

Half-term flight fares fall by a quarter in four days, but still cost far more than flying a week later

Fares fell on 15 of 18 UK routes between 30 September and 4 October, with Malta and Dalaman almost halving, yet a half-term trip still costs 2.6 times the same trip departing a week later on the typical route.

[LONDON, 4 October 2026]—Families still hunting for a half-term getaway are finally seeing flight prices fall. Flight Tribe, an independent UK travel deals site, has tracked the cheapest return fare on Google Flights for 18 routes from London, Manchester and Birmingham since 20 August. Between its checks on 30 September and 4 October, the cheapest fare for half-term week fell on 15 of those routes, and by 25% on the typical route.

Key findings

- London Gatwick to Malta fell from £474 to £248 return, and Manchester to Dalaman from £560 to £300.
- London Stansted to Rome fell from £324 to £200. The same trip departing the week after half-term costs £48.
- Even after the falls, a trip departing in half-term week costs 2.6 times as much as the same trip departing a week later on the typical route.
- In proportion, the gap is widest on short-haul sun routes. London Gatwick to Faro costs £265 departing in half-term week and £54 departing the week after. London Gatwick to Tenerife costs £268 and £58.
- Fares held steady or rose on three routes: Manchester to New York, London Gatwick to Paris and London Gatwick to Amsterdam.

Phil Salcedo, founder of Flight Tribe, said:

'Some of September's steepest rises have unwound in a matter of days. Malta, Dalaman and Rome are back to roughly what they cost in August, which will be a relief to families who held their nerve.'

'But cheaper is not the same as cheap. A week in Faro over half-term is still £265 return, against £54 for flying out a week later. We've seen the same trip move by more than £100 in a few days, so anyone still to book should check again before paying, and try another airport if they can.'

The falls follow six weeks of rises. Between 20 August and 30 September, half-term fares rose 69% on the typical route. After this week's drop, they're still higher than they were on 20 August on 12 of the 18 routes.

For a family of four, flying the week after half-term rather than during it would save £844 on London Gatwick to Faro and £840 on London Gatwick to Tenerife, on 4 October prices.

In England, parents who take a child out of school for a holiday without permission can be fined £80 per parent for each child, rising to £160 if not paid within 21 days. For two parents and two children, a first fine comes to £320, or £640 at the higher rate. Head teachers and councils decide whether to fine. On 4 October prices, flying the week after half-term would save a family of four more than £320 on 15 of the 18 routes, and more than £640 on six. Flight Tribe does not advise taking children out of school.

Route-by-route figures are available from Flight Tribe on request.

Methodology: Flight Tribe checked Google Flights for the cheapest return economy fare for one adult on 18 routes, for seven-night trips from Saturday to Saturday. Half-term week was 24 to 31 October 2026, covering the 26 to 30 October break used by most councils in England, and the week after was 31 October to 7 November. Half-term fares were checked seven times between 20 August and 30 September, and again on 4 October. 'Typical route' is the median. Family figures are four times the adult fare; a check for two adults and two children on two routes on 30 September came within £44 of that. Some airlines charge less for children, particularly on long-haul. No figures include bags. The cheapest fare can change airline or number of stops from one check to the next. On 30 September the cheapest half-term fares on Birmingham to Larnaca and Manchester to Barcelona were connecting flights, unlike in earlier checks; without those two routes, the typical fall between 30 September and 4 October was still 25% and the typical half-term trip still cost 2.6 times the week after. Fine figures are from GOV.UK and apply in England. Fares change constantly, so check the current price before booking.

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About Flight Tribe

Flight Tribe is an independent travel deals website for UK travellers, covering genuine offers on flights, hotels and package holidays. Every price is checked before it goes live, and each deal is reviewed in plain English, with the conditions and any catches made clear, so readers know exactly what they are booking. Run by former journalists and travel industry insiders, and owned by no airline, hotel group or tour operator, Flight Tribe exists to help people find a real holiday for less and book it with confidence.

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