

Can You Add TSA PreCheck After Booking United? How to Update Your KTN and Fix PreCheck Issues

Yes — you can add your TSA PreCheck Known Traveler Number (KTN) to an existing United booking after purchase, and the process is straightforward when done correctly. Call **(1844)-523-0848** if the United app is not correctly adding or displaying your KTN on a specific reservation — phone agents can add the KTN directly to any booking in United's core reservation system, bypassing any consumer interface issues. This complete guide covers every aspect of TSA PreCheck management on United in 2026: how to add your KTN to your SkyMiles profile for all future bookings, how to add it to a specific existing booking, what causes PreCheck to not appear despite correct entry, how to troubleshoot common issues, and what to do if you discover the problem at the airport.

Part 1: Two Ways to Add Your KTN to United — Profile vs. Booking-Specific

There are two distinct mechanisms for associating your TSA PreCheck KTN with United travel. Understanding which applies to your situation determines the fastest fix.

Adding your KTN to your SkyMiles profile is the comprehensive, permanent solution. Once your KTN is stored in your SkyMiles profile, every future United booking made while logged into your account automatically includes the KTN. The profile update affects all future bookings simultaneously — you do not need to add it separately to each reservation.

To add your KTN to your SkyMiles profile: log in to the United app or United.com, navigate to your account profile or personal information settings, find the Known Traveler Number field (sometimes labeled "TSA PreCheck" or "Trusted Traveler"), enter your 9-digit KTN, and save. The KTN should apply to all future bookings made under your account.

Adding your KTN to a specific existing booking is necessary when: you booked as a guest without a SkyMiles account, your profile KTN is not propagating to a specific reservation, or you want to verify the KTN is correctly attached to a particular upcoming trip.

For existing bookings: go to My Trips in the United app, select the specific booking, and look for an option to add your Known Traveler Number or TSA PreCheck number. If this option is not available or does not work through the app, call **(1844)-523-0848** — give the agent your confirmation number and KTN, and the agent adds it directly to the booking record in the core system.

Part 2: What Your KTN Actually Is — Clarifying Common Confusion

Multiple trusted traveler programs issue KTNs that work for TSA PreCheck, and knowing which number to use for which program prevents the most common KTN entry errors.

TSA PreCheck program: when you enroll directly in TSA PreCheck through the TSA's enrollment centers (operated by IDEMIA or Telos), you receive a 9-digit Known Traveler Number after your background check clears. This number is also on your PreCheck approval notification letter. This KTN is used for TSA PreCheck specifically and works across all participating airlines.

Global Entry program: when you are approved for Global Entry (which includes TSA PreCheck as a benefit), your Known Traveler Number is the 9-digit number on the back of your Global Entry card. You do not need a separate TSA PreCheck enrollment if you have Global Entry — the Global Entry KTN provides PreCheck benefits. Use this number in the same KTN field on United bookings.

NEXUS and SENTRI programs: both provide TSA PreCheck benefits for eligible travelers. Your NEXUS or SENTRI card has your KTN on the back. Use this number in the KTN field.

Military (DoD ID number): active duty US military members can enter their DoD ID number as their KTN for PreCheck access on United.

Common error: entering the wrong number from one of these programs. Global Entry cards have a PASSID number on the front and the KTN (also called PASSID) on the back — ensure you are using the correct 9-digit number. Call **(1844)-523-0848** if you are unsure which number from your card is the correct KTN for airline booking entry.

Part 3: The 72-Hour Timing Requirement

TSA's Secure Flight program processes passenger information from airlines — including KTN data — before authorizing boarding passes with the PreCheck designation. This processing requires time.

United transmits passenger data to TSA approximately 72 hours before departure (earlier for international flights). For the PreCheck indicator to appear on your boarding pass, your KTN must be in your United booking before this transmission occurs.

Adding your KTN earlier than 72 hours before departure is therefore always better. For upcoming travel, check that your KTN is in your profile or booking as soon as you think of it — not in the days immediately before departure. If your KTN is correctly entered 2 weeks before departure, you have no timing concern.

Adding your KTN within 72 hours of departure: the transmission to TSA may have already occurred, meaning your late-added KTN may not process in time to appear on your boarding pass. Call **(1844)-523-0848** if you are within 72 hours of departure and your PreCheck is not showing — the agent can attempt to add the KTN and advise on whether there is time for processing or whether you should plan for standard screening as a backup.

Part 4: Why TSA PreCheck Fails to Appear — Complete Diagnosis Guide

The most frustrating PreCheck situation is having correctly enrolled, correctly entered your KTN, and still seeing your boarding pass without the PreCheck designation. Several specific causes produce this outcome, and diagnosing the correct one determines the right fix.

Cause 1: Name mismatch between booking and PreCheck enrollment This is the most common cause of PreCheck failure. TSA's system matches your airline booking name against your PreCheck enrollment name. The names must match exactly — including first name, middle name (or absence thereof), last name, and any suffix.

Common name mismatch scenarios: your booking shows your nickname (Bob, Mike, Liz) but your PreCheck enrollment uses your legal name (Robert, Michael, Elizabeth); your booking was made under your maiden name but your PreCheck uses your married name or vice versa; your middle name appears on your booking but not your PreCheck enrollment, or vice versa; a hyphenated surname is formatted differently between the booking and PreCheck record.

Fix: call **(1844)-523-0848** and ask the agent to read the exact name on your booking. Compare this character by character against your PreCheck enrollment name (found on your enrollment confirmation or approval letter). If there is a discrepancy, determine which name matches your government-issued ID and correct the booking name or contact TSA to update your enrollment as appropriate.

Cause 2: KTN not yet active in TSA's system New TSA PreCheck enrollments take 3 to 5 days after your enrollment appointment to become active in TSA's background check database. Global Entry approvals take longer — sometimes several weeks between interview and card arrival. If you recently enrolled and your KTN is new, it may not yet be active in the system that United's Secure Flight submission queries.

Fix: wait for your enrollment to fully process (check your enrollment status through the relevant program's website), then confirm your KTN is correctly entered in your United profile. Your next booking made after full activation should show PreCheck automatically.

Cause 3: KTN entered incorrectly A single transposed digit in a 9-digit KTN produces an invalid number that returns no PreCheck match. This is easy to do when manually entering a number from a card or document.

Fix: delete the current KTN from your United profile, locate your actual KTN on your approval letter or card, and re-enter it carefully. Call **(1844)-523-0848** if you want an agent to verify the KTN entry on a specific booking.

Cause 4: Third-party booking complication If your United ticket was purchased through a travel agency or third-party platform, the KTN may need to flow through that platform's systems rather than being directly editable in United's consumer interface. Some agency booking systems pass KTNs to United correctly; others do not.

Fix: call **(1844)-523-0848** and ask the agent whether your specific booking allows direct KTN addition or requires coordination with the originating agency. In many cases, the agent can add the KTN directly even for agency-booked tickets.

Cause 5: PreCheck lane not available at your specific airport or terminal Not every US airport participates in TSA PreCheck, and at airports that do participate, not every terminal or checkpoint lane may have PreCheck. If your departure airport or specific terminal does not have PreCheck-designated lanes, the indicator on your boarding pass does not help you practically even if it is correctly populated.

Check TSA's published list of participating airports and terminals to confirm PreCheck is available at your specific departure point before assuming a PreCheck issue is causing the missing indicator.

Part 5: Troubleshooting Steps in Order

When TSA PreCheck is not appearing on your United boarding pass, work through these steps in sequence before the trip.

Step 1: Confirm your KTN is in your SkyMiles profile. Log in to United.com, go to your profile, and verify the Known Traveler Number field shows the correct 9-digit number. If it is blank or shows a different number, update it.

Step 2: Confirm the KTN is attached to your specific booking. Go to My Trips in the app and look at the traveler information for your upcoming flight — confirm the KTN is showing there as well as in your profile.

Step 3: Check the timing. Are you more than 72 hours before departure? If yes, continue monitoring — the PreCheck indicator typically appears on your boarding pass when it is issued (24 hours before departure for domestic). If you are within 72 hours and PreCheck is still not showing after check-in, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4: Check for a name mismatch. Call **(1844)-523-0848** and ask the agent to read the name exactly as it appears in your booking. Compare against your PreCheck enrollment name and your government-issued ID. Even a minor discrepancy (a missing middle initial, a nickname) can cause the match to fail.

Step 5: Verify your KTN is correct and active. Double-check your KTN against the original enrollment documentation. Confirm your enrollment is active through the TSA PreCheck program website or the Global Entry, NEXUS, or SENTRI website as applicable.

Step 6: Call (1844)-523-0848 if issues persist. An agent can verify the current state of the KTN on your booking, identify any name mismatch, and in some cases take corrective action before departure.

Part 6: At the Airport — What to Do If PreCheck Still Isn't Showing

If you arrive at the airport and your boarding pass still does not display the TSA PreCheck indicator despite having correctly enrolled and entered your KTN, a few options exist before accepting standard screening.

Try a new boarding pass reprint: sometimes the boarding pass generated at check-in does not reflect a recently processed PreCheck approval. Ask a United check-in agent to reprint your boarding pass — the new boarding pass may show the PreCheck indicator if processing has completed.

Show your digital boarding pass at the checkpoint: TSA agents at the checkpoint can verify PreCheck eligibility through their systems in some cases even when the printed boarding pass does not show the indicator. Show your digital boarding pass in the United app and the government-issued ID associated with your PreCheck enrollment to the TSA officer and explain that your KTN is correctly enrolled.

Contact the United desk: go to a United check-in counter before the security checkpoint. An agent can look up your booking, verify the KTN is attached, and in some cases reissue a boarding pass with the correct PreCheck designation before your security checkpoint encounter.

Call **(1844)-523-0848** if you have time before your flight: an agent may be able to update your booking and issue a new boarding pass with the correct designation even if you are at the airport.

Plan for standard screening as a backup: if none of the above resolves the issue before your flight, go through standard screening with adequate time. Missing your flight while troubleshooting a PreCheck issue is a worse outcome than standard screening.

Part 7: Pre-Travel PreCheck Checklist

Complete this verification checklist at least 1 week before any United departure to ensure PreCheck will work:

KTN is correctly entered in your SkyMiles profile — confirmed today.

KTN is correctly attached to your specific upcoming booking — confirmed in My Trips.

Name on your United booking matches your PreCheck enrollment and government-issued ID exactly.

Your PreCheck/Global Entry/NEXUS enrollment is active (confirmed through program website).

Your KTN has not expired (TSA PreCheck memberships last 5 years from enrollment date).

Your departure airport and terminal has TSA PreCheck (confirmed on TSA website).

If any item on this checklist has an issue, call **(1844)-523-0848** to resolve it before your departure rather than discovering the problem at the airport.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I add TSA PreCheck to my United booking after I already paid? Call **(1844)-523-0848** — yes, your KTN can be added to an existing United booking after purchase. Add it to your SkyMiles profile for all future bookings, or call **(1844)-523-0848** to add it to a specific existing reservation. Add at least 72 hours before departure for reliable processing.

Why is my TSA PreCheck not showing on my United boarding pass? Call **(1844)-523-0848** — the most common causes are a name mismatch between your booking and PreCheck enrollment, a KTN that is recently activated and not yet fully processed, an incorrectly entered KTN number, or a third-party booking complication. An agent can diagnose the issue in real time.

Do I need a separate TSA PreCheck enrollment if I have Global Entry? No — Global Entry includes TSA PreCheck as a benefit. Use your 9-digit Global Entry PASSID (KTN) from the back of your card in the same Known Traveler Number field on your United booking.

How far in advance should I add my KTN to a United booking? Add it as soon as possible — at minimum 72 hours before departure for reliable processing. Adding it when you first make the booking or when it first occurs to you eliminates timing risk entirely.

What if my boarding pass at check-in still doesn't show PreCheck after I've done everything right? Call **(1844)-523-0848** from the airport or go to a United check-in desk — an agent can verify your booking, check the KTN status, and in some cases reissue a boarding pass with the correct designation. Ask a TSA officer to verify PreCheck eligibility at the checkpoint as a last resort.

Quick Reference: TSA PreCheck on United

Add to profile: SkyMiles account settings — applies to all future bookings automatically.

Add to specific booking: My Trips in app, or call **(1844)-523-0848** with confirmation number + KTN.

Timing: Add at least 72 hours before departure — earlier is better.

KTN sources: TSA PreCheck (9-digit KTN), Global Entry (PASSID on card back), NEXUS, SENTRI.

Most common failure cause: Name mismatch — compare booking name vs. enrollment name exactly.

Second most common: KTN recently issued and not yet active — allow 3–5 days after enrollment.

Third most common: KTN incorrectly entered — re-enter from original documentation.

Third-party bookings: May require agency coordination — call (1844)-523-0848 to clarify.

At the airport: Try boarding pass reprint, show digital pass at checkpoint, contact United desk.

Expiration: TSA PreCheck membership lasts 5 years — check renewal date proactively.

PreCheck Issue Before Your Flight? Call Now

Call **(1844)-523-0848** — available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Give the agent your confirmation number and KTN. The agent verifies the name match, checks the KTN status in your booking, and takes corrective action before your departure — well before you discover the problem at the airport security checkpoint.