



TSA PreCheck, Global Entry and the Mobile Passport App

Faster Through Security PreCheck, Global Entry and MPC explained in plain English

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1595 —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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THE 60-SECOND VERSION

1. The Whole Idea in One Glance

If you remember only this page, you will still make the right choice.

There are a few different programs that speed you through the airport, and the names get confused all the time. The good news is that you only need to understand three of them, and most travelers pick just one. Each one is a membership you sign up for once and then use for years.

- TSA PreCheck: a shorter, easier security line for flights inside the United States
- Global Entry: a faster line when you fly back into the country from abroad, and it includes PreCheck
- Mobile Passport Control: a free phone app that speeds your return from an overseas trip
- CLEAR: a separate paid service that moves you to the front of the ID-check line

GOOD TO KNOW

If you fly only within the United States, TSA PreCheck is usually all you need. If you ever fly overseas, Global Entry costs only a little more and covers both jobs. The free Mobile Passport app is a nice extra for the trip home.

WHY IT HELPS

2. Why These Programs Are Worth Knowing About

Airport security lines can swallow up a chunk of your day, and they are stressful when you are not sure how long they will take. These programs were built so that travelers who have passed a background check can use a faster, calmer lane. The agencies already know who you are, so they wave you through with less fuss.

For an older traveler, the appeal is not just speed. It is dignity and ease. In the PreCheck lane you keep your shoes on, you keep your light jacket on, and you leave your laptop and liquids in the bag. That means less bending, less unpacking, and less scrambling to put yourself back together on the other side.

TIP

Even if you fly only once or twice a year, many people find the calmer line is worth it. A membership lasts five years, so the cost spreads out thin over time.

PRECHECK EXPLAINED

3. What TSA PreCheck Actually Is

TSA PreCheck is a program run by the Transportation Security Administration, the agency that screens you at the airport. When you are a member, your boarding pass is marked, and you get to use a special security lane that moves faster and asks less of you.

- You keep your shoes, belt, and light jacket on
- You leave your laptop inside your bag
- You leave your small bag of liquids inside your bag
- The line is usually much shorter than the regular one

GOOD TO KNOW

PreCheck works only for flights that start inside the United States, on airlines that take part. Almost all the big airlines do. It does not help you coming home from another country; that is what Global Entry is for.

GLOBAL ENTRY EXPLAINED

4. What Global Entry Does That PreCheck Does Not

Global Entry is run by Customs and Border Protection, the agency that checks you back into the country after an overseas trip. When you land from abroad, instead of waiting in the long passport line, you step up to a kiosk or a face-scan camera, and you are through in a minute or two.

Here is the part that makes it such a good deal. Global Entry includes TSA PreCheck at no extra charge. So one membership gives you the fast line both when you leave on a domestic flight and when you come home from overseas. For anyone who travels internationally even occasionally, it is the more complete choice.

WATCH OUT

Because Global Entry includes PreCheck, you do not need to buy both. If there is any chance you will take a trip abroad in the next five years, Global Entry is often the smarter pick.

THE COSTS

5. What Each One Costs, in Plain Ranges

Prices do change, so I will give you ranges rather than exact numbers, and you should always confirm the current price on the official site before you pay. The important thing to know is that these are one-time fees that cover a five-year membership, not yearly bills.

- TSA PreCheck: somewhere in the range of 75 to 85 dollars for five years
- Global Entry: around 120 dollars for five years, and it includes PreCheck
- Mobile Passport Control: free
- CLEAR: a yearly fee, often around 200 dollars a year, which is the priciest of the bunch

WATCH OUT

Many travel credit cards will reimburse the PreCheck or Global Entry fee as a card benefit. Check your card before you pay out of pocket; you may already have it covered.

FINDING THE OFFICIAL SITE

6. Signing Up Only on the Real Government Sites

There are copycat websites that will happily charge you extra to fill out a form you could do yourself for free. You want the real, official government sites, and nothing else.

- For TSA PreCheck: the enrollment page linked from tsa.gov
- For Global Entry and Mobile Passport: the Trusted Traveler Programs site at ttp.cbp.dhs.gov
- Both official addresses end in.gov, the government ending
- If a site asks for a big extra service fee, close it and go to the.gov site

WATCH OUT

A site ending in.com that charges a hefty fee to help you enroll is not the government. The real sites end in.gov. When in doubt, do not enter your information.

ENROLLING IN PRECHECK

7. How to Sign Up for TSA PreCheck

Signing up for PreCheck is a two-part process. First you fill out a short application online, which takes about ten minutes. Then you visit an enrollment center in person for a quick appointment where they take your fingerprints and check your documents.

- 1 Go to the official TSA PreCheck enrollment page

- 2 Fill in your name, address, and birth date as they appear on your ID
- 3 Choose an enrollment center near you and pick an appointment time
- 4 Pay the fee with a card
- 5 Go to your appointment with your driver's license and passport
- 6 Have your fingerprints and photo taken; it takes about ten minutes

TIP

There are enrollment centers at many airports and at some office-supply stores. Pick one close to home so the appointment is an easy errand, not a trek.

ENROLLING IN GLOBAL ENTRY

8. How to Sign Up for Global Entry

Global Entry takes a little more patience because it involves a background check and an interview, but the steps are straightforward. You apply online, wait to be approved for the interview, and then do the interview, which can often happen when you next land from a trip abroad.

- 1 Create an account on the Trusted Traveler Programs site
- 2 Fill out the Global Entry application and pay the fee
- 3 Wait for a message saying you are conditionally approved
- 4 Schedule an interview at an enrollment center, or plan to do it on arrival from a trip
- 5 Bring your passport and driver's license to the interview
- 6 Once approved, your card and membership number arrive

GOOD TO KNOW

Approval can take some time, from a few weeks to a few months, so apply well before a big trip. Many airports also offer 'enrollment on arrival,' where you finish the interview right after you land from an international flight.

THE KNOWN TRAVELER NUMBER

9. Your Known Traveler Number and Why It Matters

When you are approved for PreCheck or Global Entry, you are given a Known Traveler Number. This is the key that unlocks the fast lane. It is a short string of numbers and letters that tells the airline you are a member, so your boarding pass gets the PreCheck mark.

The single most common reason people do not get PreCheck on a flight is that they forgot to put this number into their airline booking. The membership alone is not enough; the

number has to be attached to each trip you book.

TIP

Write your Known Traveler Number on a card and keep it in your wallet, and also save it in each airline's app under your traveler profile. That way it is attached to every trip without you having to remember.

A GLOBAL ENTRY NUMBER

10. Where to Find Your Number if You Have Global Entry

If you have Global Entry rather than plain PreCheck, your Known Traveler Number is your Global Entry membership number, sometimes called a PASSID. It is printed on your Global Entry card and shown in your account on the Trusted Traveler site.

- 1 Sign in to your account on the Trusted Traveler Programs site
- 2 Look on the dashboard for your membership number, often labeled PASSID
- 3 That number is the one you enter as your Known Traveler Number when booking
- 4 The same number is printed on the front of your Global Entry card

GOOD TO KNOW

The number on your Global Entry card does the same job as a PreCheck number. You enter it in the Known Traveler Number box when you book a flight, and you get PreCheck on domestic trips too.

ADDING IT TO A BOOKING

11. Putting Your Number Into an Airline Booking

This is the step that turns your membership into an actual shorter line. Every time you book a flight, there is a box for your Known Traveler Number. Fill it in, and your boarding pass will carry the PreCheck mark.

- 1 When booking, look for a field called Known Traveler Number or KTN
- 2 Type in your number exactly, with no spaces
- 3 Save it to your frequent-flyer profile so it fills in automatically next time
- 4 Check your boarding pass for the words 'TSA PreCheck' before you fly

WATCH OUT

Your name on the booking must match your ID and your trusted-traveler record. A nickname or a missing middle name can stop PreCheck from showing up. Book with your name exactly as it is on your license.

THE MOBILE PASSPORT APP

12. What Mobile Passport Control Is

Mobile Passport Control, often shortened to MPC, is a free app from Customs and Border Protection. It speeds up the moment you re-enter the country after an overseas trip, and it costs nothing and needs no approval ahead of time. Anyone eligible can download it and use it the same day.

Think of it as a way to fill out your arrival paperwork on your phone before you reach the booth, so you can step into a shorter, dedicated line. It does not replace Global Entry, but for travelers who do not have Global Entry, it is a free way to save time on the way home.

GOOD TO KNOW

The app is officially called CBP MPC. It is available free on both the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Beware of look-alike apps that charge a fee; the real one is free.

WHO CAN USE MPC

13. Who the Mobile Passport App Is For

The app is open to a wide group of travelers, which is part of what makes it so useful. You do not apply or get approved; you simply need to be in one of the eligible groups and have the right documents.

- United States citizens
- Lawful permanent residents, meaning green-card holders
- Canadian visitors traveling on a B1 or B2 basis
- Returning visitors who entered on an approved travel authorization

GOOD TO KNOW

You can set up profiles for the whole family in the app, often up to a dozen people, and submit everyone together in one go. That is handy when you travel as a couple or with grandchildren.

USING MPC AT THE AIRPORT

14. Using the Mobile Passport App When You Land

The app is quick to use, but the trick is to do it after you land and before you reach the passport booth, while you are walking through the terminal. You fill in your details, take a quick selfie, and get a digital receipt.

- 1 Set up your profile with your passport details before your trip
- 2 After you land, open the app and choose your arrival airport
- 3 Answer the short customs questions
- 4 Take a photo of yourself when the app asks
- 5 Submit, and wait for the receipt to appear on your screen
- 6 Show that receipt to the officer in the Mobile Passport line

WATCH OUT

The app needs a connection to submit, so turn on the airport Wi-Fi after you land. If the app will not go through, do not worry; simply use the regular line instead. It is a helper, not a requirement.

WHICH AIRPORTS

15. Where the Mobile Passport App Works

Mobile Passport Control is available at a growing list of major airports and some cruise seaports, and the list keeps expanding. Rather than memorize it, the easy habit is to check inside the app, which shows you whether your arrival airport is covered.

GOOD TO KNOW

The app itself lists the airports and seaports where it works. Open it before your trip home and confirm your arrival airport is on the list, so you know whether to count on it.

CLEAR EXPLAINED

16. What CLEAR Is and How It Differs

CLEAR is a private company, not a government program, and it does a different job. Instead of speeding you through the security screening itself, it speeds up the first step, the identity check, by verifying who you are with a quick face or fingerprint scan and walking you to the front of that line.

CLEAR charges a yearly fee, and it is the most expensive of these options. It is sold at the airport, often with a friendly representative encouraging you to sign up. It can be worth it for people who fly very often out of busy airports, but for the occasional traveler it is usually more than you need.

WATCH OUT

CLEAR and PreCheck do different things and can be used together, but you do not need CLEAR to benefit from PreCheck. If you are choosing just one place to spend money, PreCheck or Global Entry gives most travelers the bigger benefit.

COMBINING THEM

17. How These Programs Fit Together

It helps to picture the airport as two steps. First an officer checks your identity, then you go through the screening machines. CLEAR speeds up the first step. PreCheck speeds up the second step. Global Entry covers the return from abroad and throws in PreCheck.

- CLEAR: faster identity check at the front of the line
- PreCheck: faster, gentler screening for domestic flights
- Global Entry: faster re-entry from overseas, plus PreCheck included
- Mobile Passport: a free alternative to Global Entry for the trip home

GOOD TO KNOW

Most travelers do not need all of these. A single membership, either PreCheck or Global Entry, handles the vast majority of trips comfortably.

CHOOSING FOR YOU

18. Which One Suits Your Kind of Travel

The right choice comes down to where you fly. There is no single best answer for everyone, only the best answer for your travel habits. Here is a simple way to think it through.

- You fly only inside the United States: TSA PreCheck is plenty
- You take even one trip abroad in five years: Global Entry is the better value
- You want to save on the trip home and spend nothing: add the free Mobile Passport app
- You fly very often from a big, crowded airport: CLEAR may be worth a look on top

TIP

When people ask me, I usually suggest Global Entry if there is any overseas travel in their future, because it covers both jobs for only a little more money.

THE BACKGROUND CHECK

19. What the Background Check Involves

Both PreCheck and Global Entry involve a background check, which puts some people off. There is nothing to be nervous about. The check confirms you are who you say you are and have a clean record. For the great majority of ordinary travelers, it is routine and approval follows.

The in-person appointment is where they take your fingerprints and look at your documents. It is brief and polite. You are not being interrogated; you are simply being enrolled so the system can recognize you at the airport.

GOOD TO KNOW

If you have a common, clean history, approval is usually straightforward. If something comes up, they will tell you why, and there is a process to ask about it.

SIGNING UP CHILDREN

20. PreCheck and Global Entry for Children

Families often travel with grandchildren, so it is worth knowing how children fit in. For TSA PreCheck, children under a certain age can go through the PreCheck lane with a parent or grandparent who has it, without needing their own membership.

Global Entry is different. Every traveler, including children and even infants, needs their own Global Entry membership to use that lane coming home from abroad. Children's applications go through the same process, and a parent or guardian must be present at the interview.

WATCH OUT

The age cutoff for children riding along in the PreCheck lane can change, so confirm it before you fly. For Global Entry, plan to enroll each child separately; there is no riding along on that one.

RENEWING

21. Renewing Your Membership Before It Lapses

These memberships last five years, and then you renew. The system usually reminds you, but it is wise to renew early, because approval can take time and you do not want a gap where you lose the fast lane in the middle of a trip.

- 1 Watch for a renewal reminder by email as your five years near the end
- 2 Sign in to the same official site where you first enrolled
- 3 Fill out the short renewal form and pay the renewal fee
- 4 Renew online where possible; many renewals need no second interview
- 5 Keep using your old number until the new approval comes through

TIP

Start your renewal several months before it expires. If you renew before the expiry date, you usually keep your benefits even while the renewal is being processed.

KEEPING INFO CURRENT

22. Keeping Your Details Up to Date

If you get a new passport, move house, or change your name, you should update your trusted-traveler account so everything still matches. A mismatch between your records and your travel documents is the usual cause of the fast lane not working.

- Add a new passport number to your account when you renew your passport
- Update your address if you move
- Correct your name after a marriage or other legal change
- Make sure your airline profile shows the same name and number

GOOD TO KNOW

Your Known Traveler Number does not change when you get a new passport, so you keep the same number. You simply add the new passport details to your account.

AT THE CHECKPOINT

23. What the PreCheck Lane Feels Like

The first time you use the PreCheck lane, it can feel almost too easy, and travelers sometimes hesitate because they are so used to unpacking everything. Here is what to expect so you can walk through with confidence.

- 1 Look for the lane marked TSA PreCheck and join it
- 2 Hand the officer your boarding pass and ID
- 3 Keep your shoes, belt, and light jacket on
- 4 Leave your laptop and liquids inside your bag
- 5 Place your bag on the belt and walk through the metal detector
- 6 Collect your bag and you are done, often in a fraction of the usual time

TIP

If an officer ever asks you to remove something, just do it with a smile. Screening rules can shift day to day, and the lane is still far quicker overall.

AT THE BORDER

24. What the Global Entry Kiosk Is Like

Coming home from abroad with Global Entry is a pleasure after a long flight. Instead of a long passport queue, you head to the Global Entry area, which uses either a kiosk or a simple camera that recognizes your face.

- 1 Follow the signs to the Global Entry lane after you land
- 2 Step up to the kiosk or face-scan camera
- 3 Look at the camera when prompted
- 4 Collect the printed receipt if the kiosk gives one
- 5 Hand it to the officer on your way out, and you are through

GOOD TO KNOW

Newer setups use a face scan and may not need a kiosk or a receipt at all. Follow the signs and the on-screen prompts; an officer is always nearby to help.

WHEN IT DOES NOT APPEAR

25. When PreCheck Is Missing From Your Boarding Pass

Now and then a member steps up to the airport and finds their boarding pass has no PreCheck mark. Do not panic. There is almost always a simple reason, and it is usually fixable before you fly or at least for next time.

- The Known Traveler Number was not entered when booking
- The name on the ticket does not match your trusted-traveler record
- The number was typed with a small error
- Occasionally, the system simply did not add it for that flight

TIP

Visit the airline's check-in desk and ask them to add your Known Traveler Number and reprint your boarding pass. They can often fix it on the spot.

NEXUS AND OTHERS

26. A Word on NEXUS and SENTRI

You may hear two other names, NEXUS and SENTRI. These are trusted-traveler programs built around the Canadian and Mexican borders. They include Global Entry benefits as well, so travelers who cross those borders by land sometimes choose one of them.

GOOD TO KNOW

For most Ohio travelers flying to and from airports, PreCheck or Global Entry is the natural fit. NEXUS is mainly of interest if you regularly drive across the Canadian border.

DEVICES YOU NEED

27. What You Need on Your Phone

Most of these programs do not require a phone at all once you are enrolled; your boarding pass and the airport lanes do the work. The one that lives on your phone is Mobile Passport Control, which is just an app like any other.

- For the Mobile Passport app: a smartphone that can install apps
- Your passport handy to set up your profile
- Airport Wi-Fi turned on so the app can submit
- Enough battery; charge your phone before a long flight home

TIP

Set up your Mobile Passport profile at home before your trip, while you have a calm moment and your passport in hand. Doing it at the airport in a rush is no fun.

SAVING YOUR NUMBER

28. A Safe, Simple Way to Store Your Numbers

You will need your Known Traveler Number again and again, so it pays to keep it somewhere you can always find it. The trick is to keep it handy without leaving it where a stranger could misuse it.

- Write it on a small card for your wallet
- Save it in each airline's app under your profile
- Keep a copy in a note on your phone, protected by your passcode
- Tell your travel companion where to find it in case you forget

GOOD TO KNOW

Your Known Traveler Number is not a secret like a bank password, but there is no reason to post it publicly. Treat it like your frequent-flyer number: handy, but not shouted from the rooftops.

SPEEDING UP THE INTERVIEW

29. Making the In-Person Appointment Smooth

The in-person appointment for PreCheck or Global Entry is quick when you come prepared. A little organizing beforehand means you are in and out without a hitch.

- 1 Bring your driver's license and your passport
- 2 Bring a second proof of address if asked, such as a utility bill
- 3 Arrive a few minutes early for your appointment
- 4 Answer the officer's questions plainly and honestly
- 5 Let them take your fingerprints and photo

TIP

Double-check which documents your appointment requires when you book it. Showing up with the right papers the first time saves a second trip.

COST OVER TIME

30. Thinking About the Cost the Smart Way

The sticker price can feel like a lot all at once, but it helps to spread it across the five years of membership. A one-time fee for Global Entry works out to a modest amount per year, and even less per trip if you fly a few times a year.

Add in the credit-card reimbursement many travelers qualify for, and the real cost often drops to little or nothing. It is worth a quick look at your cards before you decide it is too expensive.

GOOD TO KNOW

Prices and card benefits change over time, so confirm the current fee on the official site and check your card's benefits before you pay. Never trust a price you saw quoted a while ago.

COMMON MIX-UPS

31. The Mix-Ups That Trip People Up

Because the names sound alike, a few mix-ups come up over and over. Clearing them up ahead of time saves confusion at the airport.

- PreCheck is for leaving on a domestic flight; Global Entry is for coming home from abroad
- Global Entry already includes PreCheck, so you rarely need both
- CLEAR is a separate paid company, not a government program
- Mobile Passport is free and does not need any approval

TIP

If you remember just one thing: PreCheck for the outbound domestic trip, Global Entry for the overseas return, and Global Entry covers both.

FOR COUPLES

32. Signing Up as a Couple

Couples usually want to go through the fast lane together, which means each person needs their own membership. There is no shared or family membership; the fast lane recognizes each traveler individually by their own number.

The good news is you can do your applications side by side at the kitchen table, and often schedule your interviews back to back at the same enrollment center. That makes the whole thing one shared errand rather than two separate chores.

GOOD TO KNOW

Each spouse gets their own Known Traveler Number. Make sure each of you adds your own number to the booking, not the same one twice, or only one of you will get the fast lane.

TRAVEL REWARDS CARDS

33. Letting a Credit Card Pay the Fee

Many travel-focused credit cards offer to reimburse the cost of PreCheck or Global Entry once every few years as a perk. If you hold such a card, you can pay the enrollment fee with it and get the money back as a statement credit.

- 1 Check whether your card lists a PreCheck or Global Entry credit as a benefit
- 2 Pay the enrollment fee using that card
- 3 Watch your statement for the reimbursement to appear
- 4 Keep the card in your travel kit for future renewals

WATCH OUT

The reimbursement usually comes only when you pay with the specific card that offers it. Paying with a different card or in cash means you miss the credit, so use the right card.

IF YOU TRAVEL RARELY

34. Is It Worth It if You Barely Fly?

If you fly only once every year or two, you might wonder whether any of this is worth the bother. For some people the honest answer is no, and the free Mobile Passport app plus a little patience is enough. For others, the calmer line is worth it even for a single big trip.

There is one group I always nudge toward signing up: travelers who find the regular line physically hard, with its bending to remove shoes and lifting bags onto tables. For them, PreCheck is less about speed and more about an easier, kinder trip through the airport.

GOOD TO KNOW

If one big overseas trip is on the calendar, it is often worth enrolling just for that, since the membership then rides along free for five more years of travel.

DIGITAL CARDS

35. Global Entry in Your Phone Wallet

Your Global Entry card can usually be added to the digital wallet on your phone, alongside your boarding passes and payment cards. It is a tidy way to carry your membership details without digging for the physical card.

GOOD TO KNOW

At the airport, the kiosk or face scan recognizes you by your enrolled photo, so you often do not need to present the card at all. Carrying it is a nice backup, not a must.

TROUBLE SIGNING UP

36. When the Website Will Not Cooperate

Government websites can be clunky, and it is easy to get stuck halfway through an application. If a page freezes or an account will not log in, it is almost never anything you did wrong. A few simple moves usually get you going again.

- Try again at a quieter time of day, as the sites can get busy
- Make sure you are on the official.gov site, not a copycat
- Have your passport and card details ready before you start
- Write down any confirmation number the site gives you

WATCH OUT

If the site keeps giving you trouble, do not give up and do not hand your details to a paid 'help' site. Call me and we can get through the official application together, step by step.

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

37. What These Programs Can and Cannot Do

It is worth being honest about the limits so you are never caught off guard. These programs make lines shorter and gentler, but they do not promise a perfect experience every single time.

- The PreCheck lane is usually much faster, but not always empty
- On rare days, security may ask even PreCheck travelers to remove an item
- The Mobile Passport app occasionally fails to submit; the regular line is the backup
- None of these let you skip your actual flight boarding, only the lines before it

GOOD TO KNOW

Even on an off day, members almost always do better than the regular line. Set your expectations at 'much easier most of the time' and you will be pleased.

A PRE-TRIP ROUTINE

38. A Calm Routine Before Every Trip

A small habit before each trip makes sure your membership actually pays off. It takes two minutes and saves the disappointment of reaching the airport without the fast lane.

- Confirm your Known Traveler Number is on the booking
- Check your boarding pass shows the PreCheck mark
- Make sure your membership has not expired
- If flying home from abroad, confirm the Mobile Passport app is set up

TIP

Do this check when you print or save your boarding pass, the day before you fly. Catching a missing PreCheck mark at home is easy; catching it at the airport is a scramble.

HELPING A COMPANION

39. Helping a Less Techy Travel Partner

In many households one person handles the travel bookings and the gadgets. These programs are a gentle place to bring a partner along, because once each of you is enrolled, there is very little to do at the airport but follow the signs to the right lane.

Set up both memberships together, save both numbers in the airline app, and walk through what the lane looks like once. After that, your partner can travel with confidence even on a solo trip, because the fast lane does not ask them to do anything complicated.

TIP

Keep both Known Traveler Numbers on a shared card in a safe spot at home. If one of you forgets theirs, the other can read it off in a moment.

A QUICK CHECKLIST

40. Your Simple Sign-Up Checklist

Run through this when you decide to enroll, and you will not miss a step.

- Decided which program fits your travel
- Checked whether a credit card will reimburse the fee
- Applied only on the official.gov site
- Booked and attended the in-person appointment

- Saved your Known Traveler Number in your wallet and airline apps
- Set a reminder to renew before five years are up

GOOD TO KNOW

Keep this checklist with your travel documents. When renewal time comes around in five years, it will save you from starting from scratch.

FAMILY TRAVEL

41. Getting a Whole Family Through Together

Traveling as a family or a group raises a small wrinkle: the fast lanes recognize each person by their own membership, so everyone has to be enrolled for the whole group to breeze through together. A gap, where one traveler has no membership, can slow the whole party at the checkpoint.

- Each adult needs their own PreCheck or Global Entry membership
- Young children can often use the PreCheck lane with an enrolled adult
- For Global Entry, even children need their own membership
- Set everyone's Known Traveler Number on their own ticket

TIP

If you travel often with the same group, it is worth getting everyone enrolled at once so no single person holds up the line. A family that is all enrolled moves through security as smoothly as one person.

ENROLLMENT ON ARRIVAL

42. Finishing Global Entry When You Land

Many travelers put off Global Entry because they dread scheduling a separate interview, where appointments can be weeks or months out. There is a gentler path called enrollment on arrival. If you are conditionally approved, you can finish the interview at many airports right after you step off an international flight, with no separate trip needed.

- 1 Apply online and wait for conditional approval
- 2 Check whether your arrival airport offers enrollment on arrival
- 3 On your next trip back from abroad, follow the signs after you land
- 4 Complete the short interview with a border officer right there
- 5 Walk away fully enrolled, with no extra appointment to book

GOOD TO KNOW

Enrollment on arrival turns the dreaded interview into something you do anyway, in the airport you are already standing in. If you have a trip abroad coming up, it is often the easiest way to finish the process.

A WORD ON SCAMS

43. Spotting the Fakes Around These Programs

Because these programs are popular and a little confusing, they attract scammers and copycat services. Some send official-looking emails or set up websites that charge a fat fee to do what you could do for free. Knowing the warning signs keeps your money and your information safe.

- Only the official sites ending in.gov handle real enrollment
- No legitimate program will text you demanding payment to 'keep your membership active'
- Be wary of emails with urgent threats about your Known Traveler Number
- A service charging a big extra fee to 'help you apply' is not the government

WATCH OUT

If you get a message saying your PreCheck or Global Entry will be canceled unless you pay or click a link, treat it as a scam. The real agencies do not operate that way. When in doubt, go directly to the official.gov site yourself.

THE WHOLE JOURNEY

44. Picturing a Trip From Start to Finish

It can help to picture how these programs smooth out a whole round trip, so you see where each one fits. Imagine you are flying to visit family overseas and coming home a week later. Here is how the fast lanes carry you through.

- Leaving home: your PreCheck mark gets you through the quick security lane
- On the way out: you keep your shoes on and your laptop packed
- Coming home: Global Entry or the Mobile Passport app speeds you past the passport line
- Through it all: your Known Traveler Number was on the booking from the start

GOOD TO KNOW

The outbound trip and the return are handled by different programs, which is why Global Entry, with PreCheck included, covers the whole journey in one membership. That is the convenience people appreciate most.

WHEN TO CALL

45. When It Is Worth Calling Me

Most people can enroll in these programs on their own in an afternoon. But if the government site is giving you fits, if you are not sure which program fits your travel, or if your PreCheck mark keeps failing to appear on your boarding pass, that is exactly the kind of thing I can sit beside you and sort out. My first in-home visit in Portage County is a flat 99 dollars, and I offer remote screen-share help for 49 dollars if you would rather I guide you from my desk to yours.

TIP

Call me at (330) 200-8042, or ask Sophie, my phone and chat helper. I can walk you through the official application, save your Known Traveler Number into your airline apps, and set up the Mobile Passport app so you leave on your trip with the fast lane ready to go.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this page handy. It is the short answer to the questions travelers ask most about the fast lanes at the airport.

- PreCheck: faster domestic security line; you keep shoes and laptop packed
- Global Entry: faster return from abroad, and it includes PreCheck
- Mobile Passport Control: a free app that speeds your trip home; no approval needed
- CLEAR: a separate paid service, usually a yearly fee, that speeds the ID check
- Always enroll on the official.gov sites, never a paid copycat
- Save your Known Traveler Number in your wallet and each airline app
- Check your boarding pass shows 'TSA PreCheck' before every flight
- Renew a few months before your five years are up
- Get help: call Bill at (330) 200-8042

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

Which Program Is Right for You?

Match the program to the way you travel.

Domestic Only

TSA PreCheck
Faster security line
Shoes and laptop stay
packed

Fly Abroad

Global Entry
Faster return home
Includes PreCheck free

Trip Home Free

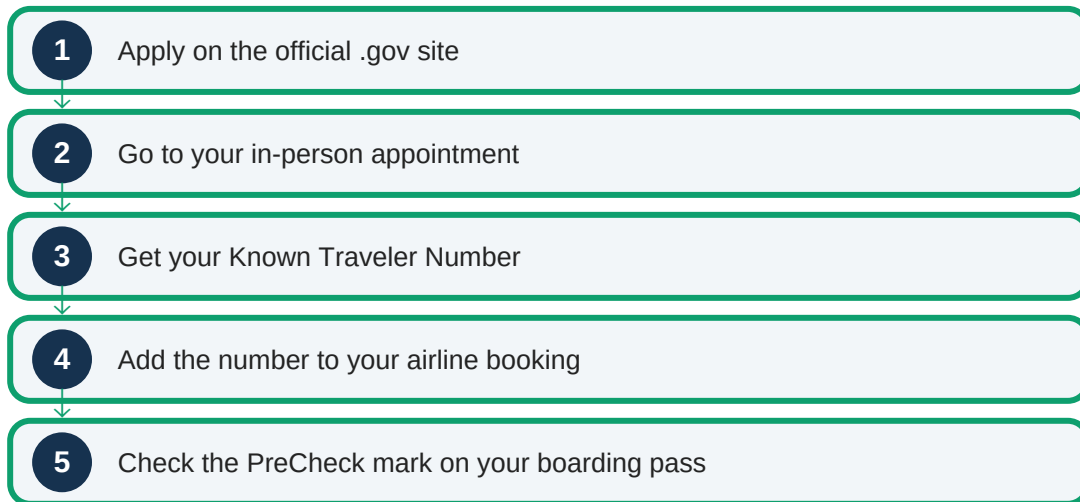
Mobile Passport app
No approval needed
Costs nothing to use

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

From Sign-Up to the Fast Lane

Do the first steps at home, then enjoy the shorter line.



BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com

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