

Ryanair

Which carry-on bags beat the new rules?

The airline is amending its baggage policy yet again. **Patrick Collinson** reports on what passengers can take on board from November

Ryanair is introducing yet another baggage policy, just months after the last one flopped because it caused plane turnaround times to stall, as wheelie bags piled up on the tarmac. The new rules are tougher and mean passengers will have to pay at least an extra £12 return unless their bag can be pushed under the seat in front. So here is our guide to what the new rules are and the sort of bags that should - with a push and a shove - meet Ryanair's latest demands.

What is the current policy on baggage?

All customers can bring on board one standard-sized wheelie bag plus a small carry-on free of charge. But unless passengers have bought priority boarding (£6), the wheelie bag is tagged at the gate and put in the hold. Most travellers have been happy with this, but it has meant that as many as 120 bags have been left waiting on the tarmac to be loaded onto the plane. This has caused significant delays, with ground staff often not immediately available to load them.

What is the new rule?

From 1 November, passengers who have not bought priority

boarding will only be able to bring on board a small carry-on bag, not a wheelie. Instead, the latter will have to be checked in at the airport for £8 (if purchased at booking) or £10. That means customers will have to suffer the hassle of queuing at the Ryanair check-in desks in the airport before going through security. But it does mean they will not have to worry so much about liquids being less than 100ml and it will speed up security screening.

Should I buy priority boarding?

Yes, if you are keen to take a wheelie bag (10kg maximum) with you. Priority-boarding customers will still be able to take on two free bags (one small carry-on plus one wheelie bag). Priority boarding costs £6 each way. Importantly, Ryanair will only allow a maximum of 95 (out of 189 potential passengers per plane) to buy priority boarding. Once this is sold out, customers will have to check their bag in before security, at a cost of £16-£20 return. The airline is hoping that many more travellers will opt for the priority option when they purchase their flight.

What if I turn up with a wheelie bag at the gate without priority boarding?

The airline will not let you board with the wheelie bag and you

will have to pay £20-£25 at the gate to have it tagged and put in the hold.

What is the biggest carry-on bag I can still take?

If you are determined not to pay extra, you can only bring a bag that can be tucked under the seat in front of you. Previously, Ryanair said that meant a bag with maximum dimensions of 35cm x 20cm x 20cm. But, from 1 November, this will increase to 40cm x 25cm x 20cm. An industry of Ryanair-approved small bags sprang up to meet the old baggage requirements and, no doubt, these are now being rapidly revised to meet the new standards.

I have a small rucksack just a little larger than that. Will I get away with it?

Some gate staff in the past were almost gleeful at rejecting oversized bags and it remains to be seen if those days will return. Airline employees are likely to be looking out for anything with wheels or hard sides, as these are unlikely to fit under seats. The key will be to make sure that your bag, if it is larger than the permitted dimensions, has soft sides and is not overpacked, so it can be squeezed under the seat.