

Getting around the USA

Transportation in the USA is diverse and expansive[•], reflecting the country's vast size and varied geography. The most common forms of transportation include cars, buses, trains, and planes, with different regions favouring different methods depending on distance, infrastructure, and local preferences.

Cars > They are the dominant mode of transportation in the US, with extensive road networks connecting nearly every corner of the country. The Interstate Highway System, established in the 1950s, allows efficient travel



between states and cities. Among the most famous roads is **Route 66**, known as the “Main Street of America”. Stretching from Chicago to Santa Monica, Route 66 once spanned over 2,400 miles and became a symbol of freedom and adventure, particularly during the mid-20th century. Although officially decommissioned[•], portions of the highway remain popular with tourists seeking a nostalgic road trip experience.



Coaches > In addition to personal vehicles, the US has an extensive bus system. **Greyhound** is one of the most well-known and longest-running coach services in the country. Founded in 1914, Greyhound operates across the US and provides an affordable way to travel between cities and states. While not as fast as air travel or as convenient as driving, Greyhound is a lifeline[•] for many passengers (nearly 18 million a year), especially in rural areas that lack major airports or train stations. The coaches are equipped with basic amenities and offer long-distance routes that connect even smaller towns.

Planes > Air travel is also a significant mode of transportation, with major hubs in cities like New York (JFK airport handles about 1,300 flight per day...!), Los Angeles, and Chicago. For longer distances, especially coast-to-coast travel, planes are often the fastest and most convenient option.

Trains > Passenger rail is available via **Amtrak**, which operates long-distance and regional routes, although its reach and speed often lag behind[•] other transportation options, especially compared to European systems.

glossary

decommissioned:
smantellato
expansive: *ampio*

to lag behind: *non essere all'altezza*
lifeline: *ancora di salvezza*

1 **READING** **WRITING** Match the beginnings and endings.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 Transportation in the USA is dominated by cars, ... | <input type="checkbox"/> | a affordable travel across the country, especially in areas without major airports or train stations. |
| 2 Route 66 is an iconic... | <input type="checkbox"/> | b with an extensive highway system connecting cities and states. |
| 3 Greyhound coaches provide... | <input type="checkbox"/> | c is slower and less extensive than other options. |
| 4 Air travel is crucial... | <input type="checkbox"/> | d for longer distances, with major hubs in cities like New York and Los Angeles. |
| 5 Amtrak offers passenger rail services but... | <input type="checkbox"/> | e road, once spanning 2,400 miles from Chicago to Santa Monica. |

2 **READING** **WRITING** **SPEAKING**

GROUP WORK Split up into groups. Choose one of the topics given below and prepare a short presentation for the class about it.

- Route 66
- Greyhound
- Amtrak
- JFK airport

