

US and UK Limit the Size of Electronic Devices in Carry-On Luggage in Airplanes Originating from Eight Muslim-Majority Countries

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A new travel restriction went into effect at 3:00 am EST on Tuesday barring passengers on foreign airlines coming to the United States from carrying electronic devices larger than a cellphone. According to Department of Homeland Security, the restricted items that cannot be in carried-on luggage include laptop computers, travel printers, and electronic games bigger than a cellphone. These items can only be carried in checked baggage. To learn who is impacted and who is not impacted, continue reading!

Who is impacted: For flights to the US, the electronic restriction applies only to direct flights on foreign carriers. The affected airlines are foreign airlines flying from airports in Amman, Jordan; Cairo; Istanbul; Jidda and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia; Kuwait City; Casablanca, Morocco; Doha, Qatar; and Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. It is estimated 50 flights each day into the United States would be affected.

Who is NOT impacted: American-operated airlines from the affected airports, as well as aircraft crews are not impacted.

The British ban affects both domestic and foreign airlines, including British Airways, Turkish Airlines, Egypt Air, Royal Jordanian, and others. The British ban affects direct flights to the United Kingdom from Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia.

The travel restriction is not based on a credible, specific threat of an imminent attack. Instead, it reflects a new consensus among US Intelligence Agencies that terrorist groups are now smuggling explosive devises hidden in electronic devices such as laptops. However, counterterrorism experts are equally divided over the need and effectiveness of the new travel restriction.

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