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From 2 October 2026, airlines will be required to seat children under the age of 14 with a parent or accompanying adult free of charge.

- extra charges for parents sitting with their children scrapped across airlines to help people with the cost of living
- greater flexibility to amend simple name mistakes when booking flights so passengers avoid unnecessary charges
- airlines and government working together to crack down on disorderly and seriously disruptive passengers
- latest measure in Prime Minister's series of 'everyday fixes' to give families room to breathe

Holidaymakers are set to save money as government steps in to ease pressure on the cost of living in time for next year's summer holidays, scrapping child seating fees and unnecessary admin costs.

Under new plans announced tomorrow (2 October 2026), airlines will be required to seat children under the age of 14 with a parent or accompanying adult free of charge. Parents should not feel pressured to pay extra simply to sit beside their child – currently, a parent and child could be charged up to £104 on a return journey.

Passengers will also be given greater flexibility to correct simple name errors on bookings for free, ending unfair and irritating charges – sometimes as much as £40 – for minor mistakes or admin tweaks.

Alongside this, government has announced it is working with airlines and trade unions to create a new system for sharing information on persistently disruptive passengers.

In 2025, more than 1,000 serious disruptive passenger incidents were logged by airlines, including a mid-air brawl that resulted in a flight being diverted, causing significant disruption to passengers and crew as well as costs for the airline.

The new system will make disruptors easier to spot, keeping staff and passengers safer from the get-go and enabling airlines to take decisions on whether to extend a ban on their airline.

While most UK airlines already offer protections against hidden costs, these new reforms will give passengers greater consistency on all airlines operating in the UK.

Prime Minister Andy Burnham said:

Charging parents just to sit with their children is a rip-off, plain and simple. And being hit with a hefty fee for a simple spelling mistake on a booking form isn't right either.

People are fed up with these little charges that add up, so I'm putting a stop to them.

This is what our everyday fixes are all about. Giving people room to breathe by tackling the small irritations that catch people out, waste their time and cost them money.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said:

Parents should not have to feel the pinch just to sit next to their child on a flight, or for amending a simple booking error. That's why we're scrapping these unnecessary charges for all airlines – another everyday fix to help put money back in people's pockets and give households more breathing room.

And everyone deserves to travel knowing their flight isn't going to be disrupted by bad behaviour from a small minority.

These common-sense reforms will make flying safer for staff and passengers and protect people from unnecessary charges, whoever they fly with.

This is the latest example of the Prime Minister's series of 'everyday fixes' to tackle the irritations that make life difficult and hit people's wallets, following action on rogue traders overcharging for home improvements, subscription traps that quietly drain bank accounts and rip-off school uniform costs.

It lands the day after the government's VAT cut on electricity bills kicked in on 1 October, saving households a further £45, as part of a bigger plan to restore fairness to family finances and give people room to breathe.

Rory Boland, Editor of Which? Travel, said:

It's clearly unfair to force parents and children as young as three to pay an extra fee just to sit together. Airlines that have separated families are putting profit ahead of passenger peace of mind.

Which? has successfully pressured many airlines into dropping these fees over the past 10 years. So it's welcome to see the government taking firm action on this by outlawing these charges completely and finally putting an end to this rip-off.

It is also positive to see greater flexibility to amend simple mistakes, protecting consumers from unnecessary charges.

Changes announced today will bring greater consistency across the sector and are set to be delivered following Royal Assent of the Civil Aviation Bill, with industry engaged to ensure swift and fair implementation.

The move also comes as regulators and lawmakers in the UK and Europe take a tougher stance on air passenger rights. The government's changes will mean UK and EU rules line up more closely, giving passengers greater certainty.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/take-off-for-passengers-as-government-scrap-extra-charges-when-flying>