

As of the new year, airline passengers are no longer allowed to pack spare lithium batteries in checked luggage. The new regulation, designed to reduce the risk of lithium battery fires, will only allow lithium batteries in checked luggage if they are installed in the devices they power. Lithium batteries are considered hazardous materials because they can overheat under certain conditions. Safety testing conducted by the FAA found that current aircraft cargo fire-suppression systems would not be capable of extinguishing the fire if a shipment of lithium batteries were to ignite in flight.

Spare batteries are the batteries you carry separately from the devices they power. A battery that is installed in a device is not considered a spare battery.

DO NOT pack spare lithium batteries in your checked baggage

It is recommended that you carry your devices with you in your carry-on luggage. However, devices may be checked with batteries installed.

DO pack spare lithium batteries in your carry-on baggage

- Keep the batteries in their original packaging
- or pack the batteries in individual plastic bags
- or cover the contact points with electrical tape

The point is to isolate the battery terminals to prevent short-circuiting

QUANTITY LIMITS apply to both spare and installed batteries. The limits are expressed in grams of “equivalent lithium content” (ELC). Generally, 8 grams of ELC provides approximately 100 watt-hours; 25 grams provides approximately 300 watt-hours.

Passengers may pack in their carry-on luggage:

- Any number of batteries with 8 grams or less ELC

All lithium ion batteries in cell phones, and nearly all laptop computer batteries are below 8-grams ELC.

- Maximum of 2 spare batteries with a combined ELC of up to 25 grams, in addition to any batteries below the 8-gram limit
- Lithium metal batteries, spare or installed, are limited to 2 grams of lithium metal per battery

Almost all consumer-type lithium metal batteries are below 2 grams of lithium metal.



The common devices above generally use 8-gram or less ELC lithium-ion batteries. You can carry any number of spare batteries for these in your carry-on, but NOT in your checked luggage.

A battery should have its specifications printed somewhere on it. Avoid having items confiscated by learning the ELC content of your items before packing them.