



Passengers With Religious or Cultural Needs

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has developed standardized security screening procedures for all airports. Therefore, you can expect that you will encounter essentially the same procedures at each airport you visit. You can also expect to be treated with the same courtesy and respect.

While the same screening procedures are used for virtually all passengers, we recognize that some passengers may have special needs or require additional assistance during the screening process. To maintain excellent security and customer service, TSA security screeners have been trained to be sensitive to and respectful of the needs of all passengers.

The Security Process & Preparation Tips

We have identified some helpful information that explains the security screening procedures as they may apply to groups with religious or cultural needs. You may want to familiarize yourself with this information before arriving at the airport. Your knowledge of the procedures, and observance of the tips and recommendations, will help you move through the security checkpoint quickly and efficiently.

If you have any questions while at the airport, ask for the TSA screening supervisor. You may also contact our Consumer Response Center toll-free at: 1-866-289-9673 or email PrepareForTakeoff@dhs.gov.

This information will be updated from time-to-time. We recommend that you periodically check the TSA web site at www.TSATravelTips.us to obtain the latest information.

General Screening Considerations

- If you do not want to go through the metal detector, you may request a personal search (pat-down inspection) as an alternative.
- You may also ask the screener for a private area for this personal search. You will be provided a screener of the same gender, except in extraordinary situations. In the unlikely situation where a screener of the same gender is not available, you will be provided with alternatives, which may include waiting for a same-gender screener to arrive, or consenting to a search by a screener of the opposite gender.
- If you refuse appropriate screening you will not be allowed to pass the security checkpoint.

Religious or Cultural Considerations

Head Coverings

It may be necessary for you to remove your head covering during the screening process. If the screener asks you to remove a head covering, you may request a private area to provide privacy while the head cover is removed, inspected, and restored.

Religious, Cultural or Ceremonial Items



Transportation Security Administration

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- There are items in this category that are not permitted through the security checkpoint (e.g., religious knives, swords). Therefore, it is advised that you place such items in your checked baggage. Check the permitted/prohibited list for more information.
- If the screener asks you to provide a religious, cultural or ceremonial item for screening, you may request a hand-inspection. If the item is prohibited from the cabin of the aircraft you will be asked to place the item in your checked baggage or speak to your airline about checking the item. If the item is delicate or fragile, or special handling is otherwise required, please let the screener know so that he or she can handle the item accordingly.
- If the screener requests that you put a delicate or fragile item through the X-ray machine, you may want to ask the screener to ensure that there is no baggage immediately before or after the item so that it will not be damaged. Bins are available at the X-ray machine.