

What Age Can a Child Fly Alone on Southwest Airlines Without Unaccompanied Minor Service?

Southwest UM Age Guide — Minimum Age to Fly Alone, When UM Service Is Mandatory, Teen Solo Travel Rules, Nonstop vs Connecting Age Limits and Age Verification at Check-In

For Southwest unaccompanied minor age rules and booking, call:

■ Southwest Unaccompanied Minor Booking — 24/7:
+1-844-565-1867 ■ Southwest Rapid Rewards — Enroll Your
Child: +1-844-565-1867 ■ International UM Age Requirements:
+1-844-940-3217

Knowing the exact Southwest Airlines unaccompanied minor age cutoffs determines whether your child must use the UM service, can optionally enroll, or can fly independently as a teenager. The rules differ for nonstop flights versus connecting itineraries, for domestic versus international travel, and for children versus teens. This complete guide covers every age-related rule for children flying alone on Southwest — including the minimum age to fly, teen travel rules, and how Southwest verifies age at the airport. For immediate help, call **+1-844-565-1867** (24/7).

At What Age Does Southwest Airlines Stop Requiring Unaccompanied Minor Service?

Southwest Airlines requires mandatory unaccompanied minor service for all children ages 5 through 14 traveling alone. At age 15, the UM service becomes optional — teenagers ages 15 through 17 can fly independently on Southwest without the UM program. Children under age 5 cannot fly alone on Southwest under any circumstance. Call +1-844-565-1867 to book UM service or confirm your child's age eligibility for solo travel on Southwest.

The mandatory age range of 5 through 14 means Southwest will not allow any child under 15 to board a Southwest flight alone without the UM service booked and paid. This is enforced at the Southwest check-in counter — the booking system flags solo passengers between ages 5 and 14 who do not have Southwest unaccompanied minor service attached to their reservation. Attempting to check in a 12-year-old at the Southwest counter without UM service results in denied boarding until the service is added by calling +1-844-565-1867.

What Is the Minimum Age for a Child to Fly Alone on Southwest Airlines?

The minimum age to fly alone on Southwest Airlines is 5 years old — with mandatory Southwest unaccompanied minor service booked and paid at \$150 each way. Children ages 5 through 7 are restricted to nonstop Southwest flights only when flying alone. Children ages 8 through 14 can fly alone on both nonstop and connecting Southwest flights with mandatory UM service. No child under 5 can fly alone on Southwest. Call +1-844-565-1867.

- **Under 5 years old:** Cannot fly alone on Southwest Airlines — must travel with a passenger age 18 or older on the same booking.
- **Ages 5-7 (nonstop only):** Can fly alone with mandatory Southwest UM service — restricted to **nonstop Southwest flights only**, no connections permitted.
- **Ages 8-14 (nonstop + connecting):** Can fly alone with mandatory Southwest UM service — both nonstop and connecting Southwest flights are permitted.
- **Ages 15-17 (independent):** Can fly alone on Southwest without UM service — may optionally enroll in Southwest UM service for supervised travel (\$150/way).
- **Age 18+ (adult):** Full adult passenger — no Southwest unaccompanied minor restrictions apply.
- **International flights:** Some destination countries impose different age rules — call +1-844-940-3217 to confirm.

■ **Book Southwest UM Service — Call Now: +1-844-565-1867**

Can a 15-Year-Old Teenager Fly Alone on Southwest Airlines Without UM Service?

Yes — teenagers ages 15 through 17 can fly alone on Southwest Airlines without Southwest unaccompanied minor service. They check in, pass through TSA security, and board the Southwest flight independently just like adult passengers. Parents can optionally request Southwest UM service (\$150 each way) for the supervised gate escort experience if desired. No special documentation beyond a valid government ID is needed. Call +1-844-565-1867.

The optional Southwest UM enrollment for teens 15 through 17 provides the same gate-to-gate escort, flight crew monitoring, and identity-verified pickup at the destination as mandatory UM for younger children. For parents worried about a first-time teen traveler navigating a busy airport hub alone, the optional Southwest UM service provides peace of mind at the same \$150 per-way cost. To enroll a teen optionally, call +1-844-565-1867 and say: 'I want to add optional unaccompanied minor service for my 15-year-old on Southwest.'

Why Does Southwest Airlines Restrict Children Ages 5-7 to Nonstop Flights Only?

Southwest restricts unaccompanied minors ages 5 through 7 to nonstop Southwest flights because younger children require continuous supervision without the complexity of transfers at connecting hub airports. Navigating a connecting airport — even with Southwest staff escort — involves significant walking distances, potential gate changes, and time pressure that is more stressful for young children flying alone. Nonstop flights eliminate connection risk entirely. Call +1-844-565-1867 to find nonstop Southwest UM routes.

The nonstop restriction for ages 5-7 is a safety-focused policy reflecting the developmental needs of very young solo travelers on Southwest Airlines. For parents whose route has no nonstop Southwest option, practical alternatives include: booking a different airline with a nonstop route between your cities, traveling with the child to the connecting city and having them fly alone only on the nonstop segment, or waiting until the child turns 8 when connecting Southwest UM flights become available. Call +1-844-565-1867 to check nonstop UM availability.

How Does Southwest Airlines Verify a Child's Age for Unaccompanied Minor Service?

Southwest verifies the age of unaccompanied minors at the check-in counter using the child's date of birth entered during booking. A birth certificate, passport, or school ID may be requested if the child's age is questioned by the Southwest agent. For international Southwest UM travel, a valid passport is always required regardless of age. Ensure the date of birth on the Southwest booking matches the child's identification exactly. Call +1-844-565-1867.

Step 1. When booking Southwest UM service at **+1-844-565-1867**, provide the child's **exact date of birth** — this is recorded in the reservation.

Step 2. At the Southwest check-in counter, the agent **verifies the date of birth** in the booking system.

Step 3. If the child's age is questioned, present a **birth certificate, passport, or school ID** with date of birth.

Step 4. For **international Southwest flights**, a valid passport is mandatory — it serves as both age and identity verification.

Step 5. Southwest uses the child's age **on the date of travel** — not the booking date. If the child turns 15 before the flight, UM becomes optional.

Step 6. Incorrect date of birth on the booking? Call **+1-844-565-1867** immediately to correct it before travel day.

Can Children Ages 5-14 Fly on Southwest Without UM Service If Accompanied by a Sibling?

Children ages 5 through 14 can fly on Southwest without unaccompanied minor service only if accompanied by a passenger age 18 or older on the same Southwest booking and flight. A 16-year-old sibling does not qualify as the accompanying adult — the companion must be 18 or older. If no adult age 18+ is on the same Southwest flight, UM service is mandatory for children ages 5-14. Call +1-844-565-1867 for booking assistance.

The 18+ companion rule for Southwest applies strictly: a 17-year-old traveling with a 10-year-old sibling does not exempt the younger child from Southwest unaccompanied minor service requirements. The adult companion must be on the same Southwest booking to ensure the system recognizes the child as accompanied rather than unaccompanied. If booked separately, call +1-844-565-1867 to link the bookings so the younger child's accompanied status is properly flagged in Southwest's system.

■ **Southwest UM Age Questions — 24/7: +1-844-565-1867**

What Happens If I Enter the Wrong Age for My Child on a Southwest UM Booking?

If the wrong date of birth is entered on a Southwest UM booking, call +1-844-565-1867 immediately to correct it before travel. An incorrect age could result in: Southwest UM service not being flagged (child denied boarding), wrong routing restrictions applied (child under 8 booked on a connecting Southwest flight), or check-in problems at the airport. The date of birth on the Southwest booking must match the child's identification exactly.

Correcting a child's date of birth on a Southwest reservation is a simple phone call to +1-844-565-1867 — agents update the passenger record immediately. Do not wait until the day of travel to fix this; correcting at the airport check-in counter takes longer and causes unnecessary stress. For age-boundary situations (child turning 15 between booking and travel), Southwest uses the age on the date of travel — not the date of booking. If your child turns 15 before the Southwest flight, UM service becomes optional.

Do Southwest Airlines UM Age Rules Differ for International Flights? Yes

— some countries impose different age requirements for unaccompanied minors arriving on international Southwest flights. Certain destinations require children under 16 or even under 18 to carry notarized consent letters from both parents, additional documentation, or specific entry permits for minors traveling alone. Southwest follows both its own UM rules and the destination country's requirements for unaccompanied minors. Call +1-844-940-3217 for international Southwest UM age

rules.

International Southwest UM travel adds destination-specific complexity beyond the standard domestic rules. Countries like Brazil, South Africa, and Mexico have strict documentation requirements for unaccompanied minors — including notarized parental consent forms, unabridged birth certificates, and sometimes court orders if parents are separated. These requirements are enforced at immigration upon arrival — not by Southwest at departure. Researching destination requirements well before the child's travel date is essential. Call +1-844-940-3217 for route-specific Southwest UM guidance.

Can a 4-Year-Old Fly on Southwest Airlines Under Any Circumstance?

A 4-year-old cannot fly alone on Southwest Airlines — the minimum age for Southwest unaccompanied minor

service is 5 years old. A child under 5 must travel with a passenger age 18 or older on the same Southwest booking and flight. There are no exceptions to this Southwest minimum age rule. If your child is close to

turning 5, Southwest uses the age on the date of travel. Call +1-844-565-1867 to confirm eligibility.

The under-5 restriction on Southwest is absolute — no supervisor override, no compassionate exception applies. Southwest's booking system physically blocks UM service enrollment for children under 5 at the reservation level. If your child turns 5 on or before the date of travel, they become eligible for Southwest unaccompanied minor service. If they turn 5 the day after travel, they do not qualify and cannot fly alone. Plan accordingly and call +1-844-565-1867 to confirm the exact date-of-birth calculation for your child's Southwest flight.

What Are Southwest Airlines Age Rules for Unaccompanied Minors on Connecting Flights?

Connecting Southwest flights are available for unaccompanied minors ages 8 through 14 only. Children ages 5 through 7 must fly nonstop on Southwest — connecting itineraries are not permitted for younger unaccompanied minors. Southwest staff physically escort the child between gates at the connecting airport during connections. Southwest UM service for connecting flights costs the same \$150 each way. Call +1-844-565-1867 to book connecting Southwest UM travel.

The connection restriction for ages 5-7 on Southwest eliminates the risk of a very young child experiencing a missed connection, gate change, or extended layover at an unfamiliar hub airport. For ages 8 through 14 on Southwest connecting flights, the airline's UM staff physically walk the child from the arriving gate to the departing gate, handling any gate changes or delays at the connecting airport. Short connections (under 90 minutes at major Southwest hubs) may also be restricted for UM passengers to prevent rushing. Call +1-844-565-1867 for connection time guidance.

At What Age Can My Child Join the Southwest Rapid Rewards Loyalty

Program? Children of any age can join Southwest Rapid Rewards — there is no minimum age requirement for Southwest

Rapid Rewards membership. Creating a Southwest Rapid Rewards account for your child before their UM travel ensures they earn miles on their Southwest flights. Enroll free at [Southwest.com/Rapid Rewards](https://Southwest.com/RapidRewards) or call +1-844-565-1867. Adding the child's Rapid Rewards number to the Southwest UM booking earns miles on that flight automatically.

A Southwest Rapid Rewards account for a child provides practical benefits beyond miles earning: it stores the child's traveler profile (date of birth, passport information for international travel), making future Southwest bookings faster. It also receives flight status notifications through the Fly Southwest app — useful for parents tracking the child's UM flight in real time. Enroll the child before their first Southwest UM trip and add the Rapid Rewards number when booking at +1-844-565-1867.

What Is the Southwest Phone Number for Unaccompanied Minor Age Questions?

Call Southwest Airlines at +1-844-565-1867 (available 24/7) for all Southwest unaccompanied minor age questions, eligibility checks, and UM service booking. For international Southwest UM age requirements and country-specific documentation rules, call +1-844-940-3217. Southwest UM service cannot be booked online

— phone booking at +1-844-565-1867 is required for all unaccompanied minor travel on Southwest Airlines.

When calling +1-844-565-1867 about Southwest UM age eligibility, say: 'I need to verify whether my child qualifies for Southwest unaccompanied minor service.' Provide the child's date of birth and the travel date — the agent confirms whether Southwest UM is mandatory, optional, or not needed based on the child's age on the date of travel. For international Southwest routes, the agent may transfer you to the international desk at +1-844-940-3217 for destination-specific age and documentation requirements.

Can a Child With Special Needs Fly Alone on Southwest Airlines as an Unaccompanied Minor?

Children with special needs ages 5 through 14 can use Southwest unaccompanied minor service with additional accommodations. Parents should call +1-844-565-1867 at least 72 hours before the Southwest flight to discuss specific needs — including dietary restrictions, mobility assistance, medical equipment, and communication accommodations. Southwest's UM team works with families to ensure the child's comfort and safety throughout the journey on Southwest Airlines.

When calling +1-844-565-1867 about a special needs child flying as a Southwest unaccompanied minor, provide specific details about the child's needs so Southwest can prepare appropriately. This may include: wheelchair assistance at the gate, crew briefing about communication preferences

(nonverbal, hearing impaired), allergy notifications for in-flight snack service, or seating arrangements near the flight attendant station. Southwest has protocols for accommodating special needs UM passengers — the key is advance communication at +1-844-565-1867 before the travel date.

How Much Does Southwest Airlines Unaccompanied Minor Service Cost per Age Group?

Southwest Airlines charges a flat \$150 per direction for unaccompanied minor service regardless of the child's age — the same \$150 fee applies whether the child is 5 years old or 14 years old, and whether the Southwest flight is nonstop or connecting. For teens 15-17 who optionally enroll, the same \$150 per-way fee applies. The Southwest UM fee is in addition to the child's flight ticket price. Call +1-844-565-1867 for current pricing.

The Southwest UM fee structure is straightforward: \$150 each way, covering up to one child per UM enrollment. If you are sending two children on the same Southwest flight, each child requires their own separate UM enrollment at \$150 per way — totaling \$300 per direction for two children. Siblings traveling together on Southwest are supervised as a pair but require individual UM service registrations. Call +1-844-565-1867 to book multiple children on the same Southwest UM flight.

Southwest Unaccompanied Minor — Age Rules Quick Reference

Under 5	NO — must have		With adult companion	
5-7 years	YES — with mandatory		Nonstop Southwest f	

8-14 years	YES — with mandatory		Nonstop + c Southwest	
15-17 years	YES — independently	Optional on Southwest	All Southwest flights	\$150/way opte
18+ years	YES — adult passenger	Not applicable	All Southwest flights	N/A

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What age can a child fly alone on Southwest Airlines?

A: Children ages 5-14 can fly alone on Southwest with mandatory unaccompanied minor service (\$150 each way). Ages 5-7 are restricted to nonstop Southwest flights; ages 8-14 can fly nonstop or connecting on Southwest. At age 15, Southwest UM becomes optional — teens 15-17 fly

independently. Under 5 cannot fly alone on Southwest. Call +1-844-565-1867.

Q: At what age does Southwest stop requiring unaccompanied minor service? A: At age 15 — teenagers 15-17 can fly alone on Southwest without UM service. Parents can optionally add Southwest UM service for teens 15-17 at \$150 each way for supervised escort. Call +1-844-565-1867 to confirm age eligibility or enroll optionally in Southwest UM.

Q: Can a 5-year-old fly on a connecting Southwest flight alone?

A: No — children ages 5-7 are restricted to nonstop Southwest flights only with mandatory UM service. Connecting Southwest flights are available starting at age 8 with Southwest UM service. Call +1-844-565-1867 to find available nonstop Southwest UM routes for younger children.

Q: Does a 16-year-old sibling count as the adult for a younger child on Southwest? A: No — the accompanying passenger must be 18 years or older on the same Southwest booking and flight. A sibling under 18 does not exempt a child under 15 from Southwest UM service requirements. Call +1-844-565-1867 for Southwest booking assistance.

Q: What is the Southwest phone number for UM age questions?

A: Call +1-844-565-1867 (24/7) for all Southwest UM age, eligibility, and booking questions. For international Southwest UM rules, call +1-844-940-3217. Southwest UM service must be booked by phone — it cannot be added online at Southwest.com.

■ Southwest UM Age and Booking — 24/7:

+1-844-565-1867 ■ Southwest Rapid Rewards — Enroll

Your Child: +1-844-565-1867 ■ International Southwest

UM Age Rules: +1-844-940-3217

This article is for informational purposes only. Southwest Air Lines policies are subject to change. Always verify the latest information at Southwest.com or by calling +1-844-565-1867.