

This page tells you about the current Covid-19 tests available for travel, and what they mean for you.

As the world opens up again, it's more important than ever that we travel responsibly and stay committed to stopping the spread of coronavirus - so that we can enjoy getting back to the places and faces we've missed so much.

Pre-departure testing

Many of our destinations have testing requirements in place to make sure customers and crew are symptom-free and safe to fly.

Find out the [specific requirements for the country you are travelling to here](#) →

If the country you're travelling to requires evidence of a negative Covid-19 test, you'll most likely need either a PCR or LAMP test.

It's important to check whether a self-test is ok (where you carry out the swab yourself) or if they need you to have been tested by a clinician at a designated location. If you don't have the correct test, you may not be allowed to travel.

There are lots of companies offering PCR tests, but our Medical, Health and Safety team can recommend the following:

Our recommended PCR and LAMP Covid-19 testing suppliers

Boots (in select stores nationwide)

Boots are pleased to announce that their PCR testing service is now available in 93 stores nationwide and we will expand further in the New Year with both PCR testing sites and a wider range of diagnostics. A PCR test costs £120.00.

[View stores where testing is available and book a test](#) →

binx health (Self-test kits)

Binx health provides a quick and easy Covid-19 PCR testing service.

Their test uses a self-collected throat/nasal swab, which is delivered directly to your home and once returned via contact-less courier service, is followed by a PCR test carried out in the laboratory.

Once the laboratory has completed your test you will receive your Safe to Travel test certificate and you can get ready to travel! Their service is fully inclusive making it easy to order, collect and send back your sample without even leaving home.

Visit the binx health website →

Collinson (onsite testing at London Heathrow and Manchester Airport)

We're pleased to be working closely with Collinson to provide customers pre-travel testing onsite at London Heathrow Terminal 2 and Manchester Airport. Currently this type of test is only available for customers travelling to select locations, so please ensure to check the requirements before you travel. If you've not already made plans for your testing, you can use this service before check in.

The test available is a 'Covid-19 RT-Lamp'.

Upon arrival at the testing centre, you'll be taken to a booth where a registered nurse will perform a nose and throat swab. It will take no more than 3 minutes.

Click 'Not a member' to set up an account. You can book a test from 4 hours before your scheduled time of departure. The latest you can carry out your test is 2 hours 45 minutes before your scheduled time of departure.

If you haven't managed to pre-book, you can still book a last-minute appointment providing you arrive at the airport at least 3 hours before your scheduled time of departure.

Your test results will be available in a sealed envelope at the testing centre approximately 80 minutes after having taken your test. You'll receive an email to let you know when you can pick the results up.

Book online in advance before you arrive at the airport here →

Melio Health (clinician test locations)

Melio Health's COVID-19 PCR Swab Test includes a medical review and Fit-To-Fly certificate in 2 business days

The swab test is carried out in a clinic by a trained health professional

[Book online with Melio Health here →](#)

Screen4 (Self-test kits and clinician test locations)

Screen4 offer both self-test kits sent by post, or a number of locations for clinician testing. Please check the Screen4 website for the latest available locations.

The test will tell you if you are positive or negative for Coronavirus (Covid-19). The PCR test can be performed at home by yourself or Screen4 can arrange for a clinician to carry this out for you (location dependent).

The test requires taking a swab from the throat and nose, this sample will then be sent to laboratory for analysis using the polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

It takes 24-48 hours to return the result once the laboratory receives the sample back. This result will be used to form the certification that you require to travel and will be sent to you via email. Please note result reporting times can be up to midnight the next working day.

Reporting times may differ over weekends and bank holidays.

Screen4 will provide you with a 24 hour tracked returns envelope to ensure your sample gets to the lab on time.

[Visit the Screen4 website →](#)

We will continue to rigorously monitor and evaluate Covid-19 testing suppliers for departures to and from the UK. Remember to check in advance whether your destination will accept self tests, or if you need to be tested by a medical practitioner in person

Test to Release for international travel

From the 15th December, international arrivals to the UK will be able to reduce their quarantine period with a negative Covid-19 test taken after 5 days self-isolation.

For customers arriving from destinations not included in the government's [travel corridors list](#), this means you will have the opportunity to reduce the mandatory 10-day quarantine period to 5 days with a negative test result.

Before returning to the UK, you'll be asked to indicate your intention to take a test on the mandatory 'Passenger Locator Form', including evidence of your booked test. You'll need to book your test before returning to the UK, and before completing the Passenger Locator Form.

You can find more information on the UK Government scheme [here](#)

We are pleased to have partnered with suppliers who have been accredited by the UK Government to provide testing to reduce quarantine, including some with preferential rates for Virgin Atlantic customers.

Our recommended Test to Release providers

Collinson

Book a test with Collinson →

Screen4

Screen4 provide both self-testing kits and on-location clinician tests

Self-tests →

Clinician tests →

The different types of Covid-19 screening:

Molecular or Genetic tests (PCR & LAMP)

'Molecular' or 'genetic' tests are some of the most accurate forms of screening for Covid-19.

PCR and LAMP tests look for the presence of genetic material which is specific and unique to Covid-19.

PCR tests are usually carried out by swabbing your throat or nose, and then posting it off to a lab for analysis, with the results returned to you within 48 hours of your sample being received. LAMP tests are typically conducted onsite and results can be returned in no more than a couple of hours.

Temperature screening

Temperature screening, often using a hand-held 'gun', or a walk-through thermal imaging device, can be used to determine if you have a temperature or fever, which is one of the UK Government identified symptoms of Covid-19.

Whilst this approach is a quick and efficient way of screening lots of customers, it will not definitively show if you have Covid-19, and is often used as an indicator for further, more accurate testing.

We currently have temperature checks in place on some routes, including those departing London Heathrow.

Antibody tests

An antibody test does not check whether you currently have Covid-19, but can tell you if you have antibodies in your blood from having previously fought off the Covid-19 infection.

While test results can be turned around very quickly, antibody testing is not typically used to screen people before they travel to other countries.