

# 4 Ways to Book a “Round the World” Ticket for Cheaper Than You Thought

There are four main ways to do it, each of which will appeal to a different type of traveler. Cost varies of course, but in general, the more ambitious/flexible you want your trip to be, the more it will cost.

## OPTION #1: THE AIRLINE ALLIANCES

The three big Alliances are [One World](#), [SkyTeam](#) and [Star Alliance](#), each of which includes many different airlines around the world. Each Alliance lets you plot your trip on a similar map-interface before giving you an estimated price

### Downsides

1. Though the base-price for an Star Alliance RTW trip isn't too bad (\$3,000 or so), it jumps up quickly if your trip is at all complicated.
2. Not every city is served by a particular Alliance, you might need sub-trips to get to some destinations, interesting restrictions

### Upsides

1. If you're willing to be flexible and really game the rules, you can put a pretty awesome trip together for not a bad price.
2. since the airlines you're flying are all on the same team, you can absolutely CRUSH the miles game.
3. Additionally, the restrictions can work in your favor sometimes, throwing in fun, free stops you might not have thought of otherwise

### Bottom Line

**Pick this option if** you're able to be a little flexible about your destinations and route, if you're loyal to a particular airline and want to really max out your rewards,

## OPTION #2: TICKET BROKERS

Can get you a surprisingly good deal on your crazy trip while taking care of a lot of the footwork for you. i.e. RTW, STA and Airtreks to name a few.

### Downsides

1. Since these brokers use every trick in the book to get you a great deal while still making a profit, you won't get as many miles, since your 15-flight trip might be on 14 different airlines, none of whom are partner

## UPSIDES

1. The biggest advantages of brokers are the great flexibility and the expert advice. These guys know their travel, and can save you money having you land-trek some portions, and adding in extra stops where it's free
2. they're often cheaper, too - typically ranging from \$3,000-\$7,000 for some very ambitious trips.

## BOTTOM LINE

**Pick this option if** you want a great balance of easy, flexible and affordable. Brokers ranked high in all three categories.

## OPTION #3: DO NONE OF IT YOURSELF (Pre-Planned Packages)

Maybe you haven't really thought about where you want to go, or are just too busy to do much planning. Other companies, like RTW (roundtheworldtickets.com) and STA (startheadventure.com) or Airtreks (airtreks.com), have already-packaged RTW trips that hit popular destinations and require almost no effort.

## DOWNSIDES

1. You're not going to as much flexibility from a trip that's already planned for you,
2. restrictions abound
3. If your RTW trip only has stops in four countries, and you've already been to two of them, you might be better off taking a cruise.

## UPSIDES

1. Because these trips tend to hit popular destinations with huge airports, they can be the most affordable options out there, and they require little planning for you, the busy traveler

## BOTTOM LINE

**Pick this option if** you're on the ends of the cash spectrum: either you don't mind spending a ton of money, or want to save a ton of it. If you're an itinerant college student, there's no cheaper way to go around the world.

## OPTION #4: DO ALL OF IT YOURSELF (The Super Hack)

**You** want to have extreme control over every piece of your amazing journey. ITA Software's MATRIX SEARCH\*\*\* (<http://matrix.itasoftware.com/>) is like Kayak on steroids. It can do things that are way too complicated for most travel sites (and most users, I should add), basically by stripping out all the shortcuts and adding a lot more variables.

\*\*\* Note: Tickets cannot be purchased directly from ITA Software. If you find a fare you like, you can give the information from this site to your travel agent or airline when making a booking.

## DOWNSIDERS

1. Doing it all yourself is going to take far more time and know-how than any of the above options, and not having an expert handy regarding things like Visas and travel conditions could slow down your planning — or your trip.

## UPSIDES

1. ***It's not easy***, but with enough time and determination, you could theoretically book an RTW Trip going anywhere, with any specs you like, perhaps for cheaper than any other options.

## BOTTOM LINE

**Pick this option if know computers... or know travel... or know you're very determined/picky.** Then again, if you know all these things, you probably already know about Matrix, and don't need us.

Blog from 03/31/2014 11:31 am ET | Updated May 31, 2014 Paul Jury Hyffpost Travel  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-jury/4-ways-to-book-a-round-th\\_b\\_5057197.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-jury/4-ways-to-book-a-round-th_b_5057197.html)

## ROUND THE WORLD TICKETING RULES

As you go about booking your round the world trip we try and keep the jargon to a minimum but for those who are a bit more detailed oriented, here is a list of airfare rules which generally apply to round the world fares. Each ticket has slightly different interpretations of these but this will give you a fair idea of the constraints of around the world airfares.

**Ocean Crossings** *travelling across the major oceans forms the basis of around the world travel*  
Both the Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean must be crossed on a round world ticket. See Circle fares for alternatives to crossing both of these oceans.

**Stopovers** *stopping in a city for more than 24 hours*

A minimum of 3 stopovers must be taken on an around the world ticket. More than 20 stopovers can be had on the top tier of tickets. A city may only be stopped in once but can be transited up to 3 times. Some tickets will restrict the number of stopovers in each continent, particularly the OneWorld tickets which only allow 2 stops in Europe on their 26,000 mile around the world ticket.

**Transits** *stopping in a city less than 24 hours*

An overnight stay can be utilized without necessarily counting as a stopover. Cities can be transited multiple times if needed; this can be the case with major hub cities such as London, Frankfurt and Chicago.

**Duration of Ticket** *the maximum validity of a ticket*

12 months is the maximum travel duration from first to last flight on almost all around the world tickets. The last flight must arrive on or before the 12 month maximum.

**Date Changes** *changing the flight date before or after departure*

Flight changes before departure attract the airline reissue fee plus the fare and taxes are reassessed to current levels with any gap paid. If rerouting, additional taxes and fees will apply. Changes after departure attract the reissue fee, if there is no route change and the same pricing bracket is available it is just the flat reissue fee collected.

**Open Dated Tickets** *the practice of having no set dates of travel*

Open dated tickets no longer exist and the whole route must have at least a provisional date. Some airlines permit the last couple of sectors to be issued as dummy legs if the preferred dates are not open for sale. This is then amended as airlines open up flights 11 months in advance with 1 x waiver of the change fee to reissue those flights that were outside of system range at the time of booking.

**Route** *the order of destinations organized for the round the world ticket*

Each ticket must have a route or structured ordered of destinations. The route is determined based on many other rules and can often include travel via hub cities. The route must be in either an easterly or westerly direction with no backtracking between continents.

**Route Changes** *changing the route of the ticket*

Changing the route before or after departure may be permitted but will often attract larger fees and additional taxes to be paid to the rerouting airline. It is recommended to set the route at the start of the booking wherever possible.

**Hub Cities** *an airlines base city or airport*

Each airline has a hub. Usually it is the capital city of their mother country but not always. For example, in America, there are several major hubs operated by different regional airlines and flights across the continent will often route via these major hubs where transits or stopovers may also be permitted.

**Backtracking** *travelling in an opposite direction to the overall direction of the ticket*

Backtracking is permitted in certain situations, particularly within a continent. Backtracking is not permitted between continents or from the west coast to the east coast of the USA or from Hawaii to mainland USA.

**Direction** *the direction of the ticket from Australia*

The direction can either be **East via the South Pacific, South America or North America** or it can be **West via Asia or Africa**. The ticket must continue in this direction without continental backtracking.

**Independent, Own Arrangements or Surface Sectors** *making your own way between two points*

You may elect to make your own way between two points. This is permitted on most round the world tickets. Distance based fares will include the gap between two cities and the surface sector is included in the maximum calculation of 16 sectors on any e-ticket.

**Distance Travelled** *total mileage of the ticket*

The total distance travelled or mileage calculation is derived from the straight line distance between all points on the itinerary. This is used to calculate the appropriate price bracket on some alliance based airfares, but has been phased out on basic round world tickets which are route based.

**Direct Services** *a flight between two cities which may include a layover*

Direct flights are different to non-stop flights. Direct flights can often include a layover to pick up additional passengers or fuel. For example, Sydney – London with Qantas on flight number QF1 is classed as a direct service. However, this service will layover in Dubai for 1.5 hours. The benefit of a direct service is that you get back onto the same seat on the same aircraft. Also, you don't have to rely on baggage handlers getting your bags onto the next plane. Another benefit of direct flights is that the layover isn't counted in your mileage or sector count.

**STAR ALLIANCE**

United  
Lufthanza  
Air Canada  
South African Airways

**ONE WORLD**

American  
British Airways  
Cathay Pacific  
Qantas

**SKY TEAM**

Delta  
KLM  
Air France  
Alitalia

## Sample TRW Itineraries



## MIGHTY MIGHTY FR \$2,349

HIGHLIGHTS: Fiji, New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, UK

# THE BOBBY DAZZLER



## THE BOBBY DAZZLER FR \$3,859

HIGHLIGHTS: Brazil, South Africa, Kenya, India, Sri Lanka, Fiji

# THE BIG DOZEN



## THE BIG DOZEN FR \$2,549

HIGHLIGHTS: Argentina, Colombia, Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong



## AROUND THE WORLD WITH EMIRATES FR \$2,059

HIGHLIGHTS: Italy, Dubai, Thailand, Australia

# THE DOLLY LLAMA



## THE DOLLY LLAMA FR \$3,179

HIGHLIGHTS: Peru, Chile, Spain, Japan, Australia

# KWIK FIRE KIWI



**KWIK FIRE KIWI FR \$1,869**

HIGHLIGHTS: United Kingdom, New Zealand, Dubai, Tahiti