landfall

LANDFALL GUIDE · VISAS & ARRIVING

Which UK visa routes are open to Americans?

THE SHORT ANSWER

Most Americans move on a work visa (usually Skilled Worker, which needs a job offer from a licensed sponsor), a family visa (if your partner is British or settled), a talent-based visa, or as a student. Some Americans are already British citizens by descent. Rules, fees and salary levels change often, so check your own case with a regulated adviser.

For US citizens and green card holders moving to the UK. Build your free, personal move plan at **yourlandfall.com/plan**.

General information, not personal tax, financial, legal or immigration advice.

This is general information, not immigration advice. In the UK, only regulated advisers can give immigration advice on your own case. We can introduce you to one.

Visiting first

US citizens don't need a visa for short visits, but you do need an **Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)** before you travel. A visit doesn't let you work or live here.

The main routes

Route	Who it's for	The key requirement
Skilled Worker	People with a UK job offer	A job with a licensed sponsor employer, at the required skill and salary level
Global Business Mobility	Staff moved by an overseas employer, e.g. to set up a UK branch	Employer sponsorship, usually for a set period
Global Talent	Leaders or emerging leaders in fields such as tech, science, the arts	An endorsement from an approved body, or a qualifying prize
High Potential Individual	Recent graduates of top-ranked universities	A degree from an eligible university within the last few years
Innovator Founder	People starting an innovative business	Endorsement of the business idea
Family (partner or spouse)	Partners of British citizens or settled people	Proof of the relationship, plus financial and other requirements
Student, then Graduate	People studying in the UK	A place on a course with a licensed sponsor

UK Ancestry visas are only for Commonwealth citizens, so they're generally not open to Americans unless you also hold a Commonwealth citizenship, such as Canadian or Australian.

Already British?

Check before you apply for a visa. You may already be a **British citizen by descent**, for example if a parent was born in the UK. Some people born before 1983 to a **British mother** can register as British under rules introduced to correct past unfairness. A British passport means no visa at all.

Costs to plan for

Most routes involve an **application fee** and the **Immigration Health Surcharge**, both paid upfront per person. Some routes also need proof of savings. Check current amounts on GOV.UK.

Your family

Partners and children can usually come as **dependants** on many routes, though not all. Check this early, because it affects which route works for you.

What to do next

Build your move plan. If you're "not sure yet" about your route, it will point you to the first step.

See every step for your move. Answer five questions and get a free plan in the right order: yourlandfall.com/plan