

Public transportation. If you travel by public transportation, any place in the United States where that vehicle makes a scheduled stop is a point in the United States. Once the vehicle leaves the last scheduled stop in the United States on its way to a point outside the United States, you apply the rules under *Travel Outside the United States*.

Example. You fly from New York to Puerto Rico with a scheduled stop in Miami. You return to New York nonstop. The flight from New York to Miami is in the United States, so only the flight from Miami to Puerto Rico is outside the United States. Because there are no scheduled stops between Puerto Rico and New York, all of the return trip is outside the United States.

Private car. Travel by private car in the United States is travel between points in the United States, even though you are on your way to a destination outside the United States.

Example. You travel by car from Denver to Mexico City and return. Your travel from Denver to the border and from the border back to Denver is travel in the United States, and the rules in this section apply. The rules under *Travel Outside the United States* apply to your trip from the border to Mexico City and back to the border.

Travel Outside the United States

If any part of your business travel is outside the United States, some of your deductions for the cost of getting to and from your destination may be limited. For this purpose, the United States includes the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

How much of your travel expenses you can deduct depends in part upon how much of your trip outside the United States was business related.

Travel Entirely for Business or Considered Entirely for Business

You can deduct all your travel expenses of getting to and from your business destination if your trip is entirely for business or considered entirely for business.

Travel entirely for business. If you travel outside the United States and you spend the entire time on business activities, you can deduct all of your travel expenses.

Travel considered entirely for business. Even if you did not spend your entire time on business activities, your trip is considered entirely for business if you meet at least one of the following four exceptions.

Exception 1 - No substantial control. Your trip is considered entirely for business if you did not have substantial control over arranging the trip. The fact that you control the timing of your trip does not, by itself, mean that you have substantial control over arranging your trip.

You do not have substantial control over your trip if you:

- Are an employee who was reimbursed or paid a travel expense allowance,
- Are not related to your employer, and

- Are not a managing executive.

"Related to your employer" is defined later in chapter 6 under *Per Diem and Car Allowances*.

A "managing executive" is an employee who has the authority and responsibility, without being subject to the veto of another, to decide on the need for the business travel.

A self-employed person generally has substantial control over arranging business trips.

Exception 2 - Outside United States no more than a week. Your trip is considered entirely for business if you were outside the United States for a week or less, combining business and nonbusiness activities. One week means 7 consecutive days. In counting the days, do not count the day you leave the United States, but do count the day you return to the United States.

Example. You traveled to Brussels primarily for business. You left Denver on Tuesday and flew to New York. On Wednesday, you flew from New York to Brussels, arriving the next morning. On Thursday and Friday, you had business discussions, and from Saturday until Tuesday, you were sightseeing. You flew back to New York, arriving Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday, you flew back to Denver.

Although you were away from your home in Denver for more than a week, you were not outside the United States for more than a week. This is because the day you depart does not count as a day outside the United States.

You can deduct your cost of the round-trip flight between Denver and Brussels. You can also deduct the cost of your stay in Brussels for Thursday and Friday while you conducted business. However, you cannot deduct the cost of your stay in Brussels from Saturday through Tuesday because those days were spent on nonbusiness activities.

Exception 3 - Less than 25% of time on personal activities. Your trip is considered entirely for business if:

- You were outside the United States for more than a week, and
- You spent less than 25% of the total time you were outside the United States on nonbusiness activities.

For this purpose, count both the day your trip began and the day it ended.

Example. You flew from Seattle to Tokyo, where you spent 14 days on business and 5 days on personal matters. You then flew back to Seattle. You spent 1 day flying in each direction.

Because only 21% (less than 25%) of your total time abroad was for nonbusiness activities, you can deduct as travel expenses what it would have cost you to make the trip if you had not engaged in any nonbusiness activity. The amount you can deduct is the cost of the round-trip plane fare and 16 days of meals (subject to the 50% limit), lodging, and other related expenses.

Exception 4 - Vacation not a major consideration. Your trip is considered entirely for business if you can establish that a personal vacation was not a major consideration, even if you have substantial control over arranging the trip.

Travel Primarily for Business

If you travel outside the United States primarily for business but spend some of your time on other activities, you generally cannot deduct all of your travel expenses. You can only deduct the business portion of your cost of getting to and from your destination. You must allocate the costs between your business and other activities to determine your deductible amount. See *Travel allocation rules*, later.



TIP You do not have to allocate your travel expenses if you meet one of the four exceptions listed earlier under *Travel* considered entirely for business. In those cases, you can deduct the total cost of getting to and from your destination.

Travel allocation rules. If your trip outside the United States was primarily for business, you must allocate your travel time on a day-to-day basis between business days and nonbusiness days. The days you depart from and return to the United States are both counted as days outside the United States.

To figure the deductible amount of your round-trip travel expenses, use the following fraction. The numerator (top number) is the total number of business days outside the United States. The denominator (bottom number) is the total number of travel days outside the United States.

Counting business days. Your business days include transportation days, days your presence was required, days you spent on business, and certain weekends and holidays.

Transportation day. Count as a business day any day you spend traveling to or from a business destination. However, if because of a nonbusiness activity you do not travel by a direct route, your business days are the days it would take you to travel a reasonably direct route to your business destination. Extra days for side trips or nonbusiness activities cannot be counted as business days.

Presence required. Count as a business day any day your presence is required at a particular place for a specific business purpose. Count it as a business day even if you spend most of the day on nonbusiness activities.

Day spent on business. If your principal activity during working hours is pursuit of your trade or business, count the day as a business day. Also, count as a business day any day you are prevented from working because of circumstances beyond your control.

Certain weekends and holidays. Count weekends, holidays, and other necessary standby days as business days if they fall between business days. But if they follow your business meetings or activity and you remain at your business destination for nonbusiness or personal reasons, do not count them as business days.

Example 1. Your tax home is New York City. You travel to Quebec, where you have a business appointment on Friday. You have another appointment on the following Monday. Because your presence was required on both Friday and Monday, they are business days. Because the weekend is between business

days, Saturday and Sunday are counted as business days. This is true even though you use the weekend for sightseeing, visiting friends, or other nonbusiness activity.

Example 2. If, in *Example 1*, you had no business in Quebec after Friday, but stayed until Monday before starting home, Saturday and Sunday would be nonbusiness days.

Nonbusiness activity on the way to or from your business destination. If you stopped for a vacation or other nonbusiness activity either on the way from the United States to your business destination, or on the way back to the United States from your business destination, you must allocate part of your travel expenses to the nonbusiness activity.

The part you must allocate is the amount it would have cost you to travel between the point where travel outside the United States begins and your nonbusiness destination and a return to the point where travel outside the United States ends.

You determine the nonbusiness portion of that expense by multiplying it by a fraction. The numerator of the fraction is the number of nonbusiness days during your travel outside the United States and the denominator is the total number of days you spend outside the United States.

Example. You live in New York. On May 4 you flew to Paris to attend a business conference that began on May 5. The conference ended at noon on May 14. That evening you flew to Dublin where you visited with friends until the afternoon of May 21, when you flew directly home to New York. The primary purpose for the trip was to attend the conference.

If you had not stopped in Dublin, you would have arrived home the evening of May 14. You did not meet any of the exceptions that would allow you to consider your travel entirely for business. May 4 through May 14 (11 days) are business days and May 15 through May 21 (7 days) are nonbusiness days.

You can deduct the cost of your meals (subject to the 50% limit), lodging, and other business-related travel expenses while in Paris.

You cannot deduct your expenses while in Dublin. You also cannot deduct $\frac{7}{18}$ of what it would have cost you to travel round-trip between New York and Dublin.

You paid \$750 to fly from New York to Paris, \$400 to fly from Paris to Dublin, and \$700 to fly from Dublin back to New York. Round-trip airfare from New York to Dublin would have been \$1,250.

You figure the deductible part of your air travel expenses by subtracting $\frac{7}{18}$ of the round-trip fare and other expenses you would have had in traveling directly between New York and Dublin ($\$1,250 \times \frac{7}{18} = \486) from your total expenses in traveling from New York to Paris to Dublin and back to New York ($\$750 + \$400 + \$700 = \$1,850$).

Your deductible air travel expense is \$1,364 ($\$1,850 - \486).

Nonbusiness activity at, near, or beyond business destination. If you had a vacation or other nonbusiness activity at, near, or beyond your business destination, you must allocate part of your travel expenses to the nonbusiness activity.

The part you must allocate is the amount it would have cost you to travel between the point where travel outside the United States begins and your business destination and a return to the point where travel outside the United States ends.

You determine the nonbusiness portion of that expense by multiplying it by a fraction. The numerator of the fraction is the number of nonbusiness days during your travel outside the United States and the denominator is the total number of days you spend outside the United States.

None of your travel expenses for nonbusiness activities at, near, or beyond your business destination are deductible.

Example. Assume that the dates are the same as in the previous example but that instead of going to Dublin for your vacation, you fly to Venice, Italy, for a vacation.

You cannot deduct any part of the cost of your trip from Paris to Venice and return to Paris. In addition, you cannot deduct $\frac{7}{18}$ of the airfare and other expenses from New York to Paris and back to New York.

You can deduct $\frac{11}{18}$ of the round-trip plane fare and other travel expenses from New York to Paris, plus your meals (subject to the 50% limit), lodging, and any other business expenses you had in Paris. (Assume these expenses total \$4,994). If the round-trip plane fare and other travel-related expenses (such as food during the trip) are \$1,750, you can deduct travel costs of \$1,069 ($\frac{11}{18} \times \$1,750$), plus the full \$4,994 for the expenses you had in Paris.

Other methods. You can use another method of counting business days if you establish that it more clearly reflects the time spent on other than business activities outside the United States.

Travel Primarily for Personal Reasons

If you travel outside the United States primarily for vacation or for investment purposes, the entire cost of the trip is a nondeductible personal expense. If you spend some time attending brief professional seminars or a continuing education program, you can deduct your registration fees and other expenses you have that are directly related to your business.

Example. The university from which you graduated has a continuing education program for members of its alumni association. This program consists of trips to various foreign countries where academic exercises and conferences are set up to acquaint individuals in most occupations with selected facilities in several regions of the world. However, none of the conferences are directed toward specific occupations or professions. It is up to each participant to seek out specialists and organizational settings appropriate to his or her occupational interests.

Three-hour sessions are held each day over a 5-day period at each of the selected overseas facilities where participants can meet with individual practitioners. These sessions are composed of a variety of activities including

workshops, mini-lectures, role playing, skill development, and exercises. Professional conference directors schedule and conduct the sessions. Participants can choose those sessions they wish to attend.

You can participate in this program since you are a member of the alumni association. You and your family take one of the trips. You spend about 2 hours at each of the planned sessions. The rest of the time you go touring and sightseeing with your family. The trip lasts less than 1 week.

Your travel expenses for the trip are not deductible since the trip was primarily a vacation. However, registration fees and any other incidental expenses you have for the five planned sessions you attended that are directly related and beneficial to your business are deductible business expenses. These expenses should be specifically stated in your records to ensure proper allocation of your deductible business expenses.

Luxury Water Travel *

If you travel by ocean liner, cruise ship, or other form of luxury water transportation for business purposes, there is a daily limit on the amount you can deduct. The limit is twice the highest federal per diem rate allowable at the time of your travel. (Generally, the federal per diem is the amount paid to federal government employees for daily living expenses when they travel away from home, but in the United States, for business purposes.)

Daily limit on luxury water travel. The highest federal per diem rate allowed and the daily limit for luxury water travel in 2009 is shown in the following table.

2009 Dates	Highest Federal Per Diem	Daily Limit on Luxury Water Travel
Jan. 1 – June 30	\$349	\$698
July 1 – Aug. 31	323	646
Sept. 1 – Sept. 30	424	848
Oct. 1 – Dec. 31	411	822

Example. Caroline, a travel agent, traveled by ocean liner from New York to London, England, on business in May. Her expense for the 6-day cruise was \$5,200. Caroline's deduction for the cruise cannot exceed \$4,188 (6 days \times \$698 daily limit).

Meals and entertainment. If your expenses for luxury water travel include separately stated amounts for meals or entertainment, those amounts are subject to the 50% limit on meals and entertainment before you apply the daily limit. For a discussion of the 50% Limit, see chapter 2.

Example. In the previous example, Caroline's luxury water travel had a total cost of \$5,200. Of that amount, \$2,350 was separately stated as meals and entertainment. Caroline, who is self-employed, is not reimbursed for any of her travel expenses. Caroline figures her deductible travel expenses as follows.



Meals and entertainment	\$2,350
50% limit	x .50
Allowable meals & entertainment	\$1,175
Other travel expenses	+ 2,650
Allowable cost before the daily limit	\$4,025
Daily limit for May 2009	\$ 698
Times number of days	x 6
Maximum luxury water travel deduction	\$4,188
Amount of allowable deduction	\$4,025

Caroline's deduction for her cruise is limited to \$4,025, even though the limit on luxury water travel is higher.

Not separately stated. If your meal or entertainment charges are not separately stated or are not clearly identifiable, you do not have to allocate any portion of the total charge to meals or entertainment.

Exceptions

The daily limit on luxury water travel (discussed earlier) does not apply to expenses you have to attend a convention, seminar, or meeting on board a cruise ship. See *Cruise Ships* under *Conventions Held Outside the North American Area*.

Conventions

You can deduct your travel expenses when you attend a convention if you can show that your attendance benefits your trade or business. You cannot deduct the travel expenses for your family.

If the convention is for investment, political, social, or other purposes unrelated to your trade or business, you cannot deduct the expenses.



Your appointment or election as a delegate does not, in itself, determine whether you can deduct travel expenses. You can deduct your travel expenses only if your attendance is connected to your own trade or business.

Convention agenda. The convention agenda or program generally shows the purpose of the convention. You can show your attendance at the convention benefits your trade or business by comparing the agenda with the official duties and responsibilities of your position. The agenda does not have to deal specifically with your official duties and responsibilities; it will be enough if the agenda is so related to your position that it shows your attendance was for business purposes.

Conventions Held Outside the North American Area

You cannot deduct expenses for attending a convention, seminar, or similar meeting held outside the North American area unless:

- The meeting is directly related to your trade or business, and
- It is as reasonable to hold the meeting outside the North American area as in it.

If the meeting meets these requirements, you also must satisfy the rules for deducting expenses for business trips in general, discussed earlier under *Travel Outside the United States*.

North American area. The North American area includes the following locations.

American Samoa	Jarvis Island
Antigua and Barbuda	Johnston Island
Aruba	Kingman Reef
Bahamas	Marshall Islands
Baker Island	Mexico
Barbados	Micronesia
Bermuda	Midway Islands
Canada	Netherlands Antilles
Costa Rica	Northern Mariana Islands
Dominica	Palau
Dominican Republic	Palmyra Atoll
Grenada	Puerto Rico
Guam	Trinidad and Tobago
Guyana	USA
Honduras	U.S. Virgin Islands
Howland Island	Wake Island
Jamaica	

The North American area also includes U.S. islands, cays, and reefs that are possessions of the United States and not part of the fifty states or the District of Columbia.

Reasonableness test. The following factors are taken into account to determine if it was reasonable to hold the meeting outside the North American area.

- The purpose of the meeting and the activities taking place at the meeting.
- The purposes and activities of the sponsoring organizations or groups.
- The homes of the active members of the sponsoring organizations and the places at which other meetings of the sponsoring organizations or groups have been or will be held.
- Other relevant factors you may present.

Cruise Ships

You can deduct up to \$2,000 per year of your expenses of attending conventions, seminars, or similar meetings held on cruise ships. All ships that sail are considered cruise ships.

You can deduct these expenses only if all of the following requirements are met.

1. The convention, seminar, or meeting is directly related to your trade or business.
2. The cruise ship is a vessel registered in the United States.
3. All of the cruise ship's ports of call are in the United States or in possessions of the United States.
4. You attach to your return a written statement signed by you that includes information about:
 - a. The total days of the trip (not including the days of transportation to and from the cruise ship port),
 - b. The number of hours each day that you devoted to scheduled business activities, and
 - c. A program of the scheduled business activities of the meeting.

5. You attach to your return a written statement signed by an officer of the organization or group sponsoring the meeting that includes:

- a. A schedule of the business activities of each day of the meeting, and
- b. The number of hours you attended the scheduled business activities.

2.

Entertainment

You may be able to deduct business-related entertainment expenses you have for entertaining a client, customer, or employee. The rules and definitions are summarized in *Table 2-1*.

You can deduct entertainment expenses only if they are both ordinary and necessary and meet one of the following tests.

- Directly-related test.
- Associated test.

Both of these tests are explained later.

An ordinary expense is one that is common and accepted in your trade or business. A necessary expense is one that is helpful and appropriate for your business. An expense does not have to be required to be considered necessary.



The amount you can deduct for entertainment expenses may be limited. Generally, you can deduct only 50% of your unreimbursed entertainment expenses. This limit is discussed later under 50% Limit.

Directly-Related Test

To meet the directly-related test for entertainment expenses (including entertainment-related meals), you must show that:

- The main purpose of the combined business and entertainment was the active conduct of business,
- You did engage in business with the person during the entertainment period, and
- You had more than a general expectation of getting income or some other specific business benefit at some future time.

Business is generally not considered to be the main purpose when business and entertainment are combined on hunting or fishing trips, or on yachts or other pleasure boats. Even if you show that business was the main purpose, you generally cannot deduct the expenses for the use of an entertainment facility. See *Entertainment Facilities* under *What Entertainment Expenses Are Not Deductible?* later in this chapter.