

Start your holiday right – sleep at the airport!

Holidays are a time to unwind, relax and forget the stresses and strains of everyday life. But, for many it is not until several days into their break that they can actually achieve that relaxed status. That's because many holiday flights leave in the early hours and getting the airport on time means disturbing your regular sleep to rise early in order to make sure you catch your flight.

If that's not bad enough, then comes the really stressful bit when you arrive at the airport's car park and realise just how much it is going to cost! If you going for longer than a couple of days then you should forget short stay parking, especially at the country's largest airport Heathrow. It is incredibly expensive, perhaps prohibitively so! Short stay rates at Terminal 4 are now running at £55.80 per 24 hour period, plus a fee of £1.50 for the privilege of entering the car park meaning that a short stay of four days would cost a staggering £224.70 at drive up rates. Prices at Terminals 1, 2 and 3 are slightly cheaper, but only just!

Of course, pre-booking and opting to stay in long stay parking rather than short stay is a much cheaper way to park at the airport. The fees are cheaper, but then you will be farther from the terminal and bus services are not as frequent as most of us would wish, especially during the early hours of the morning.

And although pre-booking seems extremely convenient, it can also bring its own problems. It can be frustrating trying to find a car park attendant to validate your ticket to exit the car park when you arrive early in the morning, and in extreme cases that can add half an hour to your journey home.

However, there is an ideal solution to car parking frustration and one that is used by many. Thankfully most [airport hotels](#) offer the incentive of free parking for periods of up to 14 days, if you book at least one night's accommodation at the hotel. Although that may sound like another expensive item to pay for on top of your holiday cost, in the majority of cases it could turn out to be equivalent or even cheaper than it will cost to park your car at the airport. And it's not just hotels around Heathrow that offer this type of facility; you will find similar deals at hotels close to most major and regional UK airports. Certainly worth bearing in mind next time your holiday comes with an early morning flight.

About the Author

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