



## NEWS RELEASE

# A historic day in Chicago aviation: American celebrates 70 years of firsts at O'Hare

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- American Airlines joined the City of Chicago to celebrate the 70th anniversary of commercial air service at O'Hare today.
- American brought history to life by reenacting O'Hare's first passenger flight with the TWA heritage livery aircraft.
- The airline reflects on seven decades of commitment to its ORD customers, team members and the broader Chicagoland community.

CHICAGO — On this day 70 years ago, American Airlines made Chicago aviation history when Trans World Airlines (TWA), which would later be acquired by American, took off from Chicago's new airport — marking the first passenger flight to depart from O'Hare International Airport (ORD). A dedication ceremony drew 23,000 people to the airport to witness the historic departure of TWA Flight 94, bound for Paris — the first ceremonial flight that officially opened the airport for commercial service on Oct. 29, 1955.

American joined the City of Chicago today to bring history to life by returning the TWA heritage livery back to ORD to reenact that first passenger flight. Customers on board American Flight 2743, operated on a Boeing 737-800 TWA heritage livery aircraft, were treated to a surprise gate celebration and water cannon salute to mark the occasion. The airline's Boeing 737-800 Astrojet heritage livery aircraft also passed through Chicago today — transporting ORD back to the 1950s for the milestone anniversary.

"For 70 years, American has grown alongside O'Hare, helping shape it into one of the world's leading aviation hubs," said American's Senior Vice President of Global Airports, Contact Centers and Inflight Dining Operations Julie Rath. "We're proud to stand with our partners today at the City of Chicago and Chicago Department of Aviation to honor

the incredible history we share and celebrate the investments we've made together to elevate Chicago as a world-class destination. Fueled by our unwavering commitment to our Chicago team and customers, as well as the vibrant communities that keep the city thriving, we look forward to our future as the airline that sets the standard at ORD."

**Download image »**

American's Boeing 737-800 Astrojet heritage livery aircraft received a water cannon salute at ORD.

**Download image »**

A Lockheed Constellation aircraft operated by TWA takes to the skies in the 1950s.

ORD's scheduled passenger service began the day after the dedication ceremony — with American leading the way. On Oct. 30, 1955, Flight 715 from Detroit marked the airport's first scheduled arrival, followed by the first scheduled departure — Flight 566 to Cincinnati.

American operated up to 16 daily flights to start in October 1955 — representing a 3,025% increase in departures as the airline looks ahead to more than 500 flights planned for summer 2026.

"From O'Hare's very first passenger flight, American Airlines has been woven into the fabric of our city's aviation legacy," said Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson. "As American continues to grow and invest in Chicago, we look forward to building on this partnership and shaping the next 70 years of progress together."

## DEEPLY ROOTED IN CHICAGO

This milestone comes as American prepares to celebrate its centennial year — with the first American flight carrying U.S. mail from St. Louis to Chicago in 1926. That momentous day represents the birth of American Airlines and its deep roots in Chicago over nearly a century.

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A throwback postcard shows American has long been proud of its Chicago connection.

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A story in American's internal news publication, Flagship News, from Nov. 3, 1955, highlighted the ORD opening.

Since 1955, American has invested billions of dollars into ORD and in the region — reaffirming its commitment to Chicago over the course of seven decades. That legacy was strengthened this year as American underwent a major expansion in Chicago — adding more than 20 new destinations to its ORD network in 2025.

American's 9,500 ORD-based team members are the driving force behind its success. O'Hare is the airline's third-largest hub based on departing flights and serves as its Midwest connection point, with service to more than 160 destinations in 17 countries.

## AMERICAN'S ORD TIMELINE

- 1955: TWA, which would later be acquired by American, marks the first passenger flight to depart from ORD with ceremonial Flight 94 bound for Paris.
- 1955: American is the first airline to arrive and depart from the airport on its first day of scheduled passenger service.
- 1959: American becomes the first airline to operate jets at ORD when it flew a Boeing 707 from Chicago to San Francisco.
- 1971: American introduces the world's first scheduled Douglas DC-10 service between Chicago and Los Angeles.
- 1982: American establishes a hub at ORD, the airline's second hub in its network.
- 1986: American installs the iconic "Hall of Flags" in the H/K Concourse in Terminal 3.
- 1990: American completes a renovation of Terminal 3 and the famous scene from Home Alone films in the "Hall of Flags."
- 2000: American Eagle launches all jet service at ORD.
- 2015: American deploys the first Boeing 787 Dreamliner at ORD.
- 2017: American opens its ORD Flagship® lounge.
- 2018: American opens five new gates known as the L-Stinger, the first new gates at ORD in 25 years.
- 2019: American unveils its ORD Hangar 2, the largest of its kind in the world.
- 2025: American becomes the only airline to offer premium options on every flight from ORD.
- 2025: American adds 24 new destinations from ORD just this year, including Chicago's only nonstop service to Naples, Italy.

## About American Airlines Group

As a leading global airline, American Airlines offers thousands of flights per day to more than 350 destinations in more than 60 countries. The airline is a founding member of the oneworld alliance, whose members serve more than 900 destinations around the globe. Shares of American Airlines Group Inc. trade on Nasdaq under the ticker symbol AAL. Learn more about what's happening at American by visiting [news.aa.com](https://news.aa.com) and connect with American [@AmericanAir](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanAirlines) and at [Facebook.com/AmericanAirlines](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanAirlines). To Care for People on Life's Journey®.