiene standards
- Only contactless payments are accepted
- Sufficient seating capacity permits gaps to be maintained between passengers in Economy Class. The middle seat is always left empty in Business Class. On aircraft with a two-seat configuration, there will always be one person seated per pair of seats
- Choice of pre-ordered meals from GOURMET MENU selection in Economy Class and BISTRO-ON-BOARD in Business Class has been reduced
- Purchases from in-flight FLY&BUY magazine have been suspended, while Mywings magazine has been removed from all aircraft

Finnair

Finnair provides passengers with tips and information to help prepare for their journey. While experts indicate aircraft do not present a likely environment for catching COVID-19, Finnair wants passengers to feel safe and comfortable when traveling.⁹

Before travel

- Passengers should check for travel restrictions and recommendations in the destination country
- Check in online or via the Finnair app to avoid queues and touching the self-service kiosks at the airport
- Pack light to avoid the need to check baggage

At the airport

- Floor markers at Helsinki airport help passengers keep their distance
- Passengers should show, rather than hand over, travel documents to the check-in agent
- Crew will provide assistance at self-service check-in, but without making any contact with the screen
- Passengers using self-service check-in should print and attach baggage tags themselves
- Helsinki Airport Priority Security service and car service for Finnair Plus Platinum Lumo members have been suspended
- Hand sanitizer is available at check-in and at departure gates
- Most lounges are closed. Service is limited at the Finnair Lounge in the Schengen side of Helsinki Airport

When boarding

- Boarding begins from the rear of the aircraft.
- Priority boarding is suspended, except for Business Class passengers on long-haul flights
- Finnair staff review seating at the gate and will socially distance passengers where possible. Families can continue to sit together

⁹ [Finnair](#), We look after your health and safety

- At Helsinki airport, capacity on transfer buses has been reduced
- Passengers must wear a mask covering the mouth and nose by the time boarding begins and during the flight. Passengers should bring their own mask and may be denied boarding without one
- Masks may be surgical or homemade of fabric. Passengers with a medical condition preventing them from wearing a mask must advise Finnair at least 72 hours before travel
- Anyone displaying respiratory symptoms will be denied boarding
- Passengers should stow hand baggage under the seat in front to avoid standing during the flight to retrieve items from overhead lockers
- A Clean Kit with Kyrö hand sanitizer and clean wipes is given to all passengers

During the flight

- Cabin crew wear surgical masks
- All passengers, except children under the age of 7 years, must wear masks onboard
- Finnair has changed its meal service to minimize contact. What's offered depends on the route and class of travel, so passengers should check with the airline before traveling
- Passengers should avoid unnecessary movement and should avoid queuing in the aisle for the toilet
- Cash payments are no longer allowed
- Disembarkation happens in a new order in smaller groups

Cleaning

- Aircraft are cleaned at every turnaround

After teaming up with private healthcare provider Terveystalo, from September 28, Finnair was able to offer passengers easy and fast access to coronavirus testing prior to travel. Through the scheme, passengers receive a 10% discount on the price of a PCR test, rising to a 15% discount for members of the Finnair Plus frequent flyer program. Passengers first get to discuss with Terveystalo the regulations at their destination, to ensure the test and certificate are appropriate. Alternatively, they can select a test-only option on their return to Finland from a high-risk country, enabling them to reduce the 14-day quarantine period.

When booking tickets, customers are directed to Terveystalo's digital service, through which they can book a test at the nearest clinic. Test results are returned within 24 hours (Helsinki) or 36 hours elsewhere within Finland.

Between November 3, 2020, and March 31, 2021, Finnair is offering international passengers free worldwide cover for expenses related to COVID-19.¹⁰ The insurance is included in the cost of the ticket for travel from Finland.

Finnair Corona Cover will cover the following expenses:

- Medical expenses and medical repatriation up to €50,000
- The price of a COVID-19 test
- Following a positive result, additional quarantine costs up to €100 for a maximum of 14 days
- A new return flight, if a passenger misses the original flight due to coronavirus-related illness

¹⁰ [BTN Europe](#), November 4, 2020

LOT Polish Airlines

The airline has brought together its hygiene and safety rules under the #FlySafeFlyLOT banner.¹¹

General guidelines

- Passengers are recommended to check-in online
- Passengers should arrive earlier than usual at the airport
- A face mask is required during the entire journey and passengers must socially distance at all times

At the airport

- All employees are equipped with personal protective equipment
- Only people with valid tickets may enter the airport
- Hand sanitizers are widely available
- Temperature checkpoints operate at the airport
- Passengers board and de-board aircraft according to assigned seat number

Onboard

- All aircraft are fitted with HEPA filters
- Aircraft are regularly disinfected with a special biocide solution
- Cabin crew are equipped with masks, gloves and hand sanitizer
- LOT has implemented a limited contact rule between crew and passengers
- Drinks and snacks are served in individual packets
- Passengers receive hand sanitizer or antibacterial tissues
- Only credit card payment is accepted
- Traditional newspapers replaced with digital e-press

SAS

The airline has introduced SAS Safe Travel; measures to ensure passenger safety and wellbeing.¹²

Check-in:

- Passengers should try to check in online, using the airline's app or website
- All SAS Lounges are temporarily closed
- Passengers must socially distance in queues at check-in, security and at the departure gate

Boarding:

- Until August 31, passengers must bring their own face covering and wear it from boarding to disembarkation on all flights
- Hand luggage is limited to one piece per traveler
- Boarding will be by zone

On board:

- Passengers are seated to create as much space as possible between them.
- All meal services have been suspended to reduce contact.

¹¹ [LOT](#), FlySafeFlyLOT

¹² [SAS](#), SAS Safe Travel

Aircraft:

- All Airbus and Boeing aircraft in the SAS fleet are equipped with HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) air filters.
- ATR regional turboprop aircraft use a different type of air filter.
- All aircraft are cleaned and disinfected according to EASA standards.
- All non-essential loose items have been removed from the seat pocket.

Crew:

- Crew wear protective face masks on board.

SWISS

The SWISS Travel Briefing provides passengers with an overview of the most important things to take note of before their next flight.¹³

Before your journey

- Find out the current entry regulations at the destination
- Check-in online
- Only travel when healthy
- Provide contact details, so SWISS can communicate throughout the journey
- Print boarding passes and baggage tags at home and use Self Bag Drop machines where available
- Bring plenty of masks for the trip. Face shields and FFP2 masks with valves are not allowed on board SWISS aircraft.
- While passengers are encouraged to bring their own hand disinfectant, this should comply with the carry-on liquid allowance

Getting to the airport

- Be clear about any regulations covering the use of public transportation
- Arrive at the airport 2 hours before departure, especially if checking in luggage
- Observe a minimum distance, as recommended by the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health

At the airport

- Wearing a face covering at the airport is strongly recommended whenever a minimum distance cannot be maintained
- Hand sanitizing dispensers are available throughout airports
- Use Self Bag Drop machines where available
- Access to SWISS Lounges is subject to certain restrictions
- Allow more time to pass through security
- Floor markings ensure a 1.5 meter minimum distance can be maintained
- Posters, digital displays and multilingual announcement remind of the need to social distance
- Plexiglass shields have been installed at check-in and ticket counters
- At Lufthansa Group hubs, contactless check-in is available at self-service kiosks and at Fast Bag Drops

On board

- A nose and mouth covering is compulsory on all flights. These should be changed very four hours. Face shields and FFP2 masks with valves are prohibited. Scarves and other textiles are not acceptable. From

¹³ [SWISS](#), SWISS Travel Briefing

September 1, passengers are only exempt from mask wearing upon presentation of a negative PCR test result not older than 48 hours plus a medical certificate on a special SWISS form

- Each passenger receives a disinfectant wipe after boarding to clean all surfaces near the seat
- Onboard service has been adjusted to minimize interactions between passengers and crew
- Intensity and frequency of cabin cleaning has been increased, with special attention given to fold-out tables, armrests, seat belts, washrooms and door handles
- HEPA filters are installed on all aircraft by default, with cabin air completely changed every 3 minutes
- Passengers should fill out the relevant Passenger Locator Form before arrival at the destination
- When disembarking, passengers must practice physical distancing and continue wearing a mask

TAP Air Portugal

All passengers (including Portuguese citizens and residents) arriving on flights from countries outside the EU, not part of the Schengen Area, or the U.K. and Canada, must present proof of a negative RT-PCR test result for COVID-19 performed within 72 hours of departure. Otherwise they will be denied boarding a TAP Air Portugal flight.

Use of a face mask is mandatory on all TAP flights for all passengers aged over 6 years. Exemptions only apply to passengers proven to have health problems, and who have submitted a medical authorization (MEDIF) prior to travel.

To ensure it can continue to transport clients and crew safely, TAP has implemented a number of measures under its Clean & Safe program.

Before travel

- Provide SWISS with up to date contact details
- Check-in online or via the SWISS app, download boarding pass and ensure mobile phone is charged
- Check to ensure sufficient face masks for the duration of the trip, changing every 4 hours
- Find out about the specific regulations at the airport and destination

At the airport

- Face masks are mandatory at the airport
- Passengers are subject to non-invasive temperature control at check-in
- Deeper and more frequent cleaning and disinfection, with attention given to service desks, self-check-in kiosks, handrails, benches, chairs, tables
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are located at all entrances and in high-traffic areas
- Signs and management of passenger flows ensure social distancing

On board

- All aircraft are disinfected daily, with a nebulization process acting against viruses and the most common bacteria in just 30 seconds
- Deeper cleaning of frequent contact surfaces using approved biocidal products
- HEPA filters extract up to 99.999% of even the smallest viruses, with air refreshed every 2-3 minutes
- Crews wear personal protective equipment throughout the flight
- Crews are trained to identify and deal with suspected cases of infectious diseases
- Onboard service has been adjusted to reduce movement and contact
- Meal and beverage service has been limited, suspended or adapted according to flight time
- Pillows and blankets are removed after each flight
- Magazines and other publications have been removed

Virgin Atlantic

To ensure passenger health and safety, Virgin Atlantic is implementing additional measures to offer peace of mind at the airport and on the aircraft. These include:

- Enhanced and thorough cleaning practices at check-in, boarding gates and onboard, where cabins and toilets are cleaned with high-grade disinfectant dispensed by electrostatic spraying.
- Safe distancing will be adhered to wherever possible, particularly at check-in and boarding. Where safe distancing is not possible, masks will be required.
- All customers receive a personal Health Pack containing medical grade face masks required to be worn onboard, surface wipes and hand gel.
- A simplified meal service in Economy and Premium Economy prepared in a COVID-19-safe monitored environment. Upper Class customers will receive a tray-delivered meal service.
- Aircraft are cleaned after every flight using a high-grade disinfectant.
- All aircraft are equipped with HEPA filters, with cabin air completely changed every three minutes on average.

From August 24, 2020, Virgin Atlantic offered free COVID-19 insurance cover to all existing and new bookings, in an effort to reassure passengers. The policy, through Allianz Assistance, offers insurance in the event that a Virgin Atlantic passenger becomes ill with COVID-19 while on a trip. It covers emergency medical costs, expenses such as transport and accommodation and repatriation up to £500,000, as well as costs if a customer is denied boarding or held in quarantine.

From October 2020, Virgin became the first U.K. airline to introduce COVID-19 pre-flight testing for cabin crew and pilots.¹⁴ All Heathrow-based crew will be tested at least once per month using a rapid Care COVID-19 RT Lamp test. Results are processed and delivered within 30 minutes of testing.

Low-cost carriers

easyJet

EasyJet wants passengers to prepare to fly with confidence, as it sees their safety and wellbeing as its highest priority. It has introduced a range of measures to keep passengers safe.

Before travel

- Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms must not travel
- Complete in advance any health declaration and/or locator forms required by the destination

At the airport

- Maintain social distancing rules
- Wear a suitable protective face mask

Onboard

- Boarding and disembarkation will be different, so passengers should listen closely and follow instructions
- Passengers must stow hand baggage in the overhead lockers themselves
- Passengers and crew must wear face masks, which should be replaced every 4 hours
- Crew manage the use of toilet facilities

¹⁴ [Breaking Travel News](#), October 5, 2020

- Bistro or Boutique service is suspended. Drinking water is available on request
- Only contactless payment will be accepted when onboard service is reintroduced
- Aircraft are fitted with HEPA filters, replacing cabin air every 3 to 4 minutes
- Cabins are thoroughly disinfected daily, with protection lasting 24 hours

Eurowings

So that passengers can take their next flight without worries, Eurowings has published travel advice and introduced a number of safety and hygiene measures.¹⁵

Before departure

- Find out about entry regulations and restrictions at the destination country
- Check for classic COVID-19 symptoms before traveling
- Where necessary, pre-register for entry to some countries, normally 48 hours before arrival
- Check in early via the Eurowings website or app. Web check-in may not be possible due to travel restrictions in some countries

At the airport

- Arrive early, as security control, check-in and boarding may take longer than usual
- Passengers may only take one piece of hand baggage on flights departing from Germany
- Wear a mask as this is mandatory in most airports
- Hand disinfectants are provided at the airport, and are free to use
- Keep at least two arm lengths from other passengers when in a queue

Onboard

- Passengers board flights in groups and must scan their own boarding passes
- Face coverings are mandatory on Eurowings flights, and passengers should bring their own masks with them. Masks must not have an exhalation valve. Face shields are not allowed onboard Eurowings aircraft
- Flying without a mask is only possible with a medical certificate (form downloaded from Eurowings website) and a negative COVID-19 test from not more than 48 hours before the flight
- Every effort is made to allocate seats to create as much space as possible when occupancy is low
- Passengers can keep the middle seat next to them free from €18. This can be added after the booking, if seats are available
- Each passenger receives a disinfecting wipe when boarding to clean the surfaces around the seat
- Onboard service has been simplified, with Wings Bistro offering a small selection of drinks and snacks for purchase (preferably cashless payment)
- Eurowings has increased aircraft cleaning cycles and regularly disinfects interiors and onboard toilets
- Air filters completely change cabin air every three minutes

At the destination airport

- Continue to wear a mask until exiting the airport
- Only disembark the aircraft once given permission by cabin crew

¹⁵ [Eurowings](#), Traveling in times of corona

Norwegian

To help passengers prepare and travel with confidence, Norwegian has taken a number of measures and provided advice to ensure they are safe while flying.¹⁶

Before the journey

- Check entry and transit requirements before traveling
- Do not travel if feeling unwell
- Complete any mandatory documentation some days before departure
- Both passengers and cabin crew must wear face masks during the flight. Exceptions apply to children under 6 years and travelers with a medical condition that prevents mask wearing. Passengers are responsible for bringing their own mask to the airport
- As Norwegian no longer provides a food and drinks service, passengers should bring their own

On departure day

- Arrive well in advance of departure, as Norwegian's fast track services are currently unavailable
- Check in online via the airline's app or website as part of the airline's touchless travel efforts
- Limit hand baggage; check in baggage where possible
- Bring necessary refreshments
- Board at a safe distance from other passengers
- Passengers should scan their own boarding passes

What Norwegian is doing

- Enhanced cleaning procedures introduced to protect passengers and crew
- Precautionary personal protection kits carried on board all aircraft
- Crew is trained to handle suspected COVID-19 cases onboard
- All aircraft are fitted with the latest HEPA air filtration technology

Ryanair

Passengers should check in online, download the boarding passes, and where possible, choose Priority & 2 Cabin Bags to keep luggage with them. Passengers should check their temperatures before traveling or risk being asked to return home. Masks must be worn at all times in the airport and onboard the aircraft.

If checking a bag, passengers should use Ryanair's automated kiosk and deposit bags at the bag drop desk. To limit queuing time at security, Ryanair recommends passengers (pay) use Fast Track. It also reminds passengers to use regularly hand sanitize and maintain distance from other passengers.

During boarding, there should be no queuing or dwelling in boarding stairwells or air bridges. Passengers are required to scan their own boarding passes.

All Ryanair aircraft are fitted with HEPA filters and interior surfaces are disinfected every night with chemicals effective for more than 24 hours. All Ryanair cabin crew wear face masks. Queuing for toilets is prohibited on board; toilet access is available to passengers upon request.

Inflight service is limited with only pre-packaged snacks and drinks on offer. Only card payment is accepted.

¹⁶ [Norwegian](#), Getting ready to fly

Vueling

To support the priority given to the safety of passengers and employees, Vueling is in permanent contact with the health and aviation authorities and is closely monitoring COVID-19 developments in Europe to ensure that it takes every precaution to protect the health of everyone on board its aircraft.¹⁷

Before you fly

- The use of a face mask covering the nose and mouth is compulsory from boarding to disembarking the aircraft. Only surgical or higher-grade masks are acceptable. Passengers cannot fly without a mask. Children aged over 6 years must also wear masks
- Check in online and download/print boarding passes
- Passengers should check the health requirements and necessary entry documents for their destination country
- Because of stricter security measures, but taking account of the need to minimize exposure to other passengers, the airline recommends arriving at the airport not more than 90 minutes before departure

At the airport

- To minimize contact, Vueling has reduced its hand baggage allowance. Passengers without a connecting flight or not booking priority boarding must check their hand baggage into the hold, at no additional cost
- Cleaning protocols have been reinforced at check-in and boarding areas
- A new queuing system at all customer service points ensures social distancing
- Check-in desks have been fitted with protective screens

When boarding

- To ensure social necessary, a new boarding queueing system has been introduced
- Signs at departure gates and on airbridges inform passengers of the new queueing system
- The number of transfer buses has been increased, to help passengers socially distance onboard

On board

- Cabin crew are trained in new health and safety protocols recommended by the Spanish Aviation Safety Agency (AEAS) and the WHO
- Cabin crew wear approved face masks and disposable gloves throughout the flight
- Soap in aircraft toilets is changed more frequently
- Crew make regular announcements to help passengers comply with new safety rules

Cleaning and hygiene

- Strict protocols have been introduced for disposing of waste after each flight
- Aircraft interiors are more frequently cleaned using products specified by AEAS
- Aircraft are thoroughly cleaned daily with special treatment applied to surfaces such as armrests, folding tables, overhead baggage compartments, toilets and crew areas
- Cabins are disinfected daily using an AESA-approved anti-viral spray
- HEPA filters change cabin air every 3 minutes on all aircraft

¹⁷ [Vueling](#), We take good care of your health on every trip

Wizz Air

At the airport Wizz Air recommends passengers check in online. It has introduced more self-service points and a bag drop option. At the airport, Wizz Air has also altered waiting areas to enable better social distancing and sanitizing.

Wizz Air requires passengers and crew to wear face masks on board its aircraft. It reserves the right to refuse to carry anyone failing to comply with this requirement.¹⁸ For flights of more than four hours, it recommends passengers bring a spare mask. Other protective gear is recommended and appreciated.

The airline disinfects its aircraft more thoroughly, with additional disinfection undertaken overnight. All aircraft are equipped with HEPA filters. Complimentary sanitizing wipes are handed out to passengers during boarding.

Wizz Air asks passengers to respect social distancing guidelines (minimum 1.5 meters) on and off its aircraft. Seat allocation takes social distancing into consideration wherever possible. Passengers may be guided by cabin crew to keep distance between occupied seats.

Onboard its aircraft, Wizz Air allows contactless payments up to €25. It has temporarily removed the WIZZ Magazine, directing passengers to its mobile app for more information.

Note – HEPA filters

When outlining their safety and hygiene measures, many airlines refer to the use of HEPA filters onboard their aircraft. According to the European air filter efficiency classification, high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters can be any filter element rated between 85% and 99.995% removal efficiency.¹⁹ Aircraft manufacturers have chosen to install the higher efficiency filters, which are similar to those used in hospital operating theaters. Most modern, large commercial aircraft, which recirculate cabin air, use HEPA filters. Some older aircraft may use less-efficient filters.

Air filters can remove very small particles, such as bacteria and viruses. With an efficiency level of 99.995%, HEPA filters can remove virtually all viruses and bacteria.

Note

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly evolving, and the situation is changing on almost an hourly basis. The information presented in this report represents the latest view as at November 5, 2020. We have carefully researched and checked the information contained. However, we do not guarantee or warrant the correctness, completeness or topicality of this article and do not accept any liability for any damage or loss as a result of the use of the information contained within this article.

Do you have questions or comments regarding this report? Please email mike.eggleson@bcdtravel.co.uk to share your thoughts.

¹⁸ [Wizz Air](#), Enhanced health & safety measures

¹⁹ [IATA](#), Briefing Paper, Cabin air quality – Risk of communicable disease transmission