



Department of Immigration

Background

From 28 January 2017, all UK passports will no longer include the holder’s signature in digital format, and instead require that holders sign their passport after it has been issued to them.

An image of a passport containing the described amendment is provided below:



Customer FAQs

1. Where do I have to sign on the passport?

There is a pre-printed line above the page which shows your personal details such as your name and date of birth. You will need to sign on this line using a black ballpoint pen with your usual signature or mark.

2. Is my passport less secure because it does not have an electronic signature?

No. A handwritten signature meets the international standards for passports, and brings the UK into line with other countries such as USA, France, Ireland, New Zealand, and Canada whose passports currently include only a handwritten signature.

3. I have two passports, one has a digital signature and the other requires 'sign after receipt', does this matter?

No. Both types of passport are highly secure and internationally trusted.

4. Will passports with a 'wet signature' be treated in the same way as the passport containing a digital signature at border control?

For a passport to be valid for travel it must contain your usual signature or mark. This can be either digitally printed or handwritten.

Both types of passport are highly secure and internationally trusted. Holders of passports with a digital copy of their signature and those with a handwritten signature should experience no difference in how they are treated at border control.

5. I am exempt from signing on my passport will I be given a 'sign after receipt' passport?

For customers who are exempt from signing there will be a note on the personal details page that contains their name and date of birth that states: 'The holder is not required to sign'.

6. Do I have to have a 'sign after receipt' passport?

By the end of January 2017, all passports issued to customers who are required to sign their passport, will need to be signed after the document has been issued to them.

The sign after receipt book has a pre-printed signature line on the page above the one with your personal details. You will need to sign on the line with your usual signature or mark.

7. What happens if my passport is not accepted as a form of Identity because I have not yet signed it or there is a query on my signature?

You must sign your passport in your usual signature or mark as soon as possible. HM Passport Office is not responsible for a third party refusing to accept a passport as evidence of identity.

Any queries over the signature will need to be resolved between the signatory and the third party.

8. What if the customer makes a mistake (signs in wrong place/below the line/over printed information/has part of a letter descended below the line e.g. those with tails such as p,y,g)

Your passport will remain valid until it reaches its expiry date.

If you have made a mistake when signing, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or further questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

9. What colour ink should be used?

HMPO recommends you sign in black ink, however, if you have signed in another colour your passport will remain valid until it reaches its expiry date.

10. What if the customer has signed in pencil?

Customers should not rub out the pencil signature as this may damage the page. The signature should be clear and not overwritten. HMPO recommends you sign in black ink.

If you have made a mistake when signing, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or further questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

11. What if the customer overwrites?

The signature should be clear and not overwritten. HMPO recommends you sign in black ink.

If you have made a mistake when signing, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or further questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

12. What is a valid signature?

A valid signature is one that is signed on the line in permanent ink and has not been crossed through or altered.

13. What happens if I have accidentally signed my wife/husband's passport?

The passport should only contain the holder's signature or mark. If you have accidentally signed your wife/husband's passport, the passport will not be valid for travel.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

14. What if I have recently changed my name and have signed in the old name by mistake on the passport in my new name?

You should sign your passport in your usual signature or mark. If you are altering this please use the one which applies from the date you have changed your name.

If you have made a mistake when signing, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

15. I am shortly getting married and have applied for a post-dated passport in my married name, what name should I sign my passport in?

You should sign your passport in your usual signature or mark. If you are changing this please use the one which applies from your date of marriage.

16. What happens if the customer has smudged their signature or used correction fluid?

If you have used correction fluid your passport will no longer be valid for travel.

If you have made a mistake when signing or the signature is smudged, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

17. How do you know it is my signature?

The holder's passport photograph is the key identifier when checking a passport, not the signature. Your signature is just one of a number of features on your passport which are used to confirm your identity.

18. There is more than one signature in my passport, does this matter?

A. The passport should only contain the holder's signature. If there is more than one signature from the holder in the passport it would still be valid till it reaches its expiry date as long as the signatures or marks are the same.

If you have made a mistake when signing, HM Passport Office are unable to guarantee that this error will not cause you to encounter issues when using your passport, such as delays or further questioning by Border Officials.

If you need to replace your passport due to a mistake when signing, you will have to apply for a replacement passport.

