



# HOW TO FIND THE BEST DEALS ON FLIGHTS

By the Postcard Academy podcast

# SET ALERTS FOR ERROR/MISTAKE FARES

An error fare is a pricing mistake by the airline, or sometimes by the travel agency. It can be a computer error, but often it's human error, so it could just be someone who's forgotten to put a zero in — instead of a \$1,000 flight, it's \$100.

## How to find an error fare

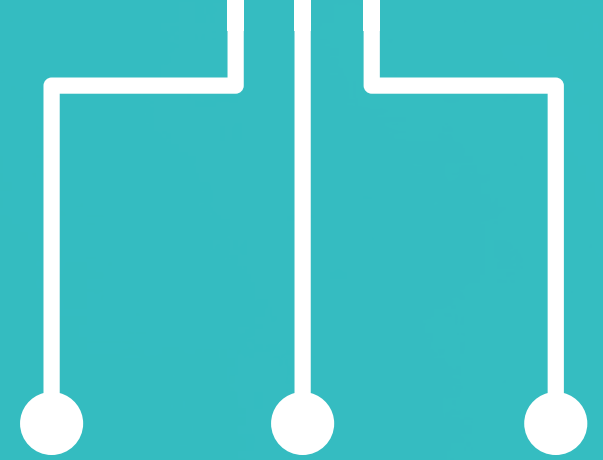
Set alerts to get notified of error fares as they happen. You can set up notifications on sites like Secret Flying and TravelPirates, though then you'll get notifications for all their deals. To avoid this, set an If This Then That (IFTTT) alert to get notified as soon as an error fare goes live. IFTTT is a service that connects your websites/apps/channels and automatically acts when a formula is triggered.

For example, if you connect Facebook and Twitter, and you want Twitter to automatically update your profile photo when you change it on Facebook, you can set up a recipe/formula for that. For error fares, here's a formula you can use to get an alert sent to your phone when Secret Flying sends a tweet using the phrase 'error fare.'

formula: <https://ifttt.com/applets/37951669d-error-fare-from-secretflying>

Don't hesitate. Error fares can last for as little as 20 minutes. Some airlines don't honor error fares, so wait until you have the tickets before booking anything else for the trip. If the airline/agency decides not to honor the error fare, you should get reimbursed.





# Before booking an error fare

Know your schedule. How flexible is your boss? Can you take vacation anytime or only specific periods during the year? Are you traveling alone or with someone? If you're not solo traveling, how flexible is your travel partner's schedule? Can you book on their behalf? Will you feel comfortable doing that?



Scott's Cheap Flights is another great resource. Sign up to get daily email alerts on international flights.





# TRAVEL ROULETTE

I love how error fares alleviate vacation decision paralysis by telling you where to go to get a fantastic deal. If you like this kind of gamble, you can also check out Google Flights' Explore Map. Add in your dates, from where you want to leave, destination 'Everywhere,' and your interests if you like (food, beaches, etc). Then click on the map. On this page, you'll see some sliders and can narrow by price. Hover over the red dots to see the flight prices for the cities.

# SHOP AROUND

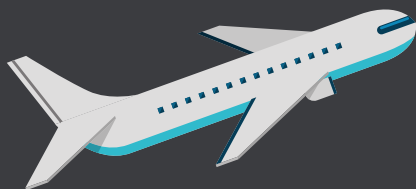
Compare flight prices on sites like Skyscanner, Momondo, and Kiwi.com, which has become popular with people who have more time than money. Kiwi searches for the cheapest travel deal for you, even if it means a layover in which you have to check in again for your connecting flight. But travelers swear it saves them hundreds of dollars, and if you miss a flight due to a delay or cancelation, Kiwi will reimburse you (up to a certain point) and help get you on the next flight as long as you contact Kiwi directly. You can also play travel roulette with Kiwi by choosing to go Anywhere.

These search engines don't always capture every price (for example, to fly Southwest, you have to go to their site), but they are a great start. And if you have a preferred airline, check flight prices directly with them, and sign up for their loyalty program. My favorite airline right now is Norwegian. I just checked flights from Providence, Rhode Island to Dublin, and Norwegian has fares cheaper than what I found on Kiwi.

# BEST TIME OF YEAR TO TRAVEL

Most travel destinations have a high and low season. Then there's this little-known season called the shoulder season, which falls between those two seasons. Usually May and November are considered the shoulder seasons, but this can vary by destination depending on the weather of the region and when most people go there.

For example, November could be a great time to go to Paris. You'll get better flight and accommodation deals than in the summer, and the Christmas markets actually start mid-November. So, you can enjoy the charm of the holidays without the crowds and bad winter weather.







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