

What you need to know: Airline cleanliness & hygiene: Northeast Asia

July 7, 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 be exceeded by the hygiene procedures implemented by individual airports. When taking it trip, it's worth travelers knowing what hygiene measures airports are implementing, too.

This report summarizes what airlines in Northeast Asia are doing and planning.

Major carriers

ANA

ANA has made a care promise to ensure the comfort and safety of all passengers and employees by providing a clean and hygienic environment in airports, lounges and on board its aircraft.

- Before departure
 - Ground staff wear facial coverings as well as face shields and goggles depending on the situation
 - Vinyl curtains have been installed as extra protection at check-in counters
 - Hand sanitizer stations have been installed at airport entrances, self-service check-in machines and self-service baggage drop machines
 - Social distancing markers help passengers queue at a safe distance
 - All equipment is regularly disinfected
- At security
 - Temperatures will be measured (at six Japanese airports)
 - Social distancing markers mean passengers can queue safely
 - Hand sanitizer stations widely available
- In lounges
 - Staff wear facial coverings and gloves
 - Disinfectants available at lounge entrance and in food & drinks area
 - Transparent acrylic panel protects lounge reception
 - Social distancing markers
 - Food and drinks individually wrapped; some service suspended
- At departure gate
 - Ground staff wear facial coverings as well as face shields and goggles depending on the situation
 - When buses are used for boarding, the number of passengers will be limited, and windows will be open for extra ventilation
 - Boarding begins with passengers with window seats and those seated at the rear
 - Priority boarding is temporarily suspended
 - Disinfectants and hand sanitizers available
- Inflight
 - Passengers are asked to wear masks
 - Cabin crew wear facial coverings
 - Additional anti-bacterial wipes are available

- High-performance filters keep cabin air clean
- Aircraft are cleaned and disinfected after each international flight; domestic aircraft are cleaned every night
- Inflight service reduced or suspended

Cathay Pacific

CathayCare represents the airline's commitment to traveler wellbeing. The program has six parts:

- Contactless check-in and boarding
 - Online check-in and self-service check-in
 - Physical distancing and screens
 - Health declaration at check-in
 - Automatic and biometric departure gates (at selected airports)
- Wait with confidence
 - All passengers temperature checked
 - All passengers and staff must wear face coverings
 - Adjusted meal services to reduce contact
- Prioritizing you on board
 - Mandatory face coverings throughout the flight
 - All passengers are temperature checked
 - Blocking off seats wherever possible
- A clean travel environment
 - Thorough sanitization of all surfaces – from inflight entertainment screens to air conditioning controls – between every flight
 - A modified meal service designed to reduce contact with cabin crew
 - Temporary suspension of pre-meal bar and pre-poured drinks (other drinks are still available during the flight)
- HEPA filtered cabin air
 - Removes 99.999% of airborne contaminants
 - Recirculates air every two minutes
 - Similar performance to hospital operating rooms and industrial clean rooms
- Our cabin crew
 - Masks, gloves and goggles provided for all crew
 - Strict layover guidelines include no contact with the local community and close medical surveillance

Japan Airlines

Japan Airlines' parent company JAL Group has made the safety and security of customers and employees its highest priority to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 and ensure peace of mind during travel.¹ In June, it implemented additional hygiene measures.

- Protection measures
 - Thorough cleaning and disinfecting of counter, equipment and machines used by customers and employees
 - Regular and frequent cleaning and disinfecting of all aircraft

¹ [JAL Group](#), May 29, 2020

- Aircraft are thoroughly cleaned overnight, with disinfection of seat tables, arm rests, IFE monitors/controllers, lavatories and any high-touch areas
- Antibacterial hand wipes and sanitizing stations available to customers at the airport and onboard
- During the flight, cabin air is changed regularly and cleaned by HEPA filters
- Airport staff and cabin crew to wear face masks and/or face guards
- Floor guide markers at the departure gate
- Passengers to board aircraft 10-20 customers at a time
- Partitions installed at airport counters
- Request to customers
 - Monitor health prior to travel and boarding. If unwell, consult a doctor
 - Co-operate during required temperature checks conducted by airport and airline staff (which will vary by airport)
 - Wear a face mask at the airport and on the aircraft. Anyone without a mask or feeling unwell may not be allowed to fly
 - Check in online and adhere to carry-on baggage guidelines

Until the end of June, JAL also introduced a temporary restriction on seat assignments to allow more personal space inside the aircraft. As a result, certain seats were unavailable for reservation.

Korean Air

To guarantee the safety of passengers, Korean Air has put a number of measures in place:

- At the airport
 - Passengers must wear a face mask at all times
 - All passengers have their temperatures checked using thermal imaging cameras and hand-held thermometers at Immigration and at boarding gates
- At the gate
 - Passengers board by zone, starting from the back of the aircraft. First and Prestige class passengers and SkyTeam ElitePlus members can still board at a convenient time via a dedicated line.
- Onboard
 - All cabin crew wear masks, gloves and safety glasses
 - Cabin crew wear safety gowns on long-haul flights to South Korea
 - Onboard announcements explain what will happen if a passenger displays COVID-19 symptoms
- Aircraft cleaning
 - Aircraft are disinfected weekly.
 - All aircraft bound for the U.S. and arriving in Seoul are sterilized at all times
 - Aircraft suspected of carrying someone with COVID-19 will be quarantined and thoroughly sterilized

Low-cost carriers

Jetstar Japan

Fly Well is Jetstar Japan's initiative to ensure customers can enjoy safe travel with peace of mind. It includes a number of requests to passengers.²

² [Jetstar Japan](#), Fly Well, July 1, 2020

- Cabin cleanliness
 - Cabin air is refreshed every two to three minutes
 - All aircraft are fitted with hospital-grade HEPA filtration systems filtering 99.999% of dust particles and airborne contaminants such as viruses and bacteria
 - Aircraft are disinfected overnight with special attention given to seat tables, windows, arm rests, toilets and any areas customers may touch during a flight
- Mask wearing
 - Wearing a face mask, including handmade masks, is mandatory onboard all flights
 - Customers must wear a mask from the check-in area through to disembarkation from the aircraft
 - Cabin crew wear face masks and gloves on all flights
 - Ground staff wear face masks
- Inflight service
 - Some snack and beverages available to purchase from July 1

Peach

ANA-owned low-cost carrier Peach has implemented thorough infection control measures at airports and onboard its aircraft.³ Peach asks all customers to wear masks and refrain from boarding aircraft if they're feeling unwell.

- At the airport
 - Ground staff must wear masks, and at some airports, this must include visors to prevent droplet infection
 - Sheets prevent droplet infection at ticket and check-in counters
- Onboard the aircraft
 - All cabin crew must wear masks and gloves
 - Cabin air completely replaced every two to three minutes
 - Aircraft equipped with HEPA filters
 - Aircraft disinfected, including tables armrests, seat equipment, toilet doorknobs, and other high touch parts
 - Inflight shopping and food/drink service temporarily suspended
- Requests for passengers
 - Wear face masks at the airport and onboard aircraft
 - Check temperature before leaving home
 - Maintain social distancing at departure gate
 - Refrain from talking to cabin crew
 - Wash hands before and after using the toilet

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.⁴ Aircraft manufacturers have chosen to install the higher efficiency filters, which are similar to those used in

³ [Peach](#), June 19, 2020

⁴ [IATA](#), Briefing Paper, Cabin air quality – Risk of communicable disease transmission

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 July 7, 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.