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American Airlines Raises Checked Bag Fees Amid Rising Costs

The airline cites cost control as the reason behind the first luggage fee increase in five years

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American Airlines jets side by side at the Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix in February 2024. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

After a fee hike went into effect on Tuesday, many passengers booking travel on American Airlines will now have to pay more for their checked luggage.

Passengers in basic economy or main cabin seating will have to pay between \$5 and \$10 more for each checked bag unless they are active duty military, or have paid for their flight with an airline-branded credit card.

Domestic travelers, to include Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, will be charged \$40 for the first checked bag, up from \$30. A second checked bag will now cost \$45, up from \$40. A \$5 discount is available to those who pay online through the carrier's website.

Passengers going to Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico or Central America will have a smaller price increase - \$35 for the first checked bag and \$45 for the second, up from \$30 and \$40 respectively.

American Airlines says the fee increase is a way to rein in rising costs, adding that the hikes are the first in over five years in some cases. American wasn't the first airline to implement baggage cost increases. The airline is following Jetblue Airways, which started charging \$45 to check a bag at the airport earlier this month, while Alaska Airlines raised their charge by \$5 to \$35, and \$45 for a second bag.

Other major carriers including Delta Air Lines and United Airlines still charge \$30 and \$40 respectively for the first and second checked bag for routes in the region.

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