



Airline Passengers and Lighters

Frequently Asked Questions



The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) enforces the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Hazardous Materials Regulations in aviation. This includes *safety* rules on how airline passengers can carry lighters. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) enforces *security* rules about what passengers can carry on the aircraft. The FAA guidance below considers both DOT and TSA rules for passengers carrying lighters.

Q1. What type of lighter can I bring onto the aircraft?

A1. Under DOT rules (49 CFR 175.10), when traveling on a commercial airline, you can bring one (1) lighter that uses a flammable gas (butane) or that uses a flammable liquid that is absorbed in a lining (Zippo-type). The following restrictions apply:

- For safety reasons, permitted lighters must be in your carry-on or on your person (in your pocket), not in checked baggage. *See Q2. regarding special travel containers that allow lighters in checked baggage.*
- Under TSA regulations, torch lighters (a.k.a. jet lighters, blue flame lighters, cigar lighters) are forbidden in your carry-on or on your person. TSA rules also prohibit lighters that look like guns or other weapons.
- Containers of lighter fluid or gas (butane) are forbidden in carry-on and checked baggage.
- Micro torches, chef torches, utility torches, etc., are not considered lighters and are forbidden in carry-on and checked baggage. Fuel for such torches is also forbidden in carry-on and checked baggage.

Q2. Is there any exception to the “one lighter only” rule or the “no torch lighters” rule?

A2. You can bring up to two (2) additional lighters—including torch lighters—in your checked baggage when you use DOT-approved airtight travel containers for lighters. Major lighter manufacturers such as Colibri, Prometheus, and Zippo have secured DOT special permits for their lighter travel containers. They are available from specialty stores and online. These DOT-approved containers are the only way you can carry the torch lighters that the TSA bans from the aircraft cabin. They are also the only way you can carry lighters in checked baggage (unless the lighter contains no fuel; see Q3.). Most of these containers are designed to hold one lighter; some hold two. When shopping for a travel container for your lighter, make sure the container is marked with the DOT special permit number and that you read and follow the instructions from the container manufacturer. These DOT special permits only apply to U.S. domestic air travel.

Q3. Are empty lighters restricted?

A3. A lighter that is truly empty (absolutely no fuel residue or vapors) is not regulated by the DOT as a hazardous material. There is no limit on how many empty lighters you may carry; however, carrying multiple empty lighters could cause delays at security screening checkpoints. The FAA recommends that passengers pack empty lighters in checked baggage accompanied by a note explaining that they contain no fuel.

Q4. Can I mail lighters or lighter fluid and butane refills?

A4. Lighters containing fuel or fuel residue are forbidden in the mail. Lighter fluid and butane refills are also forbidden in the mail.

See next page for an illustrated quick reference table...

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The table below shows how lighters and related products may or may not be carried on the aircraft. Airline passengers may bring only one lighter or one book of matches into the aircraft cabin. This table is based on the U.S. DOT hazardous materials safety regulations (<http://SafeTravel.dot.gov>) and the TSA security regulations (<http://www.tsa.gov>).

Type of lighter or product	Allowed in aircraft cabin? (in carry-on bag or in your pocket)	Allowed in checked baggage?
Lighter containing flammable gas (butane, including disposable lighters) 	Yes	No
Lighter containing flammable liquid absorbed in a lining (Zippo-type) 	Yes	No
Lighter containing unabsorbed liquid (includes many large and antique wick lighters) 	No	No
Torch lighter (a.k.a. blue flame lighter, jet lighter, cigar lighter) <i>See Special Permit container below</i> 	No	No
Torch lighter or additional lighters in a DOT Special Permit container 	No	Yes (In the U.S.)
Lighter shaped like a gun or other weapon 	No	No
Lighter gas refills (butane) and lighter fluid 	No	No
Chef torch, micro torch, utility torch 	No	No
Flammable gas cylinders or canisters (butane, propane, etc.) 	No	No