

How to Contact Southwest About Delayed, Lost, or Damaged Baggage

 **Baggage Emergency Line: +1 (844) 565-1867** (Immediate Bag Recovery!)

Act Fast: First 4 Hours Critical

Why Speed Matters:

Within 4 hours of landing:

- 80% of delayed bags found
- Same-day delivery possible
- Better tracking

After 24 hours:

- Harder to locate
- International shipment issues
- Compensation claims open

After 21 days:

- Declared permanently lost
- Compensation process begins

 **Bag missing? Call +1 (844) 565-1867 FROM THE AIRPORT immediately!**

Types of Baggage Issues

1. Delayed Baggage

What it is:

- Bag didn't arrive on your flight
- Still in Southwest system
- Expected within 24-72 hours

Your rights:

- Free delivery when found
 - Essential items reimbursement
 - Tracking updates
-

2. Lost Baggage

What it is:

- Can't locate after 5+ days
- Missing from system
- May be permanently lost

Your rights:

- Compensation (up to \$3,800 domestic)
 - Reimbursement for contents
 - Replacement necessities
-

3. Damaged Baggage

What it is:

- Bag arrived damaged
- Broken wheels, zippers, handles
- Crushed/torn

Your rights:

- Repair reimbursement
 - Replacement if unrepairable
 - Compensation for damaged contents
-

4. Pilfered Baggage

What it is:

- Bag arrived but items missing
- Evidence of tampering
- Theft occurred

Your rights:

- Compensation for stolen items
- Police report assistance

- Investigation
-

Immediate Actions at Airport

Before Leaving Baggage Claim:

STEP 1: Don't Leave!

- Stay in baggage claim area
- Don't exit to curb/parking
- Harder to file report once you leave

STEP 2: Check All Carousels

- Your bag may be on wrong belt
- Check nearby carousels
- Ask other passengers

STEP 3: Locate Baggage Service Office

- In every baggage claim area
- Look for "Baggage Service" signs
- Usually near carousel

STEP 4: File Report IMMEDIATELY

- Must file before leaving airport
- Get claim reference number
- Take photos of anything relevant

 **Can't find office?** Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** while still at airport

Filing Delayed/Lost Bag Report

At Baggage Service Office:

What agent needs:

- Baggage claim ticket (from check-in)
- Flight information
- Bag description
- Contents description
- Delivery address
- Contact phone/email

What you receive:

- File reference number (write it down!)
- Contact phone number
- Tracking website
- Timeline estimate

Processing time: 10-15 minutes

 If Office Closed/Can't Wait:

 **Call +1 (844) 565-1867 immediately**

Agent will:

- File report over phone
- Issue reference number
- Initiate search
- Arrange delivery

Still need to:

- Visit office within 24 hours if possible
 - Or online at Southwest.com/baggage
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Online Baggage Claim

 **Southwest.com/baggage:**

Step 1: Go to Southwest.com/help/baggage

Step 2: Click "Report Baggage Issue"

Step 3: Enter flight details

Step 4: Describe bag (color, brand, size)

Step 5: Upload photo (if available)

Step 6: Provide delivery address

Step 7: Submit

Receive: Reference number + tracking link

Timeline: File within 24 hours of arrival

Tracking Your Bag

WorldTracer System:

Southwest uses global tracking:

- Reference number tracks your bag
- Updates every 4-8 hours
- Shows location when scanned

How to track:

- Southwest.com → Bag Tracking → Enter reference number
- Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** for verbal update
- Check email (updates sent automatically)

Update frequency:

- Found quickly: Updates every few hours
- Complex search: Daily updates

 **No updates for 24 hours? Call +1 (844) 565-1867 for status**

Delivery Process

When Bag Is Found:

Southwest will:

- Call/email you
- Arrange free delivery
- Deliver to address you provided (home/hotel)
- Usually same-day or next-day

Delivery timeframe:

- Found at airport: 4-8 hours
- Found at other airport: 24-48 hours
- International: 48-72 hours

Track delivery:

- Courier tracking number provided
- Follow progress online



If Staying at Hotel:

Ensure they have:

- Your hotel name + address
- Room number (if available)
- Hotel phone number
- Checkout date

Hotel will:

- Accept delivery at front desk
 - Hold until you pick up
 - Notify you when arrives
-

Essential Items Reimbursement



What Southwest Covers:

If bag delayed 6+ hours, you can purchase:

- Toiletries (\$25-50)
- Underwear/socks (\$20-40)
- Basic clothing (\$50-100)
- Phone chargers (\$20-30)
- Medications (reasonable cost)

Limits:

- Domestic: ~\$50-100/day for first 5 days
- International: Higher (varies by route)

Requirements:

- Keep ALL receipts
- Submit within 45 days
- Reasonable/necessary purchases only



Before buying: Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** to confirm what's covered



How to Get Reimbursed:

Step 1: Keep receipts for everything

Step 2: File claim:

- Online: Southwest.com/baggage → Submit Reimbursement
- Mail: Send receipts + claim form
- Phone: **+1 (844) 565-1867**

Step 3: Provide:

- Receipts (photos okay)
- Bag reference number
- Explanation of necessity
- Bank/card info for payment

Step 4: Wait for approval (7-21 days)

Step 5: Receive payment (check or direct deposit)

Compensation for Lost Bags

Lost Bag Value Limits:

Domestic flights:

- Maximum: \$3,800 per passenger
- Covers bag + contents
- Must prove value

International flights:

- Maximum: ~\$1,780 (1,288 SDR - Special Drawing Rights)
 - Montreal Convention limits
 - Lower than domestic
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How to Claim Compensation:

Step 1: Wait for "Lost" Declaration

- Southwest declares bag lost after 21 days (domestic) or 5-21 days (international)
- You receive notification

Step 2: Submit Claim

- Online form at Southwest.com
- Or call **+1 (844) 565-1867**

Step 3: Document Everything

- Original purchase receipts (ideal)
- Photos of items (helpful)
- Packing list
- Estimated values (if no receipts)

Step 4: Negotiation

- Southwest reviews claim
- May request proof of value
- Offers settlement

Step 5: Accept or Counter

- Accept offer (payment within 30 days)
- Or provide additional documentation
- Or escalate to supervisor

 **Claim assistance:** Call +1 (844) 565-1867 for help with process

What's Covered vs Not:

COVERED:

- Clothing
- Toiletries
- Electronics (with proof)
- Jewelry (limited - declare high value items at check-in)
- Sports equipment
- Work materials

NOT COVERED (or limited):

- Cash/checks
- Negotiable instruments
- Perishables
- Undeclared valuables over \$3,800

Declare valuable items at check-in to exceed standard limits

Damaged Baggage Claims

Reporting Damage:

MUST report:

- Domestic: Within 24 hours of arrival
- International: Within 7 days of arrival

How to report:

- At airport baggage office (best)
- Online at [Southwest.com/baggage](https://www.southwest.com/baggage)
- Phone: **+1 (844) 565-1867**

What to provide:

- Photos of damage (multiple angles)
 - Baggage claim ticket
 - Receipt for bag purchase (if claiming replacement)
-

 Damage Compensation:**Southwest will:****Option 1: Repair**

- Send to repair facility
- Cover reasonable repair costs
- Up to \$50-200 depending on damage

Option 2: Replacement

- If unrepairable
- Pay depreciated value
- Or provide replacement bag

Option 3: Cash Settlement

- Negotiate amount
- Based on age/condition before damage

Timeline: 30-60 days for resolution

 **Damage claim:** Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** immediately upon noticing

Special Items (Sports Equipment, Pets, etc.)

 Sports Equipment:

Delayed/damaged:

- Same process as regular baggage
- Higher value claims possible (with receipts)
- Rental reimbursement (if unusable at destination)

Example:

- Skis delayed, couldn't ski Day 1
 - Southwest may reimburse rental costs
-



Pet Kennels:

Damaged kennel:

- Report immediately
- Safety concern
- Southwest replaces/repairs priority

Injured pet:

- Seek vet care immediately
- File claim for medical costs
- Keep all vet bills



Pet issue: Call +1 (844) 565-1867 urgent priority

What Southwest WON'T Cover



Exclusions:

Pre-existing damage:

- Normal wear and tear
- Damage before flight
- Must prove happened during Southwest handling

Fragile items (not packed properly):

- Liquor bottles
- Glass items
- Breakables without proper padding

Inherent defects:

- Bag was already breaking
- Manufacturer defect

Tips:

- Take photos of bag BEFORE checking
 - Shows pre-existing condition
 - Proves new damage
-

Escalating Baggage Issues

 If Not Resolved:

Level 1: Baggage office (Day 1)

- File initial report

Level 2: Phone follow-up (Day 3) ☎ Call +1 (844) 565-1867

- Status update request
- Express urgency

Level 3: Supervisor (Day 7) ☎ Call +1 (844) 565-1867 ask for supervisor

- Escalate unresolved issue
- Request expedited search

Level 4: Formal Complaint (Day 14)

- Southwest.com → Customer Care
- File written complaint
- Reference all previous contacts

Level 5: DOT Complaint (Day 30)

- transportation.gov
 - Government intervention
 - Southwest must respond
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International Baggage Issues

 Extra Considerations:

Customs complications:

- Bag held by customs
- Not lost, just detained
- May take 24-72 hours

Language barriers:

- Southwest has translators available
- Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** (English support)
- They coordinate with foreign airports

Different compensation limits:

- Montreal Convention applies
- ~\$1,780 max international
- Lower than domestic \$3,800

Currency exchange:

- Reimbursements in USD
- Exchange rates apply

 **International bag issue:** Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** - they handle foreign airports

Prevention Tips

Reduce Baggage Problems:

Before check-in:

- Take photos of bag (exterior/interior)
- List contents on phone
- Remove old airline tags
- Secure locks
- Add name tag (inside AND outside)
- Bright colored bag/ribbon (easy to spot)

At check-in:

- Verify destination tag correct
- Keep baggage claim ticket
- Declare high-value items
- Consider carry-on for valuables

Consider:

- AirTag/Tile tracker in bag
- You can track independently

- Helpful for lost bag recovery
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Baggage Delay Due to Connections

Tight Connections:

If you make it but bag doesn't:

- Very common scenario
- Bag on next flight
- Usually arrives 2-12 hours after you

What to do:

- File delayed bag report (even though you know why)
- Confirm delivery address
- Get reference number
- Southwest delivers when arrives

Compensation:

- Same rights as other delays
- Essential items covered if 6+ hours

 **Tight connection, no bag:** Expected. Still call **+1 (844) 565-1867** to file report.

Baggage Issues During Irregular Operations

Mass Delays/Cancellations:

When weather/system issues affect many flights:

Baggage challenges:

- Thousands of bags displaced
- System overwhelmed
- Longer recovery times

Your strategy:

- File report immediately (even if lines long)
- Get reference number
- Track online (phone lines jammed)

- Be patient - may take 3-5 days vs. normal 1-2

Priority bags:

- Medical necessities
 - Infant supplies
 - Medications
 - Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** and explain urgency for priority handling
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Connecting Flight Bag Transfer Issues

Common Scenarios:

Scenario 1: Short Connection, Made Flight

- You made it, bag didn't
- Bag on next flight (2-6 hours later)
- Southwest delivers automatically
- File report for documentation

Scenario 2: Missed Connection

- Both you and bag rerouted
- Bag may beat you to final destination
- Or may still be at hub
- Track with reference number

Scenario 3: Different Airlines (Codeshare)

- First leg: Partner airline
 - Second leg: Southwest
 - Bag transfer responsibility unclear
 - Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** - Southwest coordinates with partners
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Real Recovery Stories

Success Story 1:

Situation: Bag didn't arrive, honeymoon in Hawaii

Action: Called **+1 (844) 565-1867** from airport immediately

Result: Bag found at connecting hub, delivered to hotel next morning + \$150 reimbursement for necessities

Key: Fast reporting + kept receipts

✓ Success Story 2:

Situation: Bag arrived destroyed (wheel broken, zipper torn)

Action: Reported at baggage office before leaving, took photos

Result: Southwest replaced with new bag of equal value (\$220)

Key: Reported within 24 hours + documented damage

✓ Success Story 3:

Situation: Bag lost 18 days, declared permanently lost

Action: Submitted detailed claim with receipts/photos

Result: \$2,800 compensation (near maximum)

Key: Thorough documentation

✗ Mistake Story:

Situation: Bag arrived damaged

Mistake: Left airport, reported 3 days later

Result: Southwest denied claim (beyond 24-hour window)

Lesson: ALWAYS check bag condition before leaving baggage claim

Checklist: Baggage Emergency

At Airport (Missing Bag):

- Check all carousels first
- Locate Baggage Service office
- File report before leaving airport
- Get reference number (write it down!)
- Take photo of baggage claim ticket
- Provide accurate delivery address
- Get direct contact number
- Ask for estimated recovery time

After Leaving Airport:

- Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** if couldn't file at airport
- Track online with reference number
- Purchase only essential items (keep receipts!)
- Check tracking every 12 hours

- Respond to any Southwest contact immediately
- Document all purchases with receipts

If Bag Delayed 24+ Hours:

- Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** for status update
- Submit essential items receipts
- Confirm delivery address still correct
- Ask for timeline update

If Bag Damaged:

- DO NOT LEAVE baggage claim without reporting
 - Take photos immediately (multiple angles)
 - Report at Baggage Service office
 - Get claim number
 - Keep damaged bag until claim settled
 - Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** if office closed
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Contact Methods Summary

Phone (Best for Urgent):

+1 (844) 565-1867

Use phone for:

- Immediate issues at airport
- Status updates
- Escalations
- Complex situations
- Urgent delivery needs

Available: 24/7

Online (Best for Documentation):

[Southwest.com/baggage](https://southwest.com/baggage)

Use online for:

- Filing initial report (if can't do at airport)
- Tracking bag status
- Submitting reimbursement claims

- Uploading receipts/photos
- Checking claim status

Advantage: Paper trail

Airport Office (Best for Initial Report):

Baggage Service Office (in baggage claim)

Use in-person for:

- Filing report immediately upon arrival
- Showing physical damage
- Getting instant reference number
- Face-to-face documentation

Hours: Vary by airport (major airports 24/7, smaller airports limited hours)

Timeline Expectations

What to Expect:

Delayed Bag:

- Found locally (same airport): 2-6 hours
- Found at nearby airport: 6-24 hours
- Found at distant airport: 24-72 hours
- International: 48-96 hours

Damage Claim:

- Review: 7-14 days
- Repair/replacement: 14-30 days
- Payment: 30-45 days total

Lost Bag Compensation:

- Declared lost: 21 days (domestic) or 5-21 days (international)
- Claim submission: 30 days
- Review: 30-60 days
- Negotiation: 14-30 days
- Payment: 60-90 days total from loss

Essential Items Reimbursement:

- Submit: Within 45 days
- Review: 14-21 days
- Payment: 30-45 days total

 **Process taking too long? Call +1 (844) 565-1867 to expedite**

Documentation Best Practices

Keep These Records:

For all bag issues:

- Baggage claim ticket (photo + original)
- Boarding pass
- Reference number from report
- All communications (emails, texts)
- Phone call notes (date, time, agent name)

For delayed bags:

- Purchase receipts (essentials)
- Photos of purchases
- Delivery confirmation
- Timeline of events

For damaged bags:

- Photos BEFORE trip (prove condition)
- Photos of damage (multiple angles)
- Close-ups of damage
- Original purchase receipt of bag
- Repair estimates (if seeking repair)

For lost bags:

- Packing list (detailed)
- Purchase receipts of contents (if available)
- Photos of items (if available)
- Value estimates
- Replacement cost research

Store digitally:

- Photo everything
- Email to yourself
- Cloud backup
- Easy to access during claim process

Special Circumstances

Students/Study Abroad:

If bag lost with textbooks/laptop:

- Higher urgency (academic deadlines)
 - Mention to **+1 (844) 565-1867**
 - May expedite search
 - Reimbursement for essential school items
-

Business Travelers:

If bag lost with work materials:

- Presentation materials
 - Work laptop/documents
 - Meeting attire
 - Mention business urgency to **+1 (844) 565-1867**
 - Essential items reimbursement covers business necessities
-

Wedding Travel:

If bag lost with wedding attire:

- EXTREME urgency
 - Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** immediately
 - Explain situation (wedding date/time)
 - Southwest often prioritizes
 - Essential items may cover emergency attire rental
-

Medical Equipment:

If bag lost with medical devices/medications:

- HIGHEST priority
- Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** immediately
- Explain medical necessity
- Southwest expedites
- May cover emergency replacement

Insurance Considerations

Credit Card Coverage:

Many premium credit cards cover:

- Baggage delay (6-12 hours)
- Lost baggage
- Damaged baggage
- Often \$500-3,000 coverage

Check your card benefits:

- File with Southwest first
- Then file with credit card (supplemental)
- May recover more than Southwest alone

Cards with good coverage:

- Chase Sapphire Reserve
- AmEx Platinum
- Many travel cards

Travel Insurance:

Separate travel insurance policies:

- Cover baggage issues
- Higher limits possible
- Coordinate with Southwest claim
- File both simultaneously

Rights Under DOT Regulations

Your Legal Rights:

Airlines MUST:

- Accept baggage reports
- Provide tracking/status
- Compensate per published limits
- Process claims timely

- Respond to complaints

You have right to:

- File report even if airline resists
- Receive compensation per limits
- Escalate to DOT if unresolved
- Written documentation of claim

DOT complaint: [transportation.gov](https://www.transportation.gov) (if Southwest doesn't resolve)

International Rights (Montreal Convention)

International Flights:

Montreal Convention:

- Governs international baggage
- 1,288 SDR limit (\$1,780)
- Applies to all international flights
- Stricter reporting deadlines (7 days for damage)

Your obligations:

- Report damage within 7 days
- Report delay within 21 days
- File written claim
- Preserve evidence

Airlines can't avoid these:

- Minimum standards
 - Enforceable globally
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Common Mistakes to Avoid

Don't Do This:

Mistake 1: Leaving airport without reporting

- Weakens claim
- Harder to prove timing
- **ALWAYS** report before leaving

Mistake 2: Throwing away damaged bag

- Keep until claim settled
- Southwest may need to inspect
- **Store damaged bag**

Mistake 3: Not keeping receipts

- Can't get reimbursed without proof
- **Keep ALL receipts**

Mistake 4: Waiting to report damage

- 24-hour window (domestic)
- 7-day window (international)
- **Report immediately**

Mistake 5: Overstating value

- Insurance fraud
- Claim denied entirely
- **Be honest about values**

Mistake 6: Not following up

- Don't assume it's being handled
- **Call for updates regularly**

FAQ: Baggage Issues

Q: How long before bag is declared "lost"?

A: 21 days domestic, 5-21 days international.

Q: Can I buy new luggage and get reimbursed?

A: Only if bag is declared lost or damage unrepairable. Keep damaged bag until claim settled.

Q: What if I fly tomorrow and bag still not found?

A: Call **+1 (844) 565-1867** - may provide additional essentials reimbursement.

Q: Do I have to use Southwest's repair facility?

A: No, can get your own estimate. But get Southwest's approval before repairs.

Q: Can I refuse delivery and demand new bag?

A: Generally no. Accept delivery, then file damage claim if condition unacceptable.

Q: What if bag arrives after I've already left destination?

A: Southwest ships to your home address (provide when filing report).



BAGGAGE EMERGENCY? ACT NOW

Time is critical for bag recovery:



Call +1 (844) 565-1867 IMMEDIATELY if:

- Bag didn't arrive on your flight
- Bag arrived damaged
- Items missing from bag
- Bag delayed more than 6 hours
- Need urgent delivery

From airport, say:

"I'm at [airport] baggage claim and my bag [didn't arrive / is damaged / has missing items]. I need to file a report immediately."

Agent will: ☒ File official report (if office closed)

- ☒ Issue reference number
- ☒ Initiate bag search
- ☒ Explain essential items coverage
- ☒ Arrange delivery when found
- ☒ Start claims process

Report within:

- Missing/delayed: Immediately (preferably from airport)
- Damaged: 24 hours (domestic) / 7 days (international)
- Lost compensation: After 21-day period

The faster you report = the faster resolution

Southwest Baggage Hotline: +1 (844) 565-1867

- Lost, delayed, damaged bags
- Real-time tracking
- Claims assistance
- Delivery coordination
- 24/7 emergency support

Call immediately from baggage claim!