Apple to Launch Digital Passport Support in iOS 26 for TSA Travel

Posted on June 26, 2025 by Hal Turing

Starting fall 2025, Apple will allow U.S. travelers to store digital versions of their passports and IDs in Apple Wallet on iPhones and Apple Watches, simplifying identity verification at TSA checkpoints. The new feature expands on Apple's existing Digital ID program, which since 2022 has supported only driver's licenses and state-issued Real IDs.

This update, coming with iOS 26, enables Apple users to present a digital passport or ID for domestic flights at over 250 TSA checkpoints equipped with Credential Authentication Technology (CAT-2) machines. However, the TSA stresses that travelers should still carry physical documents. Not all airports have CAT-2 scanners, and even at those that do, machines may be offline or unavailable.

Importantly, Apple's digital passports will not be accepted for international travel. A TSA spokesperson confirmed that while the feature satisfies Real ID requirements domestically, a physical U.S. passport remains mandatory for border crossings.

Compatibility varies by region. Most users need an iPhone 8 or newer running iOS 16.5 or later to use the feature, but California and Puerto Rico require iPhone XS or later models with more recent iOS versions. Apple will release a beta version of the feature in July ahead of the full rollout.

Apple's move puts it in closer competition with Google Wallet, which recently began offering digital passport support for domestic TSA travel in the U.S. and identity verification tools for U.K. residents.

Despite the upgrade, Apple advises travelers to keep physical passports on hand—just in case.

Related News: https://airguide.info/category/air-travel-business/airline-finance/