



Runway alternation programme – 2023 landings

For the communities living beneath the flight paths used by incoming aircraft, runway alternation provides predictable periods of noise relief.

At its heart, runway alternation is straightforward: for part of the day we use one runway for landings and the other for take-offs. Halfway through the day we switch over. If you were living or working under an incoming flight path during the morning, you're unlikely to be under one during the afternoon. And vice versa.

To help our neighbours plan ahead, we produce this annual schedule of runway alternation. Although we do our best to adhere to the programme, it's not always possible. Sometimes delays mean some arrivals can land out of the alternation pattern, or occasionally we have to suspend runway alternation due to bad weather or emergency repairs to one of the runways.

Day-time runway alternation

Day-time runway alternation happens only when we're on what's known as 'westerly operations'. During westerly operations the wind usually blows from the west and aircraft arrive from the east over London. Westerly operations account for about 70% of the year at Heathrow.

At Heathrow, 'day-time' runs from 06:00 till the last aircraft departs at the end of the day. The halfway point – the time when we switch runways – is 15:00.

Day-time runway codes

The day-time schedule uses the runway codes 27R and 27L.

Northern runway



27R

Southern runway



27L

27R = aircraft approaching the northern runway from the east
27L = aircraft approaching the southern runway from the east

Day-time runway alternation

Date (week commencing)	06:00 - 15:00	15:00 until last departure
2 Jan	27R	27L
9 Jan	27L	27R
16 Jan	27R	27L
23 Jan	27L	27R
30 Jan	27R	27L
6 Feb	27L	27R
13 Feb	27R	27L
20 Feb	27L	27R
27 Feb	27R	27L
6 Mar	27L	27R
13 Mar	27R	27L
20 Mar	27L	27R
27 Mar	27R	27L
3 Apr	27L	27R
10 Apr	27R	27L
17 Apr	27L	27R
24 Apr	27R	27L
1 May	27L	27R
8 May	27R	27L
15 May	27L	27R
22 May	27R	27L
29 May	27L	27R
5 Jun	27R	27L
12 Jun	27L	27R
19 Jun	27R	27L
26 Jun	27L	27R

Date (week commencing)	06:00 - 15:00	15:00 until last departure
3 Jul	27R	27L
10 Jul	27L	27R
17 Jul	27R	27L
24 Jul	27L	27R
31 Jul	27R	27L
7 Aug	27L	27R
14 Aug	27R	27L
21 Aug	27L	27R
28 Aug	27R	27L
4 Sep	27L	27R
11 Sep	27R	27L
18 Sep	27L	27R
25 Sep	27R	27L *
2 Oct	27L	27R *
9 Oct	27R	27L
16 Oct	27L	27R
23 Oct	27R	27L *
30 Oct	27L	27R *
6 Nov	27R	27L
13 Nov	27L	27R
20 Nov	27R	27L *
27 Nov	27L	27R *
4 Dec	27R	27L
11 Dec	27L	27R
18 Dec	27R	27L *
25 Dec	27L	27R

* Single runway operations are expected overnight on the northern runway from approx. 22:30 (Sunday night to Friday morning) during southern runway resurfacing. Please see our X channel [@HeathrowRunways](#) or www.heathrow.com/runwayresurfacing for updates.

We are able to use both runways for arrivals between 06:00 and 07:00 because this hour is the busiest time of day for arrivals into Heathrow.

Heathrow



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Night-time runway alternation

Since so few aircraft take off or land at night, there's more scope for runway alternation. It doesn't matter whether aircraft are coming in to land from the east or the west, we can still alternate runways.

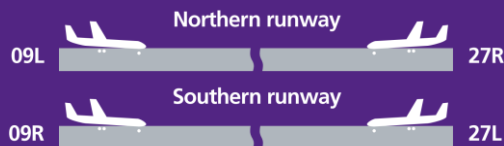
That flexibility gives us the ability to operate night-time runway alternation on a four-weekly cycle.

- **Week 1:** Aircraft fly in from the west to land on the northern runway
- **Week 2:** Aircraft fly in from the east to land on the northern runway
- **Week 3:** Aircraft fly in from the west to land on the southern runway
- **Week 4:** Aircraft fly in from the east to land on the southern runway.

Since weather conditions could interfere with this pattern, we always specify a primary and a secondary (alternative) runway in our schedule. The secondary runway is not actually a different runway. It's the primary runway approached from the opposite direction.

Night-time runway codes

The night-time schedule uses the runway codes 09L, 27R, 09R and 27L.



09L = aircraft approaching the northern runway from the west
 27R = aircraft approaching the northern runway from the east
 09R = aircraft approaching the southern runway from the west
 27L = aircraft approaching the southern runway from the east

Night-time runway alternation (from after the last departure until 06:00am)

Date (week commencing)	Runway to be used (primary)	Alternative (secondary)
2 Jan	09L	27R
9 Jan	27R	09L
16 Jan	09R	27L
23 Jan	27L	09R
30 Jan	09L	27R
6 Feb	27R	09L
13 Feb	09R	27L
20 Feb	27L	09R
27 Feb	09L	27R
6 Mar	27R	09L
13 Mar	09R	27L
20 Mar	27L	09R
27 Mar	09L	27R
3 Apr	27R	09L
10 Apr	09R	27L
17 Apr	27L	09R
24 Apr	09L	27R
1 May	27R	09L
8 May	09R	27L
15 May	27L	09R
22 May	09L	27R
29 May	27R	09L
5 Jun	09R	27L
12 Jun	27L	09R
19 Jun	09L	27R
26 Jun	27R	09L

Date (week commencing)	Runway to be used (primary)	Alternative (secondary)
3 Jul	09R	27L
10 Jul	27L	09R
17 Jul	09L	27R
24 Jul	27R	09L
31 Jul	09R	27L
7 Aug	27L	09R
14 Aug	09L	27R
21 Aug	27R	09L
28 Aug	09R	27L
4 Sep	27L	09R
11 Sep	09L	27R
18 Sep	27R	09L
25 Sep	09R *	27L *
2 Oct	27L *	09R *
9 Oct	09L	27R
16 Oct	27R	09L
23 Oct	09R *	27L *
30 Oct	27L *	09R *
6 Nov	09L	27R
13 Nov	27R	09L
20 Nov	09R *	27L *
27 Nov	27L *	09R *
4 Dec	09L	27R
11 Dec	27R	09L
18 Dec	09R *	27L *
25 Dec	27L	09R

* De-alternation to the northern runway is expected overnight (Sunday night to Friday morning) during southern runway resurfacing. Please see our X channel [@HeathrowRunways](#) or www.heathrow.com/runwayresurfacing for updates.

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