Christmas fares bottom out about now. Here's how to book them.

The booking window, the cheapest days to fly, and what Black Friday really means for your trip.



THE CLOCK Google's data puts the cheapest Christmas fares 56 days before departure. For a Dec. 25 flight, that is today. Its low-price window runs 33 to 67 days out, so for Christmas Day it closes Nov. 22[1].

56 days

Cheapest for Christmas

Google Flights: lowest fares come about 56 days out, in a 33 to 67 day window[1]

$452

Average Christmas fare

Hopper: domestic round trip, up 23% from last year. Thanksgiving: $402, up 31%[2]

14%

Monday out, Tuesday back

Leaving Monday and returning Tuesday or Wednesday saves about 14% over weekend flights[1]

Nov. 30

Go Well comes out

31 days from today. Cyber Monday, and Leah's second field guide[7]

WHEN TO BOOK

Your window, by trip

TRIP	CHEAPEST	WINDOW	2026 DATES
Thanksgiving, Nov. 26	34 days	21 to 57	Sep. 30 to Nov. 5
Christmas, Dec. 25	56 days	33 to 67	**Oct. 19 to Nov. 22**
Mexico or Caribbean, Dec. 20	43 days	24 to 69	Oct. 12 to Nov. 26
Europe, any date	90 days	49+	Book now

Google Flights, five years of U.S. departures[1]. Dates are counted back from Nov. 26, Dec. 25 and Dec. 20.

- **Expedia's deadlines:** Thanksgiving domestic by Nov. 5. Christmas domestic by Nov. 10, and international by Dec. 1[3].
- **Hopper says book before Halloween**[4]. The Points Guy: if a fare fits your budget, book it, and set alerts if it doesn't[8].

GETTING THERE

The cheapest days to fly

- **Thanksgiving:** leave Monday or Tuesday, not Wednesday, and skip the Sunday return[2]. Expedia's cheapest average: out Mon., Nov. 23, back Thanksgiving Day[3].
- **Christmas:** Expedia's cheapest average is out Dec. 24 and back Mon., Dec. 28[3]. Hopper says avoid Dec. 18 to 20 and Dec. 27[2].
- **Domestic:** Sunday out and back can cost up to 20% more than Monday out and Tuesday or Wednesday back[1].
- **Connections beat nonstops:** nonstop tickets cost 20% more on average[1].
- **Two one-ways** on different airlines can save up to 29% on domestic trips, per KAYAK[3].

BLACK FRIDAY WEEK

What the sales are

- Black Friday is Nov. 27, Cyber Monday Nov. 30, Travel Tuesday Dec. 1. Offers often run a week or more[5].
- Most sale fares are for travel from January to May[6]. Use them for winter and spring trips, not Christmas.

BEFORE YOU BUY

Check the real price

- Add bags and seat fees before you compare.
- Shift your dates a day or two and see what changes.
- Not every route gets a discount. Don't book just because it looks like a deal[5].

FOR SUMMER

Start watching now

- Set price alerts for a summer trip today[5].
- Google says waiting rarely pays for Europe, so a Cyber week fare is worth comparing[1].

THIS WEEK'S CHECKLIST

- [ ] Pick your dates and open Google Flights for your route[1].
- [ ] Price Monday out and Tuesday or Wednesday back[1].
- [ ] Compare nonstop with one connection, and two one-ways[1,3].
- [ ] Set an alert for any trip you haven't booked[5].
- [ ] Add bags and seats to the fare before you decide[5].



FROM GO WELL · 31 DAYS TO GO

Plan summer while everyone books Christmas

Real itineraries and real prices. Leah's Barcelona to Mallorca flight was $97, plus $45 in bag fees.

Kindle pre-order $4.99 through Nov. 24.

Paperback and hardcover Nov. 30. Free Summer Trip Planner with pre-order: **leah.travel/gowell**

1. Google, holiday travel trends (Oct. 5): blog.google/products-and-platforms/products/search/holiday-travel-trends-2026
2. Matador, Hopper and Google data (Oct. 20): matadornetwork.com/read/best-time-book-holiday-flights-2026
3. USA Today, Expedia, KAYAK and Hopper (Oct. 2): usatoday.com/story/travel/airline-news/2026/10/02/holiday-travel-airfare-deals-tips
4. Afar, when to book holiday flights (Oct. 22): afar.com/magazine/when-to-book-holiday-flights-to-get-the-best-deal
5. Skyscanner, Black Friday flight deals: skyscanner.com/flights/advice/find-black-friday-flight-deals
6. Skyscanner, the truth about Travel Tuesday: skyscanner.com.au/flights/advice/the-truth-about-travel-tuesday
7. Go Well: leah.travel/gowell
8. The Points Guy, when to book flights: thepointsguy.com/airline/best-time-to-book-a-flight

Fares, booking windows and sale dates as of Oct. 29. They change by route and by day, so check live prices before you book.