

How to Book Southwest Flights with Miles: Maximizing SkyMiles Value Guide

 SkyMiles Booking Help: 1-844-565-1867 (Award Ticket Experts!)

Understanding Southwest SkyMiles Award Booking

Southwest SkyMiles can save you hundreds on flights—if you know how to use them strategically. This guide shows you how to maximize every mile.

Need help booking with miles? Call 1-844-565-1867 for award availability search.

How Many Miles Do You Need?

Domestic Flights:

Route Distance	Main Cabin	First Class
Under 500 miles	6,500-10,000	15,000-25,000
500-1,500 miles	10,000-17,500	25,000-50,000
1,500+ miles	17,500-35,000	50,000-90,000

International Flights:

Region	Economy	Business
Mexico/Caribbean	15,000-35,000	40,000-75,000
Europe	50,000-90,000	125,000-250,000
Asia	75,000-150,000	175,000-350,000

Note: Southwest uses dynamic pricing—miles vary by demand.

 **Check exact miles needed:** Call **1-844-565-1867** with your route.

When Miles Beat Cash

Use Miles For:

1. Premium Cabins

- Business/First Class cash price: \$3,000-\$8,000
- Miles needed: 125,000-250,000
- **Value per mile: 2-4 cents** (excellent!)

2. Peak Travel

- Christmas, Thanksgiving, Summer
- Cash prices inflated 200-300%
- Miles prices more stable

3. Last-Minute Bookings

- Cash fares skyrocket within 2 weeks
- Miles prices less affected

4. Long-Haul International

- Best redemption value
 - Business class Asia/Europe sweet spots
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Use Cash Instead For:

1. Short Domestic Flights

- Cash: \$120
- Miles: 12,500 (worth ~\$125)
- **Better to pay cash, earn miles**

2. Off-Peak Travel

- Flash sales often cheaper than miles
- September domestic: \$89 cash vs. 10,000 miles

3. Basic Economy

- Poor mile-to-dollar ratio
- Better to earn miles on cash purchase

 **Not sure which to use?** Call **1-844-565-1867** for miles vs. cash comparison.

Step-by-Step: Booking Award Flights

METHOD 1: Online Booking

Step 1: Go to Southwest.com, log in to SkyMiles account

Step 2: Enter route and dates

Step 3: Click "Shop with Miles"

Step 4: Filter results by "Award Flight"

Step 5: Select flight + class

Step 6: Pay with miles + any taxes/fees (usually \$5-\$100)

Step 7: Confirm booking

METHOD 2: Phone Booking (Better Award Space)

 **Call 1-844-565-1867**

Why phone is better:

-  Agents see award space not shown online
-  Can book partner airlines easier
-  Help finding creative routings
-  Waive phone booking fee sometimes

Step 1: Have SkyMiles number ready

Step 2: Tell agent: *"I'd like to book an award flight from [origin] to [destination]"*

Step 3: Agent searches availability

Step 4: Agent presents options

Step 5: Choose flight

Step 6: Pay taxes/fees by card

Processing time: 10-15 minutes

Finding Award Availability

Availability Patterns:

Most Available:

- Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday flights
- 2-6 months in advance
- Off-peak seasons

Least Available:

- Friday, Sunday flights
- Holidays (Christmas, Thanksgiving)
- Peak summer (June-August)

Pro Search Tips:

Tip 1: Search one-way flights separately (more flexibility)

Tip 2: Check ± 3 days from target date

Tip 3: Consider connections (more award space than nonstops)

Tip 4: Early morning/late night flights have better availability

 **Can't find space online?** Call **1-844-565-1867** - agents access more inventory.

Maximizing Mile Value

Sweet Spot Redemptions:

#1: Domestic First Class Short-Haul

- NYC→Miami First Class
- Cash price: \$450
- Miles: 25,000
- **Value: 1.8 cents/mile** (good)

#2: Transatlantic Business

- NYC→Paris Business
- Cash price: \$4,500
- Miles: 175,000
- **Value: 2.6 cents/mile** (excellent)

#3: Domestic Main Cabin Off-Peak

- LAX→SEA midweek
- Cash price: \$180
- Miles: 10,000
- **Value: 1.8 cents/mile**

Poor Value Redemptions:

Avoid: Short flights during sales

- ATL→MCO flash sale
 - Cash: \$89
 - Miles: 10,000 (worth \$100+)
 - **Better to pay cash**
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Booking Partner Airlines with SkyMiles

Southwest Partners You Can Book:

SkyTeam Alliance:

- Air France, KLM (Europe)
- Korean Air (Asia)
- Virgin Atlantic (UK)
- Aeromexico (Mexico)

How to Book Partners:

Online: Limited partner availability shown

Phone (BETTER): Call **1-844-565-1867**

- Agents access full partner inventory
- Can combine Southwest + partner segments
- Often find space not online

Example:

- Want: NYC→Tokyo
 - Southwest flight full
 - Agent finds: Southwest to LAX + Korean Air to Tokyo
 - **Same miles, better availability**
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Fees & Taxes on Award Tickets

What You Still Pay:

Even when using miles, expect:

Domestic:

- Taxes/fees: \$5.60-\$30
- No fuel surcharges on Southwest metal

International:

- Taxes/fees: \$50-\$200+
- Higher on European routes
- Lower on Latin America

Changes/Cancellations:

- Redeposit fee: \$150 (to get miles back)
- **WAIVED for:** Medallion members, Southwest Reserve cardholders

 **Calculate total cost:** Call **1-844-565-1867** before booking.

Award Ticket Changes & Cancellations

Within 24 Hours of Booking:

-  Cancel FREE
-  Miles redeposited immediately
-  Taxes refunded

After 24 Hours:

-  \$150 redeposit fee (to cancel + get miles back)
-  **FREE for:** Diamond, Platinum, Gold, Silver Medallion
-  **FREE for:** Southwest Reserve AmEx cardholders

Changes (Same Route, Different Date):

- Fee: \$0-\$150 + any mile difference
- Depends on fare rules

 **Need to change award ticket?** Call **1-844-565-1867**

Earning More Miles Faster

Best Ways to Earn:

1. Southwest SkyMiles Credit Cards

- AmEx Gold: 2 miles/\$1 on Southwest purchases
- AmEx Platinum: 3 miles/\$1 on Southwest
- Sign-up bonuses: 40,000-90,000 miles

2. Flying

- Earn 5 miles per dollar (base)
- Medallion bonuses up to 11 miles/\$

3. Shopping Portals

- Southwest SkyMiles Shopping
- Earn 2-10 miles per dollar at retailers

4. Dining Program

- 3 miles per dollar at restaurants

5. Transfer Partners

- AmEx Membership Rewards → SkyMiles (not ideal ratio)
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Common Award Booking Mistakes

✗ Mistake #1: Not Being Flexible

Problem: Searching only one specific date

Solution: Check ± 3 days for better availability

✗ Mistake #2: Booking Too Close

Problem: Trying to book 2 weeks out

Solution: Book awards 2-6 months ahead

✗ Mistake #3: Ignoring Partners

Problem: Only looking at Southwest flights

Solution: Call 1-844-565-1867 to check partners

✗ Mistake #4: Using Miles on Cheap Flights

Problem: Redeeming 12,500 miles for \$89 flight

Solution: Save miles for expensive/premium redemptions

Mistake #5: Not Checking Cash Price

Problem: Blindly using miles without comparing

Solution: Always calculate value per mile

Award Availability Calendar



Best Months for Award Space:

Excellent Availability:

- January, February (post-holidays)
- September, October (shoulder season)
- Early December (pre-holidays)

Moderate Availability:

- March, April, May
- November (except Thanksgiving)

Poor Availability:

- June, July, August (summer peak)
- Late December (holidays)
- Thanksgiving week
- Spring break weeks

 **Flexible dates?** Call **1-844-565-1867** to find best availability months.

Special Award Situations



One-Way Awards:

Benefit: More flexibility than roundtrips

Cost: Usually half the roundtrip miles

Use when: Return date uncertain



Stopover Awards:

Benefit: Visit two cities for price of one
Limitation: Southwest restricts stopovers
Alternative: Book two one-ways

Companion Awards:

Benefit: Companion Certificate (from Southwest AmEx)
Cost: ~\$75-\$150 in fees
Value: Fly a friend/family nearly free

Upgrade with Miles:

Option: Pay cash fare + miles to upgrade
Cost: 15,000-75,000 miles for upgrade
Best for: When award space unavailable

 **Complex booking?** Call **1-844-565-1867** for expert help.

Quick Decision Guide

Use Miles When:

- ☒ Premium cabin (Business/First)
- ☒ Peak travel dates
- ☒ International long-haul
- ☒ Last-minute booking
- ☒ You have miles expiring soon

Use Cash When:

- ☒ Short domestic flights
- ☒ Flash sales / promotions
- ☒ Basic Economy
- ☒ You want to earn miles
- ☒ Award space unavailable

 **Still unsure?** Call **1-844-565-1867** for instant comparison.

SkyMiles Value Calculator

Formula: Cash Price ÷ Miles Required = Value Per Mile

Example:

- Flight costs \$450 cash or 25,000 miles
- $\$450 \div 25,000 = 1.8 \text{ cents per mile}$

Value Guide:

- **2+ cents/mile:** Excellent, use miles!
 - **1.5-2 cents/mile:** Good value
 - **1-1.5 cents/mile:** Fair
 - **Under 1 cent/mile:** Poor, use cash instead
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READY TO BOOK WITH MILES?

Maximize your SkyMiles value:



Call 1-844-565-1867 and say:

"I have [X] SkyMiles and want to book from [origin] to [destination]. Can you help me find the best value award redemption?"

Agent will: ☒ Search award availability (more than website shows)

- ☒ Check partner airline options
- ☒ Calculate value per mile
- ☒ Compare miles vs. cash
- ☒ Find creative routings if direct unavailable
- ☒ Book immediately with best value

Average call saves: 10,000-30,000 miles through better routing/partners

Southwest SkyMiles Experts: 1-844-565-1867



Award space specialists



Partner airline access



Value maximization



Flexible date searches

Book your award flight today!