

Schengen Visas

What is a Schengen visa?

A Schengen visa allows you to visit one or more European countries for up to 3 months in a single visit. It can be granted for multiple or single entry depending on your plans.

Which countries are currently in the Schengen area?

The countries in the Schengen area are:

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Austria | Germany | Poland | Slovakia |
| Belgium | Greece | Portugal | Slovenia |
| Czech Republic | Hungary | Lithuania | Spain |
| Denmark | Iceland | Luxembourg | Sweden |
| Estonia | Italy | Malta | Switzerland |
| Finland | Latvia | The Netherlands | |
| France | Liechtenstein | Norway | |

Do I need a Schengen visa?

Maybe – it depends on your nationality and the country you are visiting. Before booking any travel, you should check the embassy website to find out how long you can stay in that country and whether you need a visa.

How much does it cost?

A Schengen visa costs € 60 which is approximately £50. Usually you will need to pay in cash or by postal order but it is best to check with the relevant embassy directly. There may be other service charges and return postage fees in addition to the cost of the visa.

When should I apply?

Processing times will vary, but ideally you should apply 4-6 weeks before you travel to give the embassy time to process your application. However, most embassies will require that you apply within 3 months before your travel date.

If you are required to apply in person, you should book your appointment as early as possible, particularly if you plan to travel during busy holiday periods. Some embassies allow you to book appointments online. Be aware that if you need to ring a premium rate phone line to make an appointment is often quite expensive.

How do I apply?

If you are planning to travel to more than one country you should apply to the embassy of the country where **you will be spending the most time**. If you are spending the same length of time in each country, you should apply to the embassy of the first country that you will be visiting. Check the embassy website to find out whether you will need to make your application in person or if you can send it by post.

Application form

You can download a Schengen visa application form from the embassy website. You will use the same form regardless of which country you are traveling to, but different countries may require slightly different documents so be sure to download a new form and guidance from the correct embassy every time you apply.

General documents

Most embassies require these documents:

- Passport containing UK visa or BRP visa card (you will usually need 3-6 months remaining on both your visa and your passport)
- Photographs
- Proof of sufficient funds to pay for your trip (bank statements)
- Medical insurance to cover your entire trip (check minimum coverage required)
- Purpose of trip (e.g. itinerary, invitation letter, conference programme, etc)
- Evidence of accommodation bookings for all of your stay in the Schengen countries
- Travel details (airline reservation/Eurostar booking, etc)
- Student status letter from Student Information Desk

Bank statements, medical insurance, student certificate, etc. must be recent and up to date. Please note that **supporting documents are not returned**. You should make photocopies of all documents submitted, and carry them with you when you travel.

What are the Schengen visa conditions?

- A Schengen visa is not appropriate if you wish to remain in the Schengen state for more than 3 months (for instance on an Erasmus programme).
- It is important that you stick to your proposed itinerary as closely as possible as you may be refused a Schengen visa in the future if you have spent much longer in one country than you had originally stated.
- If you are granted a **single entry visa**, you must not re-enter the Schengen state once you have left it, even if the visa has not yet expired.

For more information contact us via SID online.