

EXCESS BAGGAGE IS THREE TIMES CHEAPER ON LOW-COST AIRLINES



The cost for excess baggage on traditional airlines (those operating within a network), is up to three times higher than on the low-cost airlines, according to findings of a study comparing 10 airlines by Liligo.com. The findings also show that the dimensions and weight allowance vary significantly from one company to another and some are more lenient than others.

According to this survey, which compares charges for excess baggage (dimensions or weight) on both types of airlines, a passenger flying with Germanwings pays 50 euros for excess baggage, while excess baggage might cost a SWISS passenger 150 euros.

The most lenient airlines are British Airways, Air France-KLM, Iberia, Air Nostrum and Air Europa, which allow 10 kilos, 12 kilos and even 23 kilos for carry-ons. The British company allows 23 kilos in hand luggage and an accessory.

Traditional companies include checked and carry-on luggage in the ticket, but each airline has its own policy. Over 70% of the airlines surveyed allow one carry-on piece plus one accessory (a camera bag, computer or tablet).

Depending on whether you are travelling on a 'business' or tourist ticket, you are allowed to travel with one or two pieces of hand luggage and a checked suitcase weighing between 20 and 30 kilos. Above that a fee is charged for excess baggage (measurement or weight), ranging from 12 to 150 euros.

Based on these averages, the charges for excess baggage range from Air France-KLM's 70 - 100 euros, to 50 - 150 euros on SWISS or 50 - 60 euros on Air Europa.

Hand Luggage Restrictions

Among the 'low-cost' airlines, the most lenient with hand luggage are Iberia Express, easyJet and JetBlue, which set no weight limit, as against Wizz Air which does not impose a weight limit but has smaller size limits.

Iberia Express, Volotea, Ryanair, Norwegian and JetBlue allow one item of hand luggage and an accessory at no extra charge. In contrast, Wizz Air and Transavia are the low-cost airlines with the most restrictive luggage dimensions. In the case of Germanwings, luggage should weigh a maximum of 8 kilos, compared with the 10 kilos of most low-cost airlines.

The hand luggage allowance should not exceed 10 kilos (except for Germanwings) and Wizz or JetBlue where it is unlimited - while measurements for a suitcase range from 42x32x25 cm, in the case of Wizz Air, to easyJet's 56x45x25 cm. For those who exceed these measurements there is a charge, ranging from 10 euros on Wizz Air, to 30 euros on Iberia Express or 60 euros on Volotea.

Calculation of Extra-charge Not Always Allowed

Iberia Express, Wizz Air, Vueling and Germanwings allow between 20 and 23 kilos for checked luggage. Some companies like Volotea, easyJet, Ryanair, Transavia, Norwegian and Vueling have

excess kilo charges. Travelling with excess baggage on Volotea attracts a charge of 60 euros, compared to 30 euros on the majority, or 50 on Ryanair.

Others like JetBlue or Germanwings apply charges of between 50 and 100 euros at the airport.

At least half of the low-cost companies surveyed do not allow you to calculate the extra charge for luggage exceeding the weight or size, so you have to go to the counter and pay the charges of between 30 and 150 euros.

What Do the Customers Think?

According to a survey on baggage policy conducted among users of Liligo.com, 78% believe that prices charged by low-cost and traditional airlines are excessive, compared with 21.1% who see them as "reasonable".

Regarding people's habits, 38% of travellers surveyed admit to having paid at some time for excess baggage, and 39% admit to not knowing that it is cheaper to pay for their excess luggage when booking than to do so later.

The platform recommends actually paying for an extra suitcase on the web, as it is often cheaper than paying for excess luggage. Iberia and Air Nostrum charge between 60 and 100 euros for excess baggage compared to 15 - 80 euros for an extra suitcase on their websites.

It is therefore advisable not to buy a carry-on and to wait for the end of 2015 when it is expected that the measurements of 55x25x20 cm for cabin luggage proposed by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) will be standardized.

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