

What is Border Force?

Border Force plays a pivotal role in the fight against terrorism, organised crime and illegal migration, exploiting the unique point of intervention presented by the UK border. It is an integral part of the UK law enforcement landscape.

This guide aims to provide basic information that can help you prepare to cross the UK border.

Before you start your journey:

- It's helpful to have any documentation related to your visit to the UK in your hand luggage (for example your itinerary) in case a Border Force officer needs to see it.
- To protect children from trafficking, those travelling with children under 18 who are not the child's parent or do not share the same surname may be asked about their relationship to that child. It may be helpful to carry photocopies of birth certificates or other documentation.
- You should fill in your Advance Passenger Information (API) carefully and in plenty of time before you fly.

Arriving in the UK

When you arrive in the UK, Border Force needs to undertake important passport and customs checks to maintain the security of the UK.

There are a number of simple steps that you can take to speed up your journey.

At passport control



- Have your passport ready and out of any cover.



- Remove any glasses, sunglasses and hats.



- It is quicker if family groups go to passport control together.



- If you are from outside the EU you need to complete a landing card (one per person) before you arrive at passport control.



- Group leaders should make themselves known to passport control.

ePassport gates

If you are over 18, an EU national or Registered Traveller and have an ePassport (a passport with this symbol  on the front) you can use one of our ePassport gates.

The ePassport gates are simple and quick to use:



Open to the photo page. Don't forget to remove your passport from its cover.



Hold the photo page face down on the reader. Keep it in position.



Look ahead at the screen until it turns green. Then remove your passport and walk through the gate.

Customs Information

There are limits on goods that you can bring into the UK from different countries. You should check the restrictions before you travel to the UK but if in doubt you can use the red telephone in the red customs channel.



- Do not bring in any meat or dairy products from outside the EU. There are also restrictions on some traditional medicines, food products and plants.



- It is against the law to bring in animal products or endangered species.



- There are restrictions on the quantities and value of tobacco, alcohol and gifts you can bring to the UK.



- Never bring in counterfeit goods, illegal drugs, offensive weapons or indecent and obscene material. Some items are restricted and will require a licence or permit.



- You must declare cash in any currency, worth €10,000 or more if you are travelling from a country outside the EU.

Further Information

UK border control visit
www.gov.uk/uk-border-control

For details on what Britain has to offer go to www.visitbritain.com

For more information on what you can and cannot bring into the UK please visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/travelling-to-the-uk

Registered Traveller is a new service launched by Border Force to give faster and more convenient entry to the UK for frequent travellers. For more information visit www.gov.uk/registered-traveller

For information on visa applications go to www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration

Issued by Border Force
© Crown Copyright February 2015



Border Force

A guide to entering the UK

