

How to get a pre-boarding pass on Southwest?

Getting a **pre-boarding pass on Southwest Airlines** is a specific process, and it's important to understand that pre-boarding is **not something you can request casually or add during online check-in**[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Southwest reserves pre-boarding for passengers who meet certain criteria, primarily related to disabilities or special assistance needs[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Below is a clear, step-by-step explanation of how it works and what to expect[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

Southwest offers **pre-boarding** to customers who need extra time or assistance to board the aircraft or to stow assistive devices[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** This typically includes passengers with **disabilities** , **mobility limitations** , or other conditions that require accommodations under the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA)[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** If you qualify, pre-boarding allows you to board the plane **before Group A** , giving you additional time to get settled without the pressure of the normal boarding flow[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

To get a pre-boarding pass, you must **speak with a Southwest agent at the airport**[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** You cannot add pre-boarding online, through the mobile app, or over the phone in advance[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** On the day of travel, arrive at the airport early and go to the **Southwest ticket counter or customer service desk** before going through security[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Let the agent know that you are requesting pre-boarding due to a disability or need for assistance[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Southwest does not require medical documentation or proof, and you are not required to disclose specific medical details[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** A verbal request is generally sufficient[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

Once approved, the agent will issue you a **boarding pass marked "Preboard**[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**"** This designation replaces your assigned boarding group and position (such as A, B, or C)[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** When boarding begins at the gate, the gate agent will announce pre-boarding first, and passengers with pre-boarding passes will be invited to board before all other groups[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** At that point, you simply present your boarding pass—digital or printed—and board with the pre-boarding group[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

It's important to understand what pre-boarding is **intended for** and how Southwest applies it[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Pre-boarding is designed for passengers who need extra time or assistance, such as those who use wheelchairs, walkers, canes, braces, or other mobility aids; passengers who need help transferring to an aircraft seat; travelers with visual or hearing impairments who require assistance; or individuals with conditions that make it difficult to board during regular boarding[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** It is not intended for general convenience, preference for a certain seat, or fear of not finding overhead bin space[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

Southwest has an **open seating policy**, meaning there are no assigned seats[+1]- 855-510- 5815** Pre-boarding passengers may choose any available seat except **exit row seats**, which are restricted for safety reasons[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** However, Southwest has implemented policies to ensure fairness, especially regarding seats with extra legroom[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** On many aircraft, pre-boarding passengers are asked **not to sit in the first few rows** unless they specifically need those seats for accessibility reasons[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** This policy helps balance accessibility needs with fairness for other passengers, particularly those who paid for EarlyBird Check-In or upgraded boarding[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

If you are traveling with a companion, the rules are more limited[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Generally, **only one companion** may board with a pre-boarding passenger, and only if that companion is assisting the passenger during boarding[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Additional family members or travel companions must board according to their assigned boarding group and position[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** This is an important distinction, as pre-boarding does not automatically extend to an entire traveling party[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

It's also helpful to understand the difference between **pre-boarding** and **family boarding** on Southwest[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Family boarding occurs **after Group A and before Group B** and is available for families traveling with children aged six or younger[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Family boarding is separate from pre-boarding and does not provide the same early access[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** If you qualify for pre-boarding due to a disability, you would board earlier than families using family boarding[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**

If your needs change during travel—for example, if you did not request pre-boarding on your outbound flight but realize you need it on your return—you can request it again at the airport for that segment[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Each flight is handled separately, and approval is based on your needs at the time of travel[+1]- 855- 510- 5815** Southwest agents are trained to handle these requests respectfully and in compliance with federal accessibility regulations[+1]- 855- 510- 5815**