



| THE PLANE TRUTH

Passengers fed up with airlines' performance; analysis of DOT data shows complaints quadruple, cancellations soar

U.S. PIRG
Education Fund

The Plane Truth

**Passengers fed up with airlines' performance;
analysis of DOT data shows complaints quadruple, cancellations soar**

WRITTEN BY:

TERESA MURRAY

**CONSUMER WATCHDOG
U.S. PIRG EDUCATION FUND**

MARCH 2023



I ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

U.S. PIRG Education Fund thanks our donors for supporting our work on consumer protection and public health issues and for making this report possible.

The author wishes to thank the following for editorial support: Tony Dutzik, Associate Director and Senior Policy Analyst, Frontier Group and John Rumpler, Senior Director, Clean Water for America Campaign and Senior Attorney, Environment America Research & Policy Center.

The author bears responsibility for any factual errors. Policy recommendations are those of U.S. PIRG Education Fund. The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders or those who provided review.

2023 U.S. PIRG Education Fund. Some Rights Reserved. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

With public debate around important issues often dominated by special interests pursuing their own narrow agendas, U.S. PIRG Education Fund offers an independent voice that works on behalf of the public interest. U.S. PIRG Education Fund, a 501(c)3 organization, works to protect consumers and promote good government. We investigate problems, craft solutions, educate the public and offer meaningful opportunities for civic participation. For more information about U.S. PIRG Education Fund or for additional copies of this report, please visit www.uspirgedfund.org.

Cover Image: anyaberkut via 123rf.com

| CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
CHRISTMAS MELTDOWN CAPPED A YEAR OF INCREASED CANCELLATIONS ...	4
The best and worst cancellation records	5
An overview of 18 months' worth of cancellations.....	6
Cancellations by year, 2001 to 2022	7
COMPLAINTS QUADRUPLED IN 2022	8
Refunds is again a top complaint	9
Complaints surged against third-party travel websites	9
New DOT rules would define a significant delay as three hours.....	10
ON-TIME ARRIVALS DECLINED IN 2022	11
The best and worst on-time records	11
BAGGAGE LOST, DAMAGED OR PILFERED	12
BUMPING GETS WORSE	13
WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?	14
DOT's new customer service dashboards help travelers	14
A look at specific airlines' customer-friendly policies	15
Proposals at DOT and in Congress	16
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	17
HELP FOR PASSENGERS	18
TIPS FOR CONSUMERS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES	19
METHODOLOGY	23
APPENDIX	25
OVERALL # AND % OF CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. MARKETING CARRIERS 2022 ...	25
OVERALL # AND % OF CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. OPERATING CARRIERS.2022	26
OVERALL % -- ARRIVING ON-TIME: U.S. MARKETING CARRIERS 2022	27
OVERALL % -- ARRIVING ON-TIME: U.S. OPERATING CARRIERS 2022	28
CAUSES OF DELAY, BY REPORTING MARKETING CARRIER.....	29

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The number of people who flew in 2022 on U.S. airlines remain below pre-pandemic 2019 levels. But consumer complaints about air travel nearly quadrupled compared with 2019. And that's *before* the final tally of the flood of December complaints.

Refunds – or the lack of – again topped the list of airline complaints for the first 11 months of 2022, but the volume of refund complaints fell significantly compared with 2021. Refund complaints, however, were still more than 10 times higher than in 2019 – again before counting December 2022 refund complaints.

Meanwhile, in a year when we started trying to get back to pre-pandemic “normal,” the airline industry wasn’t ready. Nearly every major holiday and travel period last year was marred by cancellations. Now, the industry is gearing up for the busiest travel season in four years, [with 78 million passengers projected in April](#).

Over all of 2022, airlines canceled 190,038 flights in the United States, or 2.7% of all scheduled flights.⁽¹⁾ And 1.44 million more flights – 20.6% – were delayed. This is according to just-released data from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Setting aside 2020, last year we saw the highest number of cancellations since 2001. That year, air travel was disrupted by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks; the skies were [empty for days](#) and quieter than normal for months after.

As a result, consumer complaints about cancellations and delays for January through November 2022 tripled compared with all of 2019.

It’s no wonder since both the number of cancellations and cancellation rates last year increased over both 2021 and 2019.

Likewise, airlines mishandled nearly 3 million bags, wheelchairs or scooters last year.⁽²⁾ This lost, damaged, delayed or pilfered baggage represents problems with a higher percentage of checked bags than in 2021 or 2019.

These are the key takeaways of an analysis of Department of Transportation (DOT) data by U.S. PIRG Education Fund. The DOT two weeks ago released its air travel report for 2022, with information about cancellations, on-time arrivals, bumping, lost and damaged luggage and wheelchairs, and more.

¹ For the 10 largest airlines and their marketing partners, which make up more than 95% of domestic scheduled passenger air traffic.

² The number of bags enplaned in DOT data

“represent the total number of checked bags enplaned, including wheelchairs and scooters that were placed into the aircraft cargo compartment for any reportable domestic nonstop scheduled passenger flight.”

The monthly reports also normally include details about complaints filed by consumers. For the first time in at least 25 years, however, the DOT's year-end report did not include complaint data.⁽³⁾ The reason? After the Christmas weekend airline meltdown, there were simply too many complaints for DOT to tally, [the agency said](#). The 2022 complaint data is expected to be released sometime in April.

In a nutshell, just about everything negative got worse in 2022: complaints, cancellations, delays, involuntary bumping and baggage handling – all while the number of air travelers for the full year of 2022 was below 2019 levels.

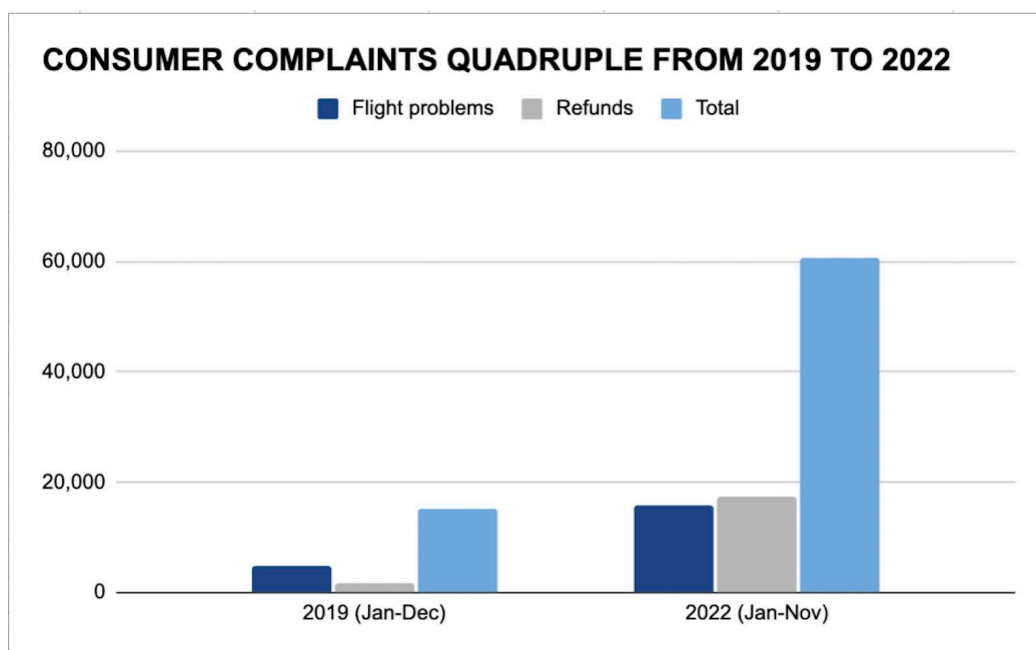
The backdrop of all of this is, of course, the

BOARDED PASSENGERS BY YEAR

2022:	799,692,821
2021:	648,253,862
2020:	322,277,667
2019:	886,614,224
2018:	849,245,271

SOURCE: DOT

pandemic. When COVID-19 exploded in March 2020 – three years ago this month – the airline industry collapsed, understandably. In the early months of the pandemic, most people didn't want to fly unnecessarily and, even if they did, virtually all events that people might travel to were canceled anyway.



2022 was the first sort-of normal travel year since 2019. The volume of airline passengers in 2022 remained below 2019 levels, but total complaints quadrupled, even before December complaint totals are released. The 2019 total was 15,342. The 2022 total so far was 60,732.

³ Year-end data was in every Air Travel Consumer Report going back to the February 1999 report for 1998. The year-end data for

1997, if it was included, would have been in the February 1998 report. The Air Travel Consumer Reports online go back to only March 1998.

Some airlines could have quickly gone out of business if not for the [\\$54 billion lifeline](#) from the U.S. government – our tax dollars – aimed at keeping the airlines afloat and covering their payroll for 18 months, through September 2021. The catch: The airlines were instructed not to lay off any employees. Instead, however, many of the companies offered [early retirements](#) and [lucrative buyout](#) packages.

So when air travel started rebounding after COVID vaccines became widely available in 2021, most of the airlines weren't quite ready, particularly regarding staffing. In February 2020, before the pandemic declaration, passenger airlines employed 458,229 full-time equivalent employees. By October 2020, that number had plunged 20% to 366,115 and didn't rebound to pre-pandemic levels until nearly two years later, in July 2022.

EMPLOYEES WITH PASSENGER AIRLINES:

FEB. 2020: 458,229

OCT. 2020: 366,115

SOURCE:DOT

The lower number of employees doesn't even reflect staffing levels that were disrupted when workers were off unexpectedly because they had COVID or had to care for a child whose school was shut down. And it doesn't reflect the [shortage of pilots](#), which existed before the pandemic and just got worse.

The effects of all of this can be measured in the complaints filed with the DOT and performance data tracked by DOT. Our analysis shows the industry and regulators both have a lot of work to do.

Lisa Sands could give them some advice. The Ohio marketing executive and her husband returned from a "bucket list" 10-day trip to Europe just before Christmas. Their connecting flight from Newark, like thousands of others on Dec. 23, was canceled. They finally got home on Dec. 27, but only because they got a one-way car rental from New Jersey, she told U.S. PIRG Education Fund.

They weren't mad that their initial flight was canceled. Or even their second. They were beyond frustrated that United Airlines was of little help.

United kept Sands on hold for eight hours, lost track of the couple's luggage and gave her the runaround about rebooking or refunds, blaming its partner airline and the third-party the couple booked their travel through. Sands and her husband got home four days late and nearly \$2,000 poorer. She's not sure which category to file her complaint under – there are so many choices.

Unfortunately, tales like Sands' are not uncommon. If there's a silver lining to the Christmas mess, it's that it's shining a bright spotlight on problems that have existed for years. The DOT in recent months has proposed several new consumer protections and Congress may take up some issues as well. Relief for weary travelers can't come soon enough.

As many Americans gear up for airline travel over the Easter holiday and summer vacation season, there's reason to wonder when -- or if -- air travel will return to the higher standards we enjoyed before the pandemic.

CHRISTMAS MELTDOWN CAPPED A YEAR OF INCREASED CANCELLATIONS

Back in Ohio, Sands' experience checks almost all of the boxes of the airline industry's very bad awful no good year. Or three bad years. Poor customer service and poor communication? Check. Multiple canceled flights? Sure. Lost bags? Yup. Unwillingness to accept any responsibility? Definitely.

For all that Sands and her husband dealt with, she hasn't yet followed through yet with a DOT complaint. When the Ohio couple first got back from their two weeks away in December, they were trying to catch up on the Christmas they missed with their family and friends. And they were mentally exhausted. And then the holidays were over and it was time to go back to work.

The Christmas weekend meltdown for millions of travelers – with more than 25,000 flights canceled from Dec. 22 through Dec. 29 – was just the latest nightmare that millions of travelers would like to forget. Those were the bulk of the 31,187 flights canceled in December.

The biggest problems in 2022 were refunds, and cancellations and delays.

For all of 2022, **190,038** flights were canceled in the United States, or **2.7% of all scheduled flights**. Keep in mind: That figure includes only flights canceled within seven days before the planned departure date.

AIRLINE CANCELLATIONS BY YEAR

2022: 190,038

2021: 111,018

2020: 301,055

2019: 153,629

Flights that get scrubbed more than seven days ahead of time are considered “discontinued flights.” So while a flight that gets canned eight or 10 days before your trip might be a hassle to rebook – possibly facing higher prices or no available seats – it doesn't count against the airline.

This little-known fact about “discontinued” flights had been kept largely under wraps until cancellations started becoming such an enormous problem last year.

William McGee is one veteran of the airline industry and consumer advocacy who was blindsided by a DOT disclosure that flights that are canceled aren't really considered by DOT to be canceled if they're canceled more than seven days before departure.

“I was blown away. I've been around the industry for 38 years. I always, always believed for all of these years that discontinued flights were rolled into cancellations,” said McGee, a senior fellow for aviation and Travel at the American Economic Liberties Project who was with Consumer Reports for 22 years.

“The worst part of it is (discontinued flights” are not captured at all,” McGee added. “That part is really disturbing.”

McGee, who was invited last week to speak at a Senate hearing on enhancing airline passenger protections, said it’s unacceptable to not use the dictionary definition of “cancellation” for flights that don’t happen. “If we don’t even know how many cancellations there are, how can we possibly fix it?”

The DOT does track cancellation rates for individual airlines, as well as delays for airlines and individual airports.

If the flight you booked two months ago for a vacation that starts this weekend is removed from the airline's schedule (canceled), you get a refund, of course. But that may not make you whole if you have to rebook your flight and prices have increased because it's a last-minute reservation.

With that as a backdrop, DOT reports the cancellation rate was much worse for December 2022, not surprisingly. That month, the top 10 airlines canceled a total of 31,187 flights, or 5.4.%.

About 17,000 of those were from Southwest – an eye-popping 15% of its flights. Alaska canceled nearly 8% of flights, while Allegiant canceled 5%.

Over the last nearly two years, the airlines have pointed the finger at bad weather, COVID variants, [space shuttle launches](#) and [air traffic controllers](#). Anything but themselves.

AIRLINES WITH THE LOWEST CANCELLATION PERCENTAGES IN 2022

At or below industry average

Hawaiian Airlines: 0.92%

Delta: 2%

Alaska: 2.2%

United: 2.7%

AIRLINES WITH THE HIGHEST CANCELLATION PERCENTAGES IN 2022

JetBlue: 3.7%

Allegiant: 3.5%

Southwest: 3.3%

Spirit: 3%

Frontier: 2.9%

American: 2.8%

The Christmas calamity was the worst travel disruption in recent memory, but there have been many others. Consider this incomplete list of travel periods marred by cancellations and delays during an 18-month period:

June 2021: Southwest Airlines [said operations were disrupted because of technology](#) issues. Hundreds of flights canceled and thousands delayed -- half of Southwest's flights in one day.

July-August 2021: Spirit Airlines [canceled nearly 3,000 flights](#) during an 11-day stretch.

July-August 2021: [American Airlines canceled](#) hundreds of flights. It blamed weather, but it wasn't just weather.

October 2021: Southwest [canceled more than 2,000 flights](#) over a four-day period, [costing the airline \\$75 million](#).

October-November 2021: American Airlines, the nation's largest carrier, [canceled more than 2,300 flights](#) over a period of several days.

Christmas 2021: [Thousands of flights](#) were canceled or delayed, mostly because employees called out sick. United said it had to cancel hundreds of flights because it didn't have enough crew members to operate them.

Spring break 2022: During the first weekend in April, a heavy spring break travel weekend, [more than 3,400 airline flights were canceled](#).

Memorial Day 2022: [2,800 flights canceled](#), with Delta Air Lines leading the way.

Juneteenth and Father's Day weekend 2022: This included the busiest air travel day of the year to that point: [More than 3,300 flight cancellations](#) from Friday to Monday.

July 4 weekend 2022: [More than 2,200 U.S. flights canceled](#), and 23,000 more delayed.

Labor Day weekend 2022: [Hundreds of flights were canceled](#) and thousands were delayed.

Christmas 2022: More than [12,000 flights were canceled](#) Dec. 21 through 24, and more than [25,000 flights](#) were canceled in the two weeks after, as the airlines caught up.

On an annual basis, here are the total cancellations for the 10 largest airlines and their [marketing partner airlines](#). They make up more than 95% of domestic passenger air traffic.

AIRLINE CANCELLATIONS

BY YEAR

2022: 190,038

2021: 111,018

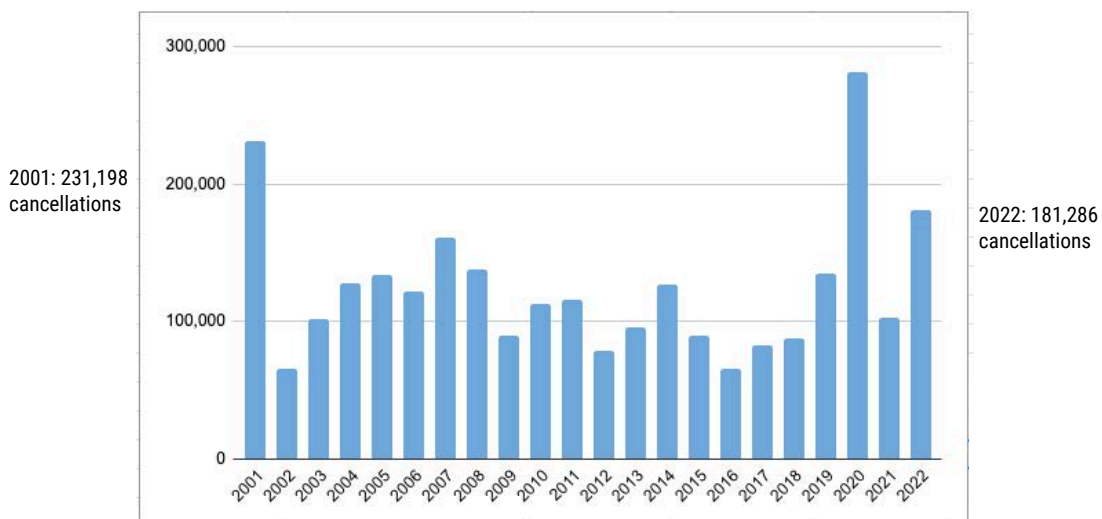
2020: 301,055

2019: 153,629

Looking just at all of the [largest airlines](#), defined as U.S. airlines with at least 0.5% of domestic passenger revenue, here are the number and percentage of cancellations. (The number of airlines counted varies by year; it ranged from 14 to 17 airlines during the last 10 years.)

2022:	181,286	2.7%	2011:	115,978	1.9%
2021:	103,060	1.7%	2010:	113,255	1.8%
2020:	281,034	6%	2009:	89,377	1.4%
2019:	134,925	1.8%	2008:	137,431	2%
2018:	87,839	1.4%	2007:	160,809	2.2%
2017:	82,693	1.5%	2006:	121,934	1.7%
2016:	65,861	1.2%	2005:	133,730	1.9%
2015:	89,884	1.5%	2004:	127,757	1.8%
2014:	126,984	2.2%	2003:	101,469	1.6%
2013:	96,012	1.5%	2002:	65,143	1.2%
2012:	78,862	1.3%	2001:	231,198	3.9%

CANCELLATIONS INCREASE IN 2022



Setting aside 2020, we had the highest number of airline cancellations last year since 2001.

SOURCE: DOT

| COMPLAINTS QUADRUPLLED IN 2022

All of those cancellations and delays lead to unhappy travelers. And they get more upset when they have difficulty getting refunds for those canceled flights, get treated poorly, have their bags get lost – all while [ticket prices have soared](#).

When travelers aren't happy, they have recourse: [Filing a complaint](#) with the DOT, but only *after* they've tried to resolve their issue with the airline or whoever they think is responsible. Airlines are then required to acknowledge complaints within 30 days and respond in writing within 60 days.

There have certainly been a lot of complaints to respond to.

In 2019, the last normal year before the pandemic, travelers filed 9,547 complaints against all U.S. airlines. In 2022, that more than tripled, to 33,647 for January through November 2022.

When you add in complaints against foreign airlines, third-party booking sites, travel agents and others, the total in 2019 was 15,342. That skyrocketed to 60,732 for January through November 2022 – a fourfold increase even before the December avalanche is added in.

Keep in mind this doesn't reflect all of the travelers who actually had problems. It only reflects the ones who couldn't get their issue

resolved and then took the time to file a formal complaint.

Ann Evans of Texas did file a complaint. The information technology professional booked a round-trip ticket through American Airlines to Amsterdam in August 2021. She has a metal rod in her leg, so she booked a business class seat for the extra legroom. "I paid for business class because I find coach extremely tortuous," she said.

Everything was fine until the last segment of the trip, from Philadelphia to Dallas. American put her in coach, which has less legroom. She was miserable.

This represents an "involuntary downgrade" of service. [DOT rules say](#):

"A consumer is entitled to a refund if the consumer was involuntarily moved to a lower class of service. For example, if the consumer purchased a first-class ticket and was downgraded to economy class due to an aircraft swap, the consumer is owed the difference in fares."

The coach seat cost less than the business class seat. She calculated the difference in the prices for business class and coach in November 2021: \$250. She complained to American. The airline initially refused to offer any refund for the service downgrade. She followed up; they offered a \$250 credit. She has no plans to travel anywhere anytime soon; she wants money back.

She filed a complaint with the DOT in September 2022, a process which automatically requires the airline to respond. American then offered to extend her credit through the end of 2023. American isn't hearing her and while she notified her FAA complaint agent that she didn't get resolution, she hasn't heard back and the voicemail box for the agent is full.

"I wish the DOT would implement some kind of tracking system for complaints" that haven't yet been resolved, Evans said. She hasn't given up hope of getting her refund.

Complaints about refunds

Refunds was again the No. 1 complaint for January through November 2022, comprising 29% of complaints. The typical reason that travelers expect and are legally entitled to a refund: When the flight is canceled for any reason, whether it's bad weather, staffing, equipment issues, security or something else.

2022 saw an explosion of refund complaints against travel agents, which mostly consists of third-party online booking companies that passengers use to find discount rates on travel-related purchases including flights and hotel rooms.

For January through November 2022, there were 5,433 complaints against travel agents, compared with 436 for all of 2019.

The majority of complaints against travel agents last year concerned refunds.

TRAVEL AGENTS WITH MORE THAN 300 COMPLAINTS THROUGH NOVEMBER 2022

CheapOair.com: 311

Expedia.com: 1,026

GoToGate: 332

JustFly.com: 363

Kiwi.com: 477

Priceline.com: 302

What is the DOT doing about refunds? Not enough.

The DOT did [fine a half-dozen airlines](#) in November for taking too long to issue refunds. But it included only one U.S. airline – Frontier Airlines. The refunds involved flights that had been canceled or significantly delayed or changed. The airlines were ordered to refund more than \$600 million in refunds and pay more than \$7.25 million in civil penalties.

"When a flight gets canceled, passengers seeking refunds should be paid back promptly," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said in a [statement](#). "Whenever that doesn't happen, we will act to hold airlines accountable on behalf of American travelers and get passengers their money back."

"A flight cancellation is frustrating enough, and you shouldn't also have to haggle or wait months to get your refund," Buttigieg added.

Frontier was ordered to pay \$222 million in refunds and fined \$2.2 million, the most among the airlines. Air India and TAP Air Portugal's fines topped \$1 million. The other three, Aeromexico, El Al and Avianca, were ordered to pay less than \$1 million.

The DOT crowed that the \$8.1 million in civil penalties for 2022 was the largest amount ever issued in a single year by DOT, and promised these wouldn't be the last fines.

The regulator has [proposed strengthening consumer protections](#) so travelers can get refunds more easily. The proposed new rules on Airline Ticket Refunds would:

- **Define a [significant change](#) as a flight that is delayed three hours** or more for a domestic flight or six hours or more for an international flight. A significant change would also include a change to the departure or arrival airport or that increases the number of connecting flights; or a switch to a different type of airplane that leads to “a significant downgrade in the air travel experience or amenities available onboard the flight.”
Currently, [there is no definition](#) about what qualifies as a significant delay. Establishing the three-hour threshold would be welcomed.
- **Require airlines to “proactively inform passengers** that they have a right to receive a refund when a

flight is canceled or significantly changed,” *before* pushing credits or vouchers.

- **Require airlines to offer non-expiring vouchers or travel credits** when people can't travel because they have COVID or another communicable disease, and require that airlines that take taxpayer money in the future be required issue refunds instead of non-expiring travel credits or vouchers when passengers are advised not to travel because of a serious communicable disease.

The DOT held a [public hearing](#) on these proposed new rules last week.

| ON-TIME ARRIVALS DECLINED

Flight problems was the No. 2 complaint for January through November 2022, comprising 26%. This category covers cancellations, delays, or any other schedule changes.

Besides the increase in cancellations, the airlines' on-time performance also suffered in 2022. A flight is considered by DOT to be on time if it arrived within [15 minutes of the scheduled time](#), meaning it wasn't delayed or canceled.

ON-TIME ARRIVALS BY YEAR FOR U.S. AIRLINES:

2022: 76.7%
2021: 81.1%
2020: 84.5%
2019: 79.0%

AIRLINES WITH THE WORST ON-TIME PERFORMANCES IN 2022

Allegiant Air: 63%
JetBlue: 65%
Frontier: 66%

Includes delays and cancellations within seven days.

AIRLINES WITH THE BEST ON-TIME PERFORMANCES IN 2022

Delta: 82%
Alaska Airlines: 79%
United: 79%
American: 77%

Includes delays and cancellations within seven days.

| BAGGAGE LOST, DAMAGED OR PILFERED

Coming in third in complaints in 2022 (January through November) was baggage issues, at 16% of complaints.

Of the 470 million bags boarded in January through December 2022, nearly 3 million were mishandled. The total number of bags is slightly below 2019 – when 507 million bags were boarded but fewer bags were mishandled. The mishandled rate went up from 5.9 per 1,000 in 2019 to 6.4 per 1,000 in 2022.

Among the items mishandled last year: 11,389 wheelchairs and scooters that were placed in the cargo compartment. (This is a bigger problem because these often take weeks or months to get repaired [because of repair restrictions](#).)

If travelers' bags are lost, pilfered or delayed, [they do have rights](#), including a refund for any checked baggage fees, and reimbursement for lost items up to \$3,800.

For purposes of mishandling, DOT tallies [bags only on nonstop flights](#), not connecting flights. And DOT counts wheelchairs and scooters put in the cargo compartment as bags. DOT looks at all U.S. airlines with at least 0.5% of total domestic passenger revenues.

**NEARLY 3 MILLION
BOARDED BAGS
WERE MISHANDLED
IN 2022**

**THIS INCLUDED
11,389
WHEELCHAIRS AND
SCOOTERS PLACED
IN THE CARGO
DEPARTMENT**

| BUMPING GETS WORSE

When an airline sells too many seats for a flight and everyone shows up, someone has to go. Airlines generally ask for volunteers and offer another flight plus compensation of varying amounts. Of the 317,707 travelers bumped from flights with U.S. airlines, more than 90% volunteered. But that left 25,626 bumped or “denied boarding” involuntarily.

While not the largest issue travelers dealt with in 2022, the percentage of passengers bumped involuntarily nearly doubled from 2021.

For passengers who are bumped involuntarily, the [airline must provide compensation](#) if the person will be delayed one hour or more. For domestic flights with a one- to two-hour delay, the compensation is double your one-way fare, up to \$775. If the delay is more than two hours, the compensation is quadruple your one-way fare, up to \$1,550. The compensation levels are higher for international flights.

Nearly 1,200 travelers last year filed complaints about bumping – meaning they likely weren’t satisfied with the resolution – from January through November. That’s four times as many as in 2021 and three times as many as in 2019.

When flights are oversold, airlines prefer to take volunteers to be bumped, for public relations and financial reasons. When seats weren’t available last year, 292,181 passengers volunteered to get bumped. That’s up from 171,792 in 2021 but down from 506,569 in 2019.

**317,707 TRAVELERS
WERE BUMPED IN 2022.**

**WHEN THERE WEREN'T
ENOUGH SEATS, 292,181
OF THOSE VOLUNTEERED
TO TAKE ANOTHER FLIGHT.**

**THAT LEFT 25,626
DENIED BOARDING
INVOLUNTARILY.**

| WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?

The data show airline travel is much more stressful today for many travelers, with uncertainty about whether their flight will be canceled or significantly delayed, whether they will get bumped, whether their baggage will be lost or damaged or, if their flight is canceled, whether they'll get a timely refund.

DOT has taken some steps (but not enough) to improve travel for consumers. Last summer, for example, it unveiled an [Airline Customer Service Dashboard](#) that discloses various policies for the 10 largest airlines and how customer-friendly or not those policies are. (See next page for screenshots.)

The three policies outlined for now are:

1. Commitment to Fee-Free Family Seating, which “guarantees adjacent seats for (a) child 13 or under and an accompanying adult at no additional cost for all fare types subject to [limited conditions](#).”
2. Commitments for Controllable Cancellations.
3. Commitments for Controllable Delays.
A controllable flight cancellation or delay is essentially a delay or cancellation caused by the airline. Examples include: maintenance or crew problems; cabin cleaning; baggage loading; and fueling.

Only three of the airlines have made the commitment on fee-free family seating: Alaska, American and Frontier.

On cancellations within the airlines' control, these airlines will rebook the passenger on a partner airline or another airline at no additional cost:

**Alaska
American
Delta
Hawaiian
JetBlue
United**

The airlines that haven't committed to this:

**Allegiant
Frontier
Southwest
Spirit**

All 10 companies will rebook on their own airline and provide money or a voucher for meals when a cancellation within the airlines' control delays a passenger by three hours or more. All except Frontier will pay for a hotel and ground transportation to and from the hotel.

The policies are the same for controllable delays, except that Hawaiian won't rebook on a partner airline or other airline at no additional cost. The hope behind the dashboard: An easy-to-understand, public-facing comparison will put pressure on the airlines to change their policies.

THE DOT'S NEW DISCLOSURES OF AIRLINE POLICIES

Family Seating Dashboard

Commitment for Fee-Free Family Seating

	Carrier									
	Alaska	Allegiant	American	Delta	Frontier	Hawaiian	JetBlue	Southwest	Spirit	United
Guarantees adjacent seats for child 13 or under and an accompanying adult at no additional cost for all fare types subject to limited conditions	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Commitments for Controllable Cancellations

	Carrier									
	Alaska	Allegiant	American	Delta	Frontier	Hawaiian	JetBlue	Southwest	Spirit	United
Rebook passenger on same airline at no additional cost	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rebook on partner airline or another airline with which it has an agreement at no additional cost	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Meal or meal cash/voucher when cancellation results in passenger waiting for 3 hours or more for new flight	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary hotel accommodations for any passenger affected by an overnight cancellation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary ground transportation to and from hotel for any passenger affected by an overnight cancellation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Commitments for Controllable Delays

	Carrier									
	Alaska	Allegiant	American	Delta	Frontier	Hawaiian	JetBlue	Southwest	Spirit	United
Rebook passenger on same airline at no additional cost for significant delays	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rebook on partner airline or another airline with which it has an agreement at no additional cost for significant delays	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Meal or meal cash/voucher when flight delay results in passenger waiting 3 hours or more	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary hotel accommodations for any passenger affected by an overnight delay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complimentary ground transportation to and from hotel for any passenger affected by an overnight delay	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The good news is that attention is being paid to the problems. A number of new rules and laws have been proposed by DOT or discussed by members of Congress.

Besides the likely change to require refunds for delays of three hours or more for domestic flights, the DOT has proposed:

- **Better transparency in pricing.** The DOT wants to make sure consumers have access to more fee information upfront. Under the rule, airlines and “travel search websites” would have to disclose any fees to sit with your child, change or cancel your ticket or to check or carry on any bag. The disclosures would be required the first time the airfare cost is displayed. “The proposal seeks to provide customers the information they need to choose the best deal. Otherwise, surprise fees can add up quickly and overcome what may look at first to be a cheap fare,” [DOT said in a statement](#).
- **Requiring refunds** to customers who paid for services that weren’t provided, such as WiFi.

DOT has also:

- **Strongly encouraged** U.S. airlines “to do everything in their power to ensure that children who are age 13 or younger are seated next to an accompanying adult with no additional charge.” DOT said it receives complaints involving babies as young as 11 months old who are not able to be seated next to their adult travel companion. DOT this month [submitted a legislative proposal to Congress](#) on this issue. The DOT Office of Consumer Protection plans to scrutinize airline policies and consumer complaints “If airlines’ seating policies and practices are barriers to a child sitting next to an adult family member or other accompanying adult family member, the Department will consider additional action consistent with its authorities,” DOT said.

Over in Congress, [legislators have discussed](#) several possible new bills, dealing with:

- Boosting consumer rights.
- Fee transparency.
- Fees for children to sit with their parent.
- Issues with certain ancillary fees.
- Seat size because of concern over whether passengers could evacuate quickly if necessary.

I CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Transparency**

Airlines and third parties should disclose all fees up front, as part of the ticket price, and clearly spell out any ancillary fees before a traveler gets ready to click the button to book the flight. This would allow consumers to better compare prices. This practice shouldn't have to wait on a new DOT rule.

- **Refunds**

Full refunds are required by law when an airline cancels or discontinues a scheduled flight, for any reason. This includes baggage fees, seat fees, taxes, etc.

Airlines should not try to offer consumers a credit or voucher first, when they're entitled to refunds.

The volume of refund complaints indicates too many consumers aren't getting timely refunds, even when they ask for them.

Last year's regulatory action by DOT against six airlines doesn't scratch the surface to address the extent of the problem. Consumers are still owed upwards of \$10 billion from flights canceled during the pandemic.

- **Reciprocity**

Airlines should join an industry-wide reciprocity agreement so passengers whose flights are canceled or delayed could have tickets transferred to another airline with seats available at no charge, if that flight could get the passenger to their destination quicker.

- **Better scheduling**

Airlines should do a better job scheduling flights, so they're not just putting flights on the schedule without regard to whether they really expect to fly the route at that time. Then they can cancel flights without any real repercussions, particularly because they're not counted as cancellations if they're scrubbed more than a week before departure. (They're called "discontinued" flights.)

Whatever they're called, this can be a huge inconvenience and financial stress to travelers who may have booked flights months in advance, only to have them canceled eight or 10 days before the travel date, meaning there's a good chance replacement tickets may be more expensive or unavailable.

- **Accountability**

DOT should do more to hold airlines accountable for chronically delayed, canceled or "discontinued" flights.

- **Eliminating federal preemption involving the airlines**

The states should be able to enforce existing federal consumer protection laws, but they can't. And 35 of the state attorneys general signed a letter to Congress on this issue last August.

HELP FOR PASSENGERS:

[Passengers have rights](#) for issues such as refunds, cancellations, delays, tarmac delays and lost baggage.

For refunds, travelers should [know their rights if their flight is canceled for *any* reason.](#)

And if they choose to [accept a credit or voucher](#), it's important to understand how they work at each of the 10 largest domestic airlines.

Here's how to [file a complaint](#) with the DOT.



TIPS: AIRLINE TRAVELERS' RIGHTS WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

First, the big one: If any airline cancels your flight for any reason, you're entitled by law to a full refund of your ticket price, taxes, baggage fees and other ancillary fees. Here's advice if you prefer a [credit or voucher](#) instead. Airlines and ticket agents must issue refunds promptly. Airlines must issue the refund within seven business days if you paid by credit card and within 20 days if you paid by cash or check. Here's [advice on getting that refund](#).

If you learn your flight is canceled or will be significantly delayed or changed and you find a flight on another airline with available seats, you can ask the first airline to transfer your ticket to the second airline. Airlines aren't required to do this, but many will. This could save you a significant amount of money compared with getting a refund and buying the new ticket, because tickets often become more expensive closer to the departure date.

You also have legal rights if you are bumped from a flight that departs, if your baggage is misplaced or lost or if you're stuck on the tarmac.

Airlines often are accommodating when they cancel or delay a flight for a reason that's their fault. The Department of Transportation last year [launched a dashboard](#) so travelers can see the policies of various airlines when they cancel or delay flights for reasons *within* the airline's control. Many airlines rebook you, pay for hotels, meals, etc.

Here's advice on what you can do to avoid headaches and what you should know if something goes wrong.

BEFORE YOU GO

Hedge your ticket purchase

Many airlines will hold tickets for 24 hours without payment, or will let you cancel your reservation and get a refund within that time frame, so you can make sure you get the best deal.

Check the flight's record

Major airlines are required by law to provide on-time performance information on their websites when you consider what flight to buy. Check these out to help avoid long delays.

Give yourself a buffer

If possible, plan to fly out a day before you actually need to be somewhere by a certain time, particularly if you're attending a wedding or going on a cruise.

Pay with a credit card, not a debit card

If you buy your plane ticket with a credit card, you have far greater protection to dispute the charge under the federal [Fair Credit Billing Act](#).

Fly in the morning

Schedule your flight as early in the day as possible. The DOT says you're more likely to get where you're going. The later in the day you fly, the more chances there are for the airline to get off schedule. And if you have a late-night flight that's canceled, there may not be another one until the next morning.

Avoid connecting flights

This isn't always possible, of course. But two flights mean two chances for a problem. And a delay on the first leg could mean you miss the second leg. The extra cost of a non-stop may save you a lot of stress and expense.

Avoid checking a bag

This also isn't always possible. But having a carry-on reduces the chances of you getting separated from your bag.

Consider buying travel insurance

It won't keep your flight from being canceled but should help with other expenses. (But read the terms and conditions.)

Get the app

Get the airline's app on your phone a couple of days before your flight. It can help you with notifications, rebooking and contacting customer service.

AT THE AIRPORT

Involuntary bumping

If you're involuntarily bumped, airlines must provide you with a list of your rights and compensate you according to how long your flight will be delayed.

Delay compensation

- Less than 1 hour: None
- 1-2 hours: (Domestic) 200% of your one-way fare up to \$775
- 1-4 hours: (International) 200% of your one-way fare up to \$775
- More than 2 hours: (Domestic) 400% of your one-way fare up to \$1,550
- More than 4 hours: (International) 400% of your one-way fare up to \$1,550

Tarmac delays

Airlines have to provide medical attention and working bathrooms the entire time the plane is on the tarmac. After two hours, you must have food and water. After three hours, you must be in the air or back in the airport—or the airline faces massive fines.

Flight delays

If your flight is delayed more than 30 minutes, airlines must give you regular updates.

POST-FLIGHT PROBLEMS

Delayed bags

If your bag is delayed overnight, most airlines set guidelines that allow their employees to reimburse you for some emergency expenses.

Lost bags

Airlines must refund any checked baggage fees, and reimburse you for the lost items up to \$3,800.

Complaints

Airlines are required to give you information on how to file complaints. Airlines need to acknowledge written complaints within 30 days and respond within 60 days. If you don't get satisfaction from an airline, [file an official complaint with the DOT](#).

To file a complaint against an airline, an airport or a ticket agent, go to <https://airconsumer.dot.gov/escomplaint/ConsumerForm.cfm>

For other information about passenger rights, go to <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer>

THE SOUTHWEST MESS

If your flight was canceled, you're entitled by law to a refund of your ticket price, taxes, baggage fees, any extra charges and ancillary fees. If you haven't received that yet, request a flight refund from Southwest <https://www.southwest.com/traveldisruption/>

In addition, Southwest says: "If you have been impacted by a flight cancellation or significant flight delay between December 24, 2022, and January 2, 2023, you may submit receipts for consideration ... We will honor reasonable requests for reimbursement for meals, hotel, and alternate transportation."

To fill out a claim and upload receipts, go to: <https://support.southwest.com/email-us/s/?clk=TRAVEL-DISRUPTION-LP>

A reminder: Your rights and responsibilities as an air traveler may change. Please check the [Department of Transportation website](#) for the most complete and up-to-date information about your rights.

| METHODOLOGY

U.S. PIRG Education reviewed Department of Transportation [Air Travel Consumer Reports](#) dating back to 1998. The reports, which often include 55 to nearly 80 pages worth of data, cover everything from performance of airlines, including cancellations, departure and arrival records and tarmac delays; on-time departures and arrivals at major airports nationwide; and complaints about airlines and others that are part of the air travel experience. Complaint categories are flight problems, oversales, reservations/ticketing/boarding, fares, refunds, baggage, customer service, disability, advertising, discrimination, animals and other.

For this report, we analyzed data on cancellations, delays, bumping, mishandled baggage, and complaints documented in the DOT reports for the last several years. Most of the data involves airlines; some involves travel agents (most online booking websites,) foreign airlines that operate in the United States, tour operators and others.

DOT generally looks at issues through three lenses: top 10 airlines and their 11 marketing partner airlines, all U.S. operating airlines with revenue that represents at least 0.5 percent of all of the industry's revenues (last year there were 17 airlines in this group), and all U.S. airlines. In both of the first two categories, the top airlines represent at least 95 percent of the domestic scheduled air traffic.

The top 10 airlines and their branded codeshare (marketing) partners for last year included four airlines with partners:

American Airlines: Envoy Air, Mesa Airlines, Piedmont Airlines, PSA Airlines, Republic Airways and SkyWest Airlines.

Alaska Airlines: Horizon Air, SkyWest Airlines.

Delta Air Lines: Endeavor Air, Republic Airways, SkyWest Airlines.

United Airlines: Air Wisconsin Airlines, Commutair, GoJet Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Republic Airways, SkyWest Airlines.

The Air Travel Consumer Reports usually are released early every month, with the data from the end of the month two months' prior. The report for the entire year usually comes out in late February or early March. For calendar year 2022, it was released March 16.

Generally, the February reports include the entire previous year. The quarterly reports are in May for Q1, August for Q2 and November for Q3.

We looked high-level at complaint data. For 2022, it includes complaints for January through November. The December data is being released late because of the avalanche of complaints from the Christmas mess.

For all other years, we reviewed the full year's worth of data.

For complaint data, we looked at the available first 11 months for 2022, compared with past years. In general, we compared 2022 against 2019 because 2019 was the most recent "normal" travel year, because it was before the pandemic.

I APPENDIX

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 6B. OVERALL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING MARKETING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022			JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021		
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED
1	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	73,865 73,865 -	680 680 -	0.92 0.92 -	60,654 60,542 112	264 264 0	0.44 0.44 0.00
2	DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK - DELTA AIR LINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,448,920 893,172 555,748	29,035 14,317 14,718	2.00 1.60 2.65	1,357,322 747,998 609,324	7,866 3,631 4,235	0.58 0.49 0.70
3	ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK - ALASKA AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	382,544 228,384 154,160	8,274 6,218 2,056	2.16 2.72 1.33	359,458 188,955 170,503	6,010 3,217 2,793	1.67 1.70 1.64
4	UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK - UNITED AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,263,956 626,473 637,483	34,221 11,886 22,335	2.71 1.90 3.50	1,148,340 446,837 701,503	25,203 6,107 19,096	2.19 1.37 2.72
5	AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK - AMERICAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,759,257 874,145 885,112	49,416 25,894 23,522	2.81 2.96 2.66	1,674,371 736,399 937,972	33,452 16,478 16,974	2.00 2.24 1.81
6	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	4,455	2.87	137,142	1,929	1.41
7	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	6,973	3.00	191,361	5,661	2.96
8	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	42,655	3.26	1,064,640	23,505	2.21
9	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	4,110	3.52	115,881	3,829	3.30
10	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	10,219	3.74	202,702	3,299	1.63
	TOTAL	7,013,508	190,038	2.71	6,311,871	111,018	1.76

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 6C. OVERALL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING OPERATING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022			JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021		
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	FLIGHT OPERATIONS CANCELLED	PERCENT OF OPERATIONS CANCELLED
1	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	73,865	680	0.92	60,542	264	0.44
2	DELTA AIR LINES	893,172	14,317	1.60	747,998	3,631	0.49
3	HORIZON AIR	88,791	1,512	1.70	111,628	2,096	1.88
4	SKYWEST AIRLINES	733,576	13,331	1.82	753,417	13,412	1.78
5	UNITED AIRLINES	626,473	11,886	1.90	446,837	6,107	1.37
6	ENVOY AIR	248,059	5,550	2.24	255,710	5,700	2.23
7	ALASKA AIRLINES	228,384	6,218	2.72	188,955	3,217	1.70
8	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	4,455	2.87	137,142	1,929	1.41
9	AMERICAN AIRLINES	874,145	25,894	2.96	736,399	16,478	2.24
10	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	6,973	3.00	191,361	5,661	2.96
11	PSA AIRLINES	214,450	6,612	3.08	222,611	2,278	1.02
12	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	42,655	3.26	1,064,640	23,505	2.21
13	MESA AIRLINES	114,779	3,810	3.32	159,809	4,818	3.01
14	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	4,110	3.52	115,881	3,829	3.30
15	ENDEAVOR AIR	231,941	8,202	3.54	266,702	986	0.37
16	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	10,219	3.74	202,702	3,299	1.63
17	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	316,524	14,862	4.70	333,063	5,850	1.76
	TOTAL	6,729,125	181,286	2.69	5,995,397	103,060	1.72

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenue

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 1C. OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED FLIGHT OPERATIONS ARRIVING ON-TIME: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING MARKETING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021	
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS
1	DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK - DELTA AIR LINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,448,920 893,172 555,748	82.14 82.53 81.51	1,357,322 747,998 609,324	88.22 87.85 88.67
2	ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK - ALASKA AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	382,544 228,384 154,160	79.06 77.28 81.70	359,458 188,955 170,503	83.17 81.22 85.32
3	UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK - UNITED AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,263,956 626,473 637,483	78.74 79.01 78.47	1,148,340 446,837 701,503	79.81 81.34 78.83
4	AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK - AMERICAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	1,759,257 874,145 885,112	77.15 74.94 79.33	1,674,371 736,399 937,972	81.58 80.53 82.40
5	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - HAWAIIAN AIRLINES - BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	73,865 73,865 -	75.77 75.77 -	60,654 60,542 112	90.14 90.15 89.29
6	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	73.18	1,064,640	75.78
7	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	72.96	191,361	76.74
8	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	66.10	137,142	76.64
9	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	64.63	202,702	72.31
10	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	63.39	115,881	68.26
	TOTAL	7,013,508	76.72	6,311,871	81.08

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 1D. OVERALL PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED FLIGHT OPERATIONS ARRIVING ON-TIME: RANKING OF U.S. REPORTING OPERATING CARRIERS (YTD)

RANK	CARRIER ¹	JANUARY - DECEMBER 2022		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2021	
		FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS	FLIGHT OPERATIONS SCHEDULED	PERCENT OF ON-TIME ARRIVALS
1	DELTA AIR LINES	893,172	82.53	747,998	87.85
2	HORIZON AIR	88,791	81.79	111,628	85.26
3	SKYWEST AIRLINES	733,576	81.61	753,417	82.45
4	ENVOY AIR	248,059	80.65	255,710	82.32
5	ENDEAVOR AIR	231,941	80.53	266,702	90.98
6	UNITED AIRLINES	626,473	79.01	446,837	81.34
7	PSA AIRLINES	214,450	77.96	222,611	84.52
8	MESA AIRLINES	114,779	77.43	159,809	77.14
9	ALASKA AIRLINES	228,384	77.28	188,955	81.22
10	REPUBLIC AIRWAYS	316,524	76.42	333,063	84.35
11	HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	73,865	75.77	60,542	90.15
12	AMERICAN AIRLINES	874,145	74.94	736,399	80.53
13	SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	1,307,149	73.18	1,064,640	75.78
14	SPIRIT AIRLINES	232,400	72.96	191,361	76.74
15	FRONTIER AIRLINES	155,482	66.10	137,142	76.64
16	JETBLUE AIRWAYS	273,058	64.63	202,702	72.31
17	ALLEGiant AIR	116,877	63.39	115,881	68.26
	TOTAL	6,729,125	76.61	5,995,397	81.19

¹ All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues.

Note: For simplicity, statistics are displayed to one decimal place. Actual ranking order is calculated to nine decimal places.

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT

TABLE 7. CAUSES OF DELAY, BY REPORTING MARKETING CARRIER

DECEMBER 2022

CARRIER	TOTAL RECORDS	ON TIME	% ON TIME	CANCELLED	% CANCELLED	DIVERTED	% DIVERTED	AIR CARRIER DELAY	% AIR CARRIER DELAY	EXTREME WEATHER DELAY	% EXTREME WEATHER DELAY	NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM DELAY	% NATIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM DELAY	SECURITY DELAY	% SECURITY DELAY	LATE ARRIVING AIRCRAFT DELAY	% LATE ARRIVING AIRCRAFT DELAY
ALASKA AIRLINES NETWORK	30401	18405	60.54	2321	7.63	173	0.57	2541	8.36	564	1.86	2881	9.48	57	0.19	3460	11.38
- ALASKA AIRLINES	20079	11464	57.09	1735	8.64	125	0.62	1708	8.51	291	1.45	2369	11.80	51	0.25	2336	11.63
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	10322	6941	67.24	586	5.68	48	0.47	833	8.07	273	2.64	512	4.96	6	0.06	1124	10.89
ALLEGiant AIR	10421	5963	57.22	550	5.28	50	0.48	898	8.62	207	1.99	1146	11.00	10	0.10	1598	15.33
AMERICAN AIRLINES NETWORK	138398	102057	73.74	2534	1.83	363	0.26	10373	7.50	2025	1.46	8191	5.92	109	0.08	12747	9.21
- AMERICAN AIRLINES	76149	54111	71.06	1174	1.54	174	0.23	6378	8.38	824	1.08	4806	6.31	67	0.09	8614	11.31
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	62249	47946	77.02	1360	2.18	189	0.30	3995	6.42	1200	1.93	3385	5.44	42	0.07	4133	6.64
DELTA AIR LINES NETWORK	114831	89046	77.55	3299	2.87	215	0.19	9680	8.43	1999	1.74	5522	4.81	22	0.02	5047	4.40
- DELTA AIR LINES	75771	59104	78.00	1851	2.44	128	0.17	6099	8.05	674	0.89	3882	5.12	13	0.02	4021	5.31
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	39060	29942	76.66	1448	3.71	87	0.22	3581	9.17	1325	3.39	1640	4.20	10	0.03	1026	2.63
FRONTIER AIRLINES	13895	7858	56.55	665	4.79	26	0.19	1818	13.08	114	0.82	1439	10.36	0	0.00	1975	14.21
HAWAIIAN AIRLINES	6642	3862	58.15	231	3.48	19	0.29	1092	16.44	154	2.32	156	2.35	7	0.11	1122	16.89
JETBLUE AIRWAYS	23881	14125	59.15	465	1.95	61	0.26	3770	15.79	74	0.31	2376	9.95	23	0.10	2987	12.51
SOUTHWEST AIRLINES	116229	70580	60.72	17000	14.63	170	0.15	10995	9.46	257	0.22	4600	3.96	77	0.07	12550	10.80
SPIRIT AIRLINES	21236	13795	64.96	994	4.68	11	0.05	2161	10.18	176	0.83	2434	11.46	62	0.29	1603	7.55
UNITED AIRLINES NETWORK	102387	73482	71.77	3128	3.06	278	0.27	9974	9.74	984	0.96	5866	5.73	17	0.02	8659	8.46
- UNITED AIRLINES	58417	41499	71.04	1420	2.43	117	0.20	5667	9.70	363	0.62	3858	6.60	3	0.01	5491	9.40
- BRANDED CODESHARE PARTNERS	43970	31983	72.74	1708	3.88	161	0.37	4307	9.80	620	1.41	2009	4.57	14	0.03	3168	7.20
TOTAL	578,321	399,173	69.02	31,187	5.39	1,366	0.24	53,301	9.22	6,553	1.13	34,611	5.98	383	0.07	51,747	8.95

*** Causes of Delay:**

- **Air Carrier Delay:** The cause of the cancellation or delay was due to circumstances within the airline's control (e.g. maintenance or crew problems, etc.).
 - **Extreme Weather Delay:** Significant meteorological conditions (actual or forecasted) that, in the judgment of the carrier, delays or prevents the operation of a flight.
 - **National Aviation System Delay:** Delays and cancellations attributable to the national aviation system refer to a broad set of conditions -- non-extreme weather conditions, airport operations, heavy traffic volume, air traffic control, etc.
 - **Security Delay:** Delays caused by evacuation of terminal or concourse, re-boarding of aircraft because of security breach, inoperative screening equipment and long lines more than 29 minutes at screening areas.
 - **Late Arriving Aircraft Delay:** Previous flight with same aircraft arrived late which caused the present flight to depart late.
- A "cancelled" flight is a flight that was not operated but was in the carrier's computer reservation system within 7 days of the scheduled departure. A "diverted" flight is a flight which is operated from the scheduled origin point to a point other than the scheduled destination point in the carrier's published schedule.

Note: Individual causes of delay numbers may not add to totals, because of rounding.

* All U.S. airlines with at least half of one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues plus any branded codeshare partners.