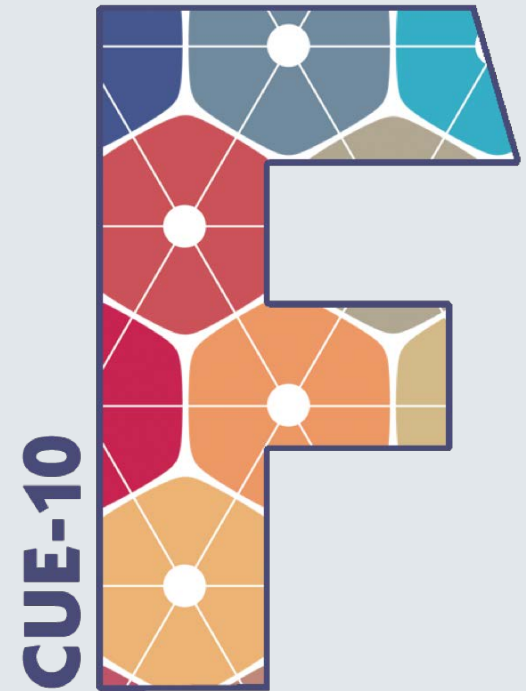


ryanair.com usability study findings

01 April 2018



goals & procedure

Goals

- Evaluate the overall ease of use of ryanair.com.
- Prioritize development efforts by identifying specific interaction issues that hinder user performance & diminish their perception of the Ryanair brand
- Establish a baseline for comparison against future versions of Ryanair.com

Procedure

- Three 40-minute usability study sessions were conducted on 23 March 2017.
- Each session included a brief introduction to the purpose and mechanics of the study and up to 5 of 6 planned think-aloud task completion exercises.
(See Appendix A.)



findings summary

Task Completion

Of the 13 total tasks attempted by the 3 participants:

- 7 (54%) were successfully completed
- 5 (38%) were not completed
- one (8%) was successful with assistance

Recommendations

22 recommendations are provided.

Positive Findings

Several positive findings were observed, particularly around shortcuts and navigation.

Localization

The most frequent issues were around poor localization. US-based participants were not familiar with some of the terms used, nor are they immediately familiar with metric measurements or foreign currencies.

Additional findings included:

- inconsistent header navigation
- issues with the airport selection interaction
- findability, volume, and presentation of Help Centre content

participants

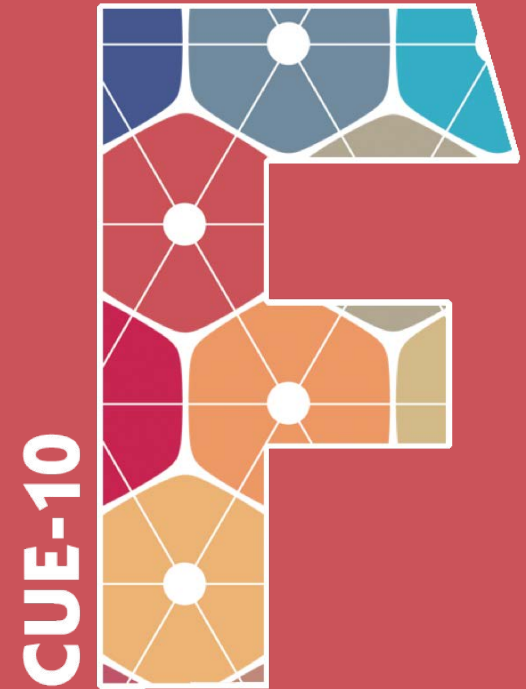
	age	gender identity	education	travel ¹	online shopping ²
P1 – Dixie	50s	female	some college	4–10	> 31
P2 – Jen	40s	female	some college	> 10	1–10
P3 – Dennis	40s	male	bachelor's degree	1–3	11–20

¹ Trips involving commercial air travel in the last 5 years

² Online purchases in the last 12 months

positive findings

Sessions revealed many user-friendly features of [ryanair.com](https://www.ryanair.com).

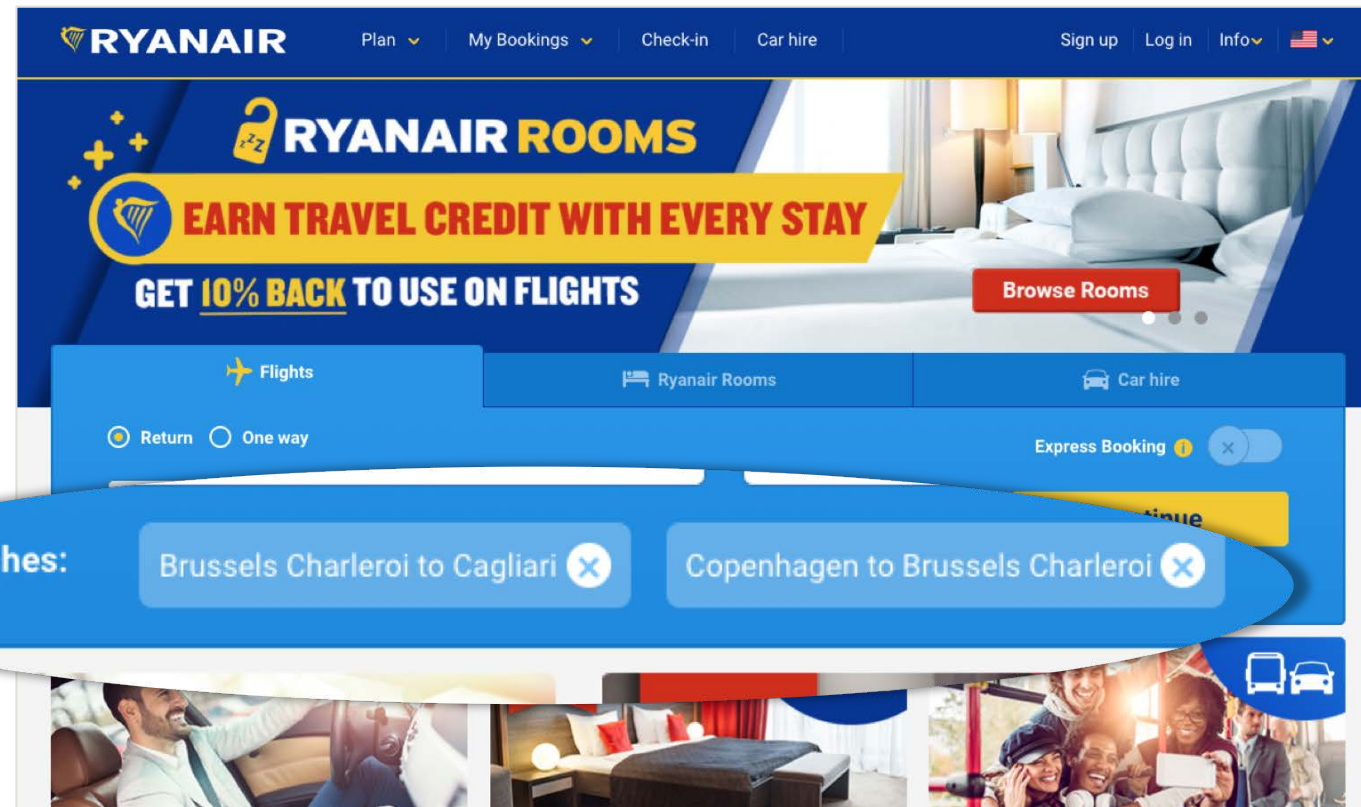


shortcuts

Some features increased participants' efficiency with the tasks.

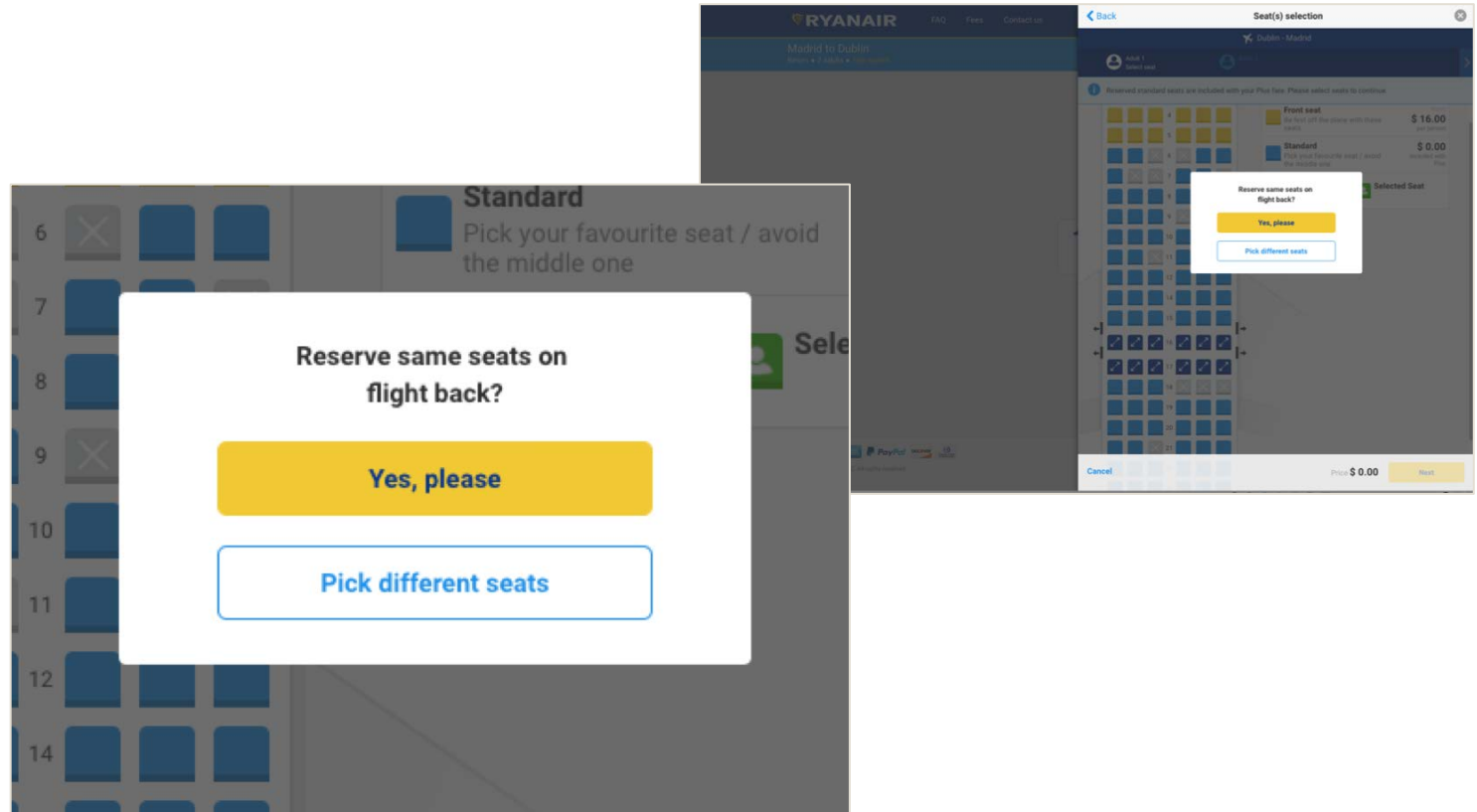
shortcuts: flight search

The home page includes small chips allowing easy access to recent flight searches, saving users effort vs. creating their searches from scratch.



shortcuts: return flight seat selection

Participants responded positively to the option to select the same seats for a return flight with a single click.

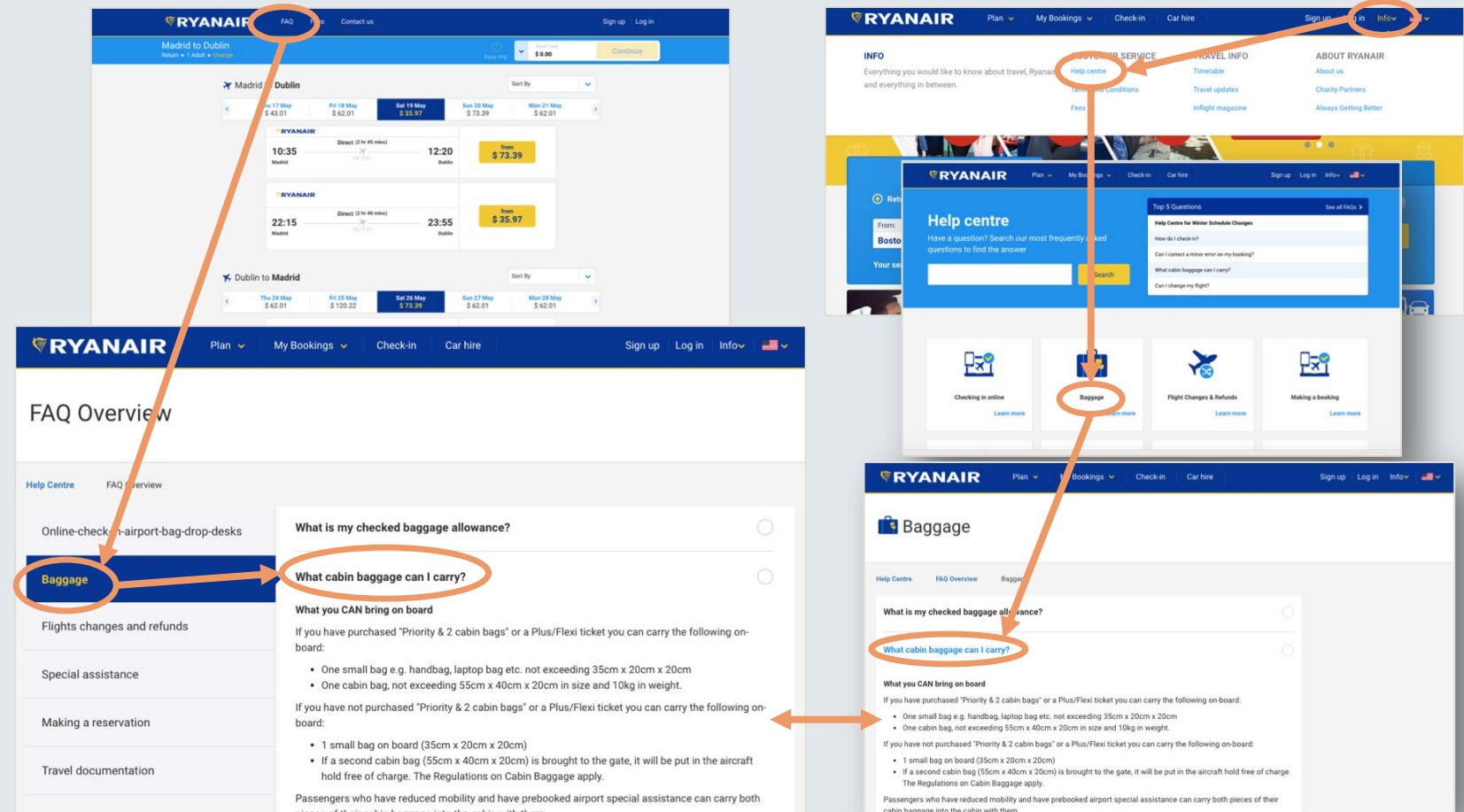


redundant navigation

Two instances of redundant navigation proved helpful to participants.

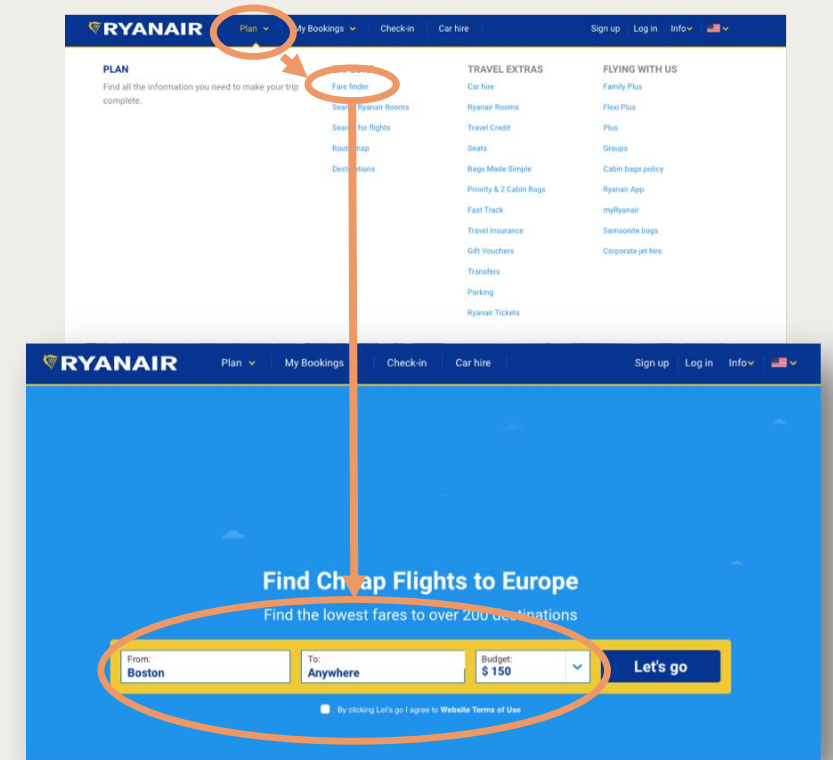
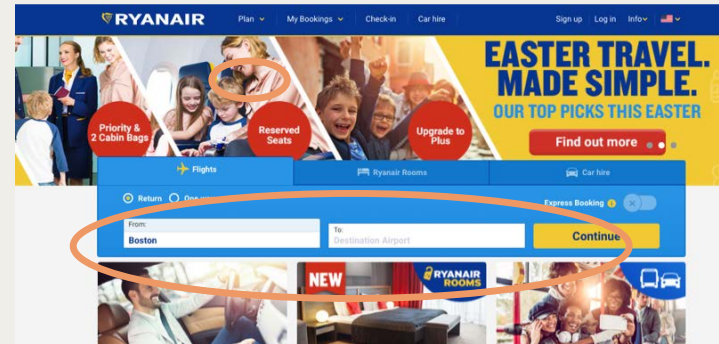
redundant navigation: help

The site provides multiple navigation paths to Help content, increasing its findability for customers.



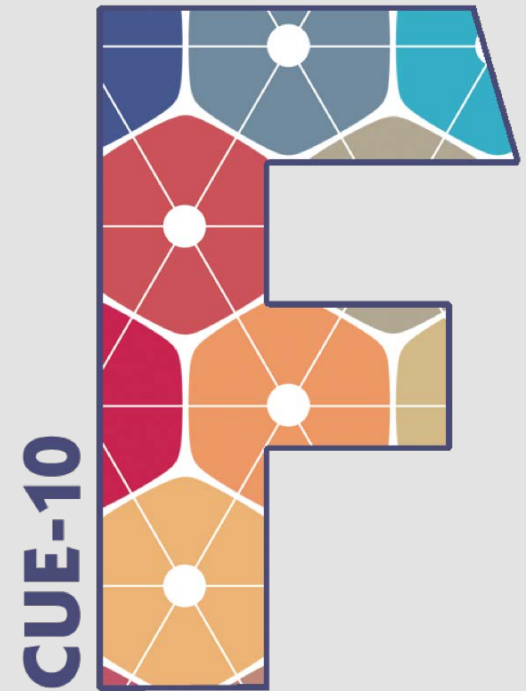
redundant navigation: flight search

There are also multiple paths to flight search.



task-centric observations

A task-by-task assessment of participants' performance.



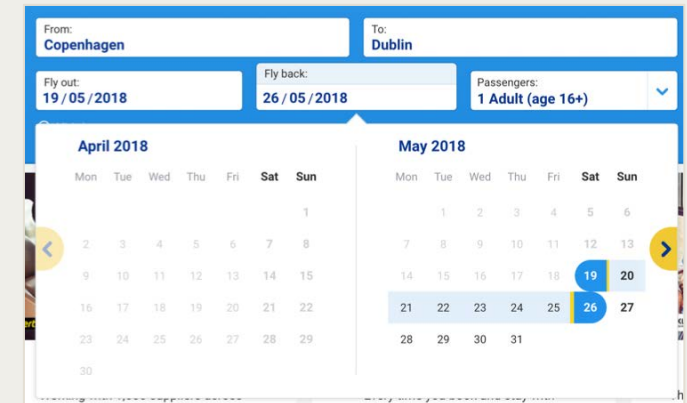
task 1

book a round-trip flight

task 1: summary

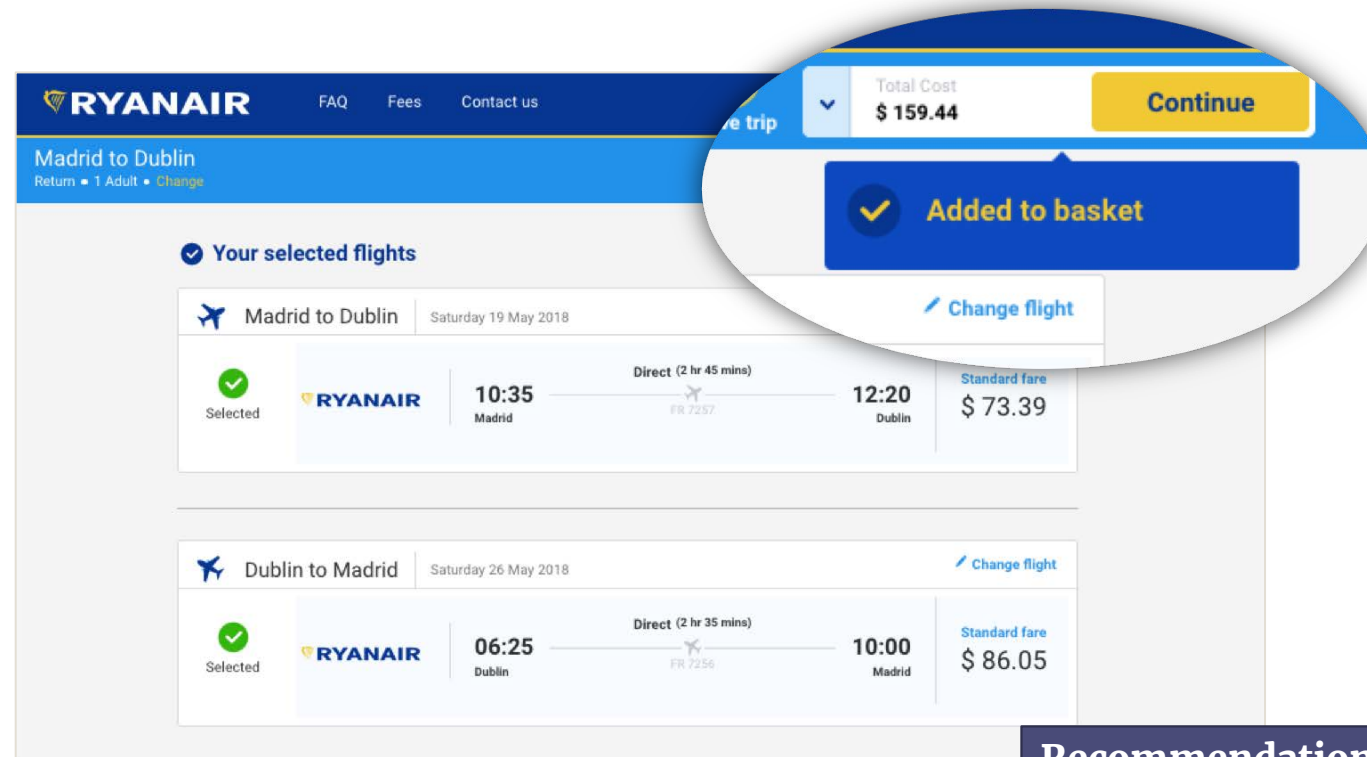
Task completion: 3 of 3

- All of the participants were able to book a flight successfully.
- Specific issues that impeded their performance included:
 - some difficulty with the country/airport panel
 - a need to translate the date format into the American format with which they are more familiar
 - a minor misunderstanding of the flight options displayed, in which Participant 3 thought the 2 options for the departing flight were actually the departing and return flights.
- Participants had positive things to say about:
 - the lack of intrusive popups or other distractions during the search process
 - the visual approach to the travel dates during selection.



task 1: add to basket

At least one participant found the term “Added to basket” unusual – that she didn’t think of “baskets” in the context of air travel. Participant 1 suggested “Added to itinerary” as a possible alternative.



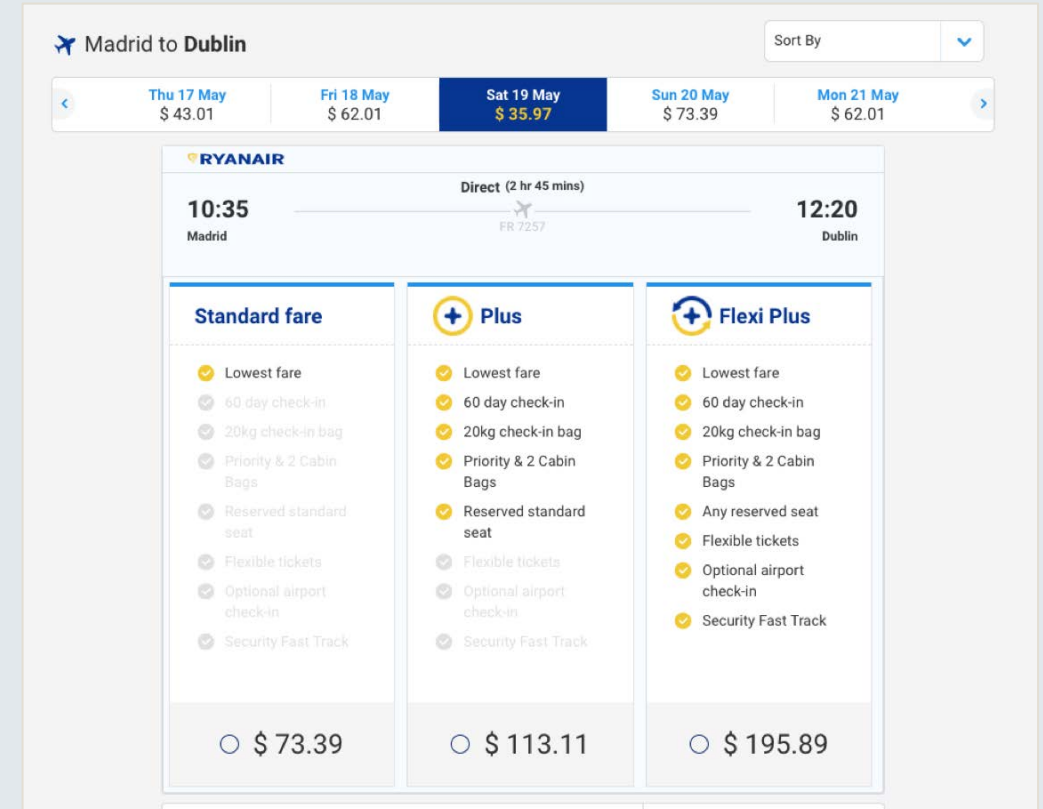
Recommendation: Consider removing the term “basket” or replacing it with a more travel-relevant term.

task 1: flight options

Participants were unfamiliar with Ryanair and did not know the differences among the “Standard Fare,” “Plus,” and “Flexi Plus” options.

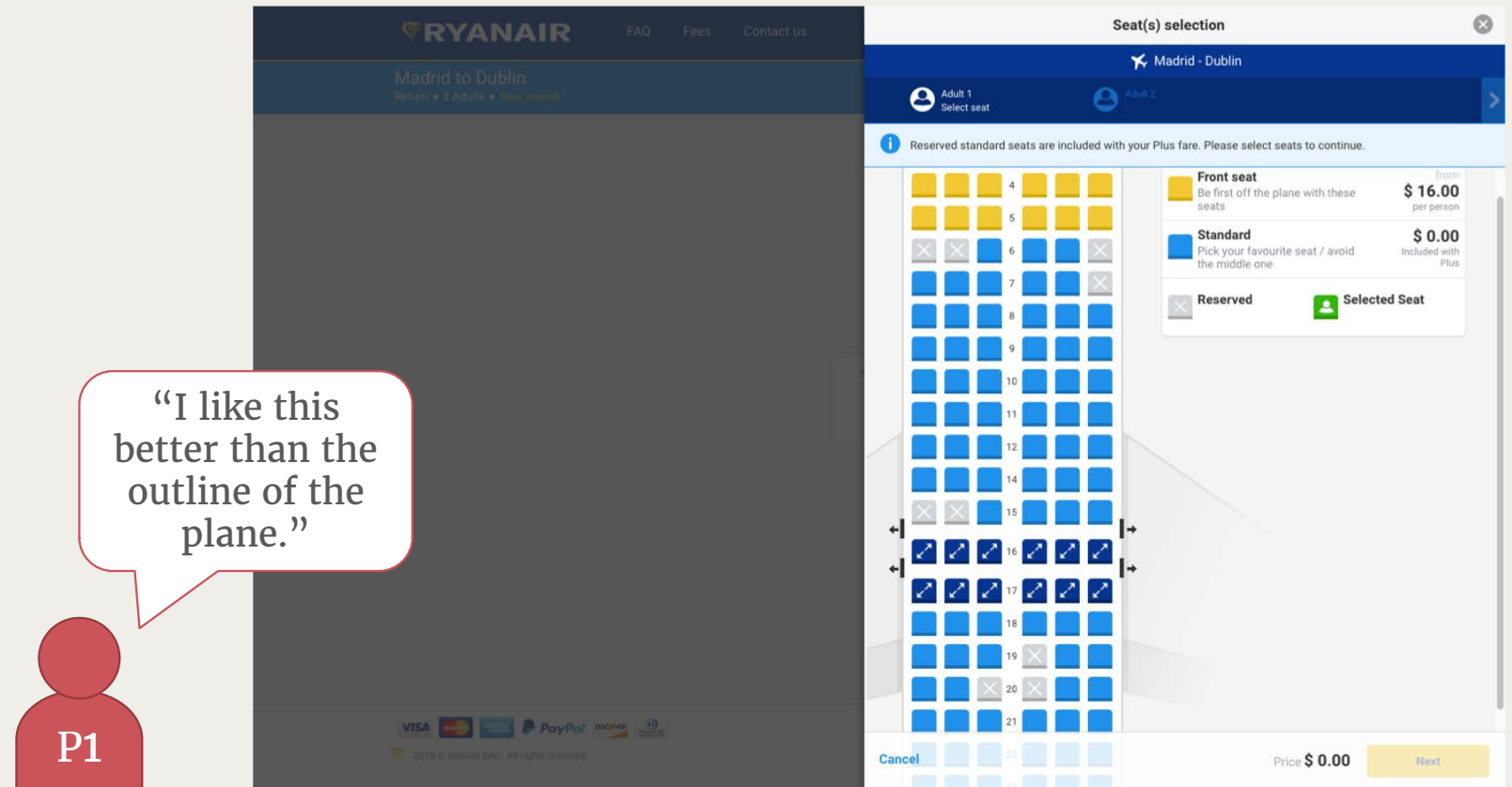
In general, they did not read these options carefully during the study and generally made a selection based on their general propensity toward economy or convenience.

Participant 3 read and misunderstood the premium options.



task 1: seat selection

Participants commented positively on the ease of selecting seats. Participants who chose a standard fare ticket clearly understood that reserving a seat came with an additional charge.



task 1: login prompt

At least one participant initially did not see the login prompt. Because she was focused on the central, washed-out portion of the screen, she assumed the page was still loading.

The screenshot shows the Ryanair website's login and booking interface. At the top, a dark blue header contains the Ryanair logo, navigation links (FAQ, Fees, Contact us), and user links (Sign up, Log in). Below the header, a white banner prompts users to sign up or log into 'myRyanair' to continue their booking. It includes three benefits: 'Faster bookings', 'Faster check-in', and 'Save your searches', each with a checkmark icon. Two prominent buttons, 'Sign up' (yellow) and 'Log in' (blue), are centered below the banner. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'Passenger details', contains a light blue instruction box: 'Please enter names as they appear on passport or travel documentation.' Below this are two identical sets of input fields for 'Title' (a dropdown menu), 'First name' (text input), and 'Surname' (text input). At the bottom of this section is a checkbox with a wheelchair icon and the text: 'Tick this box if any passengers require special assistance at the airport.' The right column, titled 'Price breakdown', lists flight details and costs. It shows 'Flights' from 'Madrid to Dublin' on 'Sat 19th May 10:35 - 12:20 FR 7257' for '\$ 226.22'. Below this, it lists inclusions: '2 x Adult Plus fares', '2 x Free Priority & 2 Cabin Bags', '2 x 1st checked bag', '1 x Reserved seat', and '1 x Reserved seat', all marked as 'Included'. It also shows a return flight 'Dublin to Madrid' on 'Sat 26th May 18:00 - 21:40 FR 7156'. At the bottom of the page, a section titled 'Contact details and payment' is partially visible.

Recommendation: Consider repositioning the Sign Up/Log In options to make them more visible.

task 2

rules for carry-on baggage

task 2: summary

Task completion: 3 of 3

- All of the participants were able to find the information about baggage rules.
- Specific issues that impeded their performance included:
 - localization issues with terminology and measurements
 - the formatting of the information shown.
- Participants requested a more visual breakdown of the different rules instead of the text-only presentation provided.

task 2: presentation of information

Participants generally found the baggage content difficult to consume, sometimes requesting clearer visuals or chunking of information. Alternate presentations from other airlines are provided here for comparison and inspiration

Cabin bag allowance

Maximum size: 56cm x 45cm x 25cm, including handles and wheels

Squeeze in just enough for a weekend away. Cabin bags should be placed in the overhead lockers (or if small enough under the seat in front of you).

If the lockers are full, and your bag is the correct size, we'll put it into the aircraft hold for free.

Hand baggage

Number of items	Maximum size	Maximum weight
One	23 x 36 x 56cm (that's approx. 9 x 14 x 22 inches)	10kg (22lb)

Know what you can carry on

22 inches
14 inches
9 inches

Recommendation: Consider an alternate presentation of baggage requirements to improve efficiency and comprehension.

task 3

find the lowest-priced ticket among multiple airports

task 3: summary

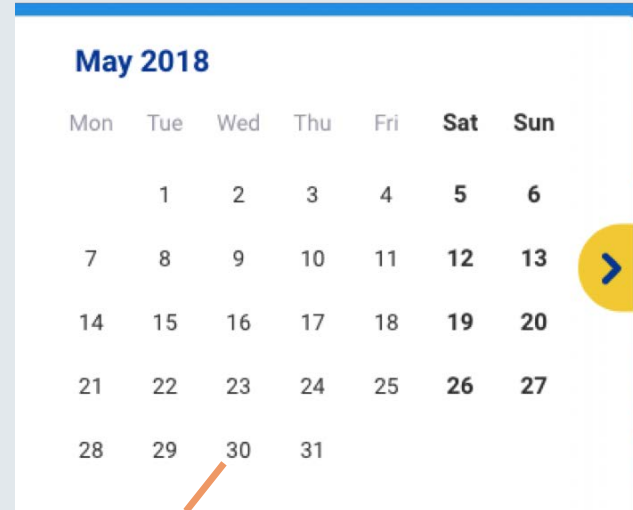
Task completion: 1 of 3

- Only one of the three study participants checked all three London airports to determine the lowest fare.
 - Other participants were able to find a fare but settled for the lowest fare from whichever airport they had searched. Sometimes, there was only one flight and fare from which to choose.
- The core issues with this task stemmed from participants **lack of knowledge that they must conduct three separate searches** and not, for example, that they were unwilling to do so.
 - The one participant who did complete the task successfully **was not happy** about having to conduct three separate searches.
- Specific interaction issues also hindered participants' ability to complete the task or to complete it efficiently, including:
 - mechanism for airport selection
 - misunderstanding the meaning of font styling on the calendar

Recommendation: Support flight searches from multiple nearby airports.

task 3: calendar styling

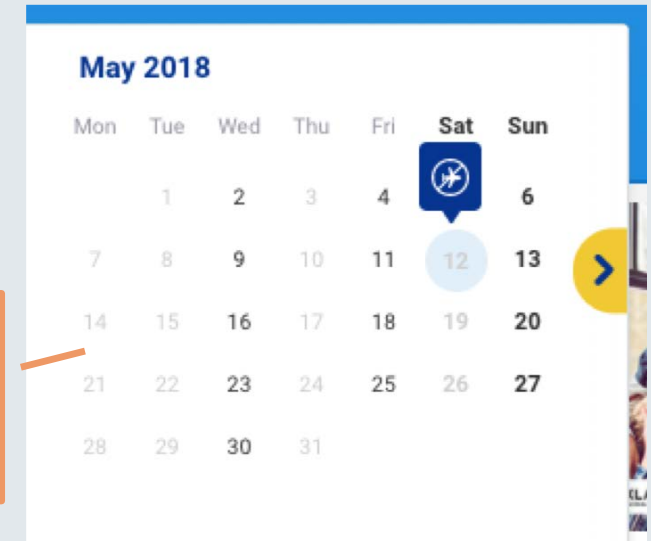
Participants misunderstood the styling of the calendar, thinking the regular font on weekdays indicated Ryanair did not have any flights on that route on those days. Some didn't even click the date to try to use it.



Participants thought flights were not available on the non-bolded dates.

There are actually *three* font styles, but users wouldn't necessarily know that.

It wasn't until later in the study, when they saw a third style accompanied by a hover effect, that they understood the meaning of the styling.



Recommendation: Consider not bolding weekend dates at all. Alternately, different date styling or more visible and persistent iconography to indicate valid dates.

task 4

change a flight

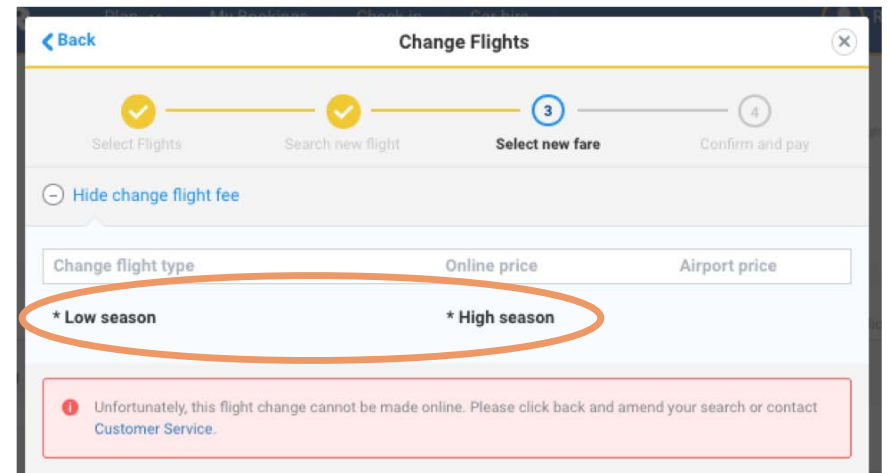
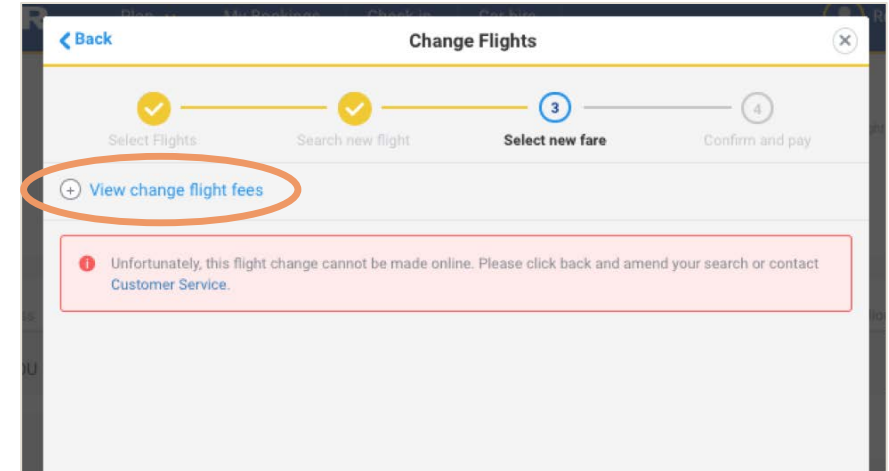
task 4: summary

Task completion: 1 (with assistance) of 3

- Participants *were* able to navigate successfully to the portion of the site that would allow them to change their flight but seemed at a loss for how to move on when they saw the error message that they could not continue.
- The experience was similar for participants who logged in and those who used only the confirmation number to access the booking.
- Participants had considerable difficulty moving on from their original path.
- All three participants indicated at some point in the task that they would call customer service for assistance.

task 4: error screen

- Participants often missed the “View flight change fees” link above the error message.
- Instead of providing fee information, “View flight change fees” shows two links – one for “Low season” and one for High season. Clicking these links closes the “View flight change fees” panel.
- There was no explanation for the cause of the error, nor were meaningful steps provided to resolve it.



Recommendation: Likely, this is at least in part not operating as designed. Fix any code errors and re-evaluate.

task 4: additional attempts

- One participant attempted to use the “Important information for your flight reservation” section of the printed confirmation, but the answer was not there.
- Two participants did eventually make their way to the **FAQ**, where:
 - Relevant content was divided among three different questions.
 - Answers were **incomplete**. The content provided ranges of fees but allowed the user no way to determine the actual cost of their specific desired flight change.
 - One of the links to the table of fees was broken and went to a 404 page.
 - The fee table itself does not provide enough detail for a user to determine their specific fees, either

Recommendations:

- Review the FAQ for completeness and accuracy and revise accordingly.
- Consider adding a link to flight change information in the booking confirmation

How can I change my flight?

How much will a flight or name change cost?

Can I change my flight?

Content on flight changes was distributed across three FAQ topics and a separate “Fees” page.

task 5

book a multi-leg flight

task 5: summary

Task completion: 0 of 1

- Due to time limitations, only one participant attempted this task.
- The participant did not attempt to use the Route Map to complete the task.
- The participant did determine:
 - She would need to compare many combinations of flights to determine the best itinerary for her needs.
 - She would have to write down information about various combinations, because there was no discernible way to save searches for later comparison.

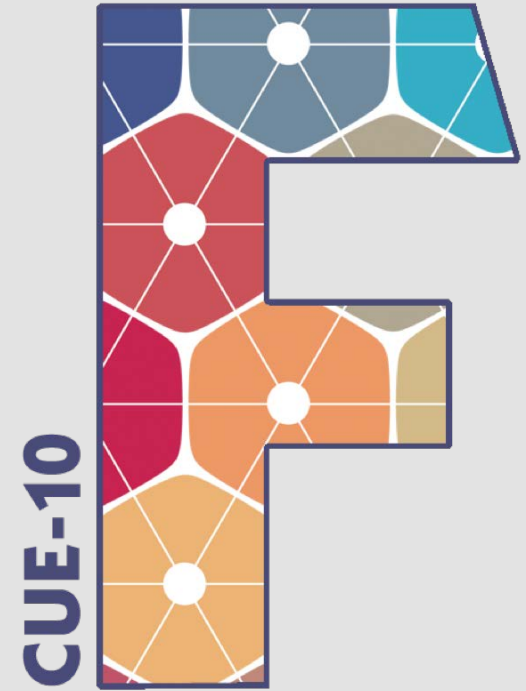
“I’d always wonder if I missed something.”



Recommendation: Allow for a single search to compare flight options even when there are connecting flights. Southwest Airlines in the US is one point-to-point airline that supports this activity on its website.

general findings

Findings grossly applicable across multiple tasks.



localization issues

Several minor instances of poor localization, when considered cumulatively, added significant friction to the participants' experiences.

localization: date format

Although the site clearly indicates it has detected the user is in the USA, dates are presented using the European format of dd/mm/yyyy instead of the American format mm/dd/yyyy.

Participants initially *did* find this confusing.

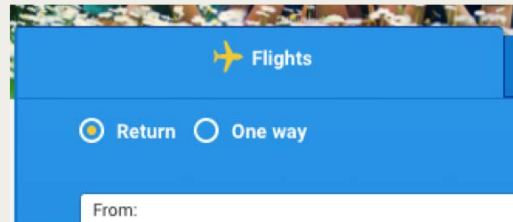


Recommendation:
Use the date format
standard for the
user's location.

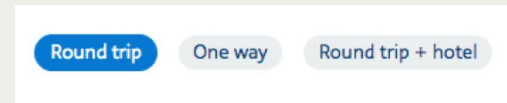
localization: “return” vs. “round trip”

Participants were somewhat confused by the term “Return” in the search options. In the United States, the terminology for this type of trip is “round trip.” “Return” is sometimes used specifically for the second flight or set of flights, with which the traveler *returns* to his or her point of origin.

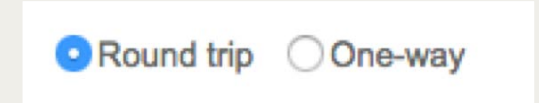
Participants were able to figure out the meaning of the term because it was presented next to the more familiar “one way” option.



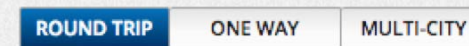
ryanair.com



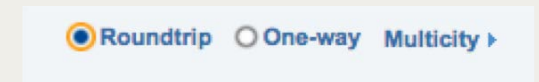
americanairlines.com



southwest.com



delta.com

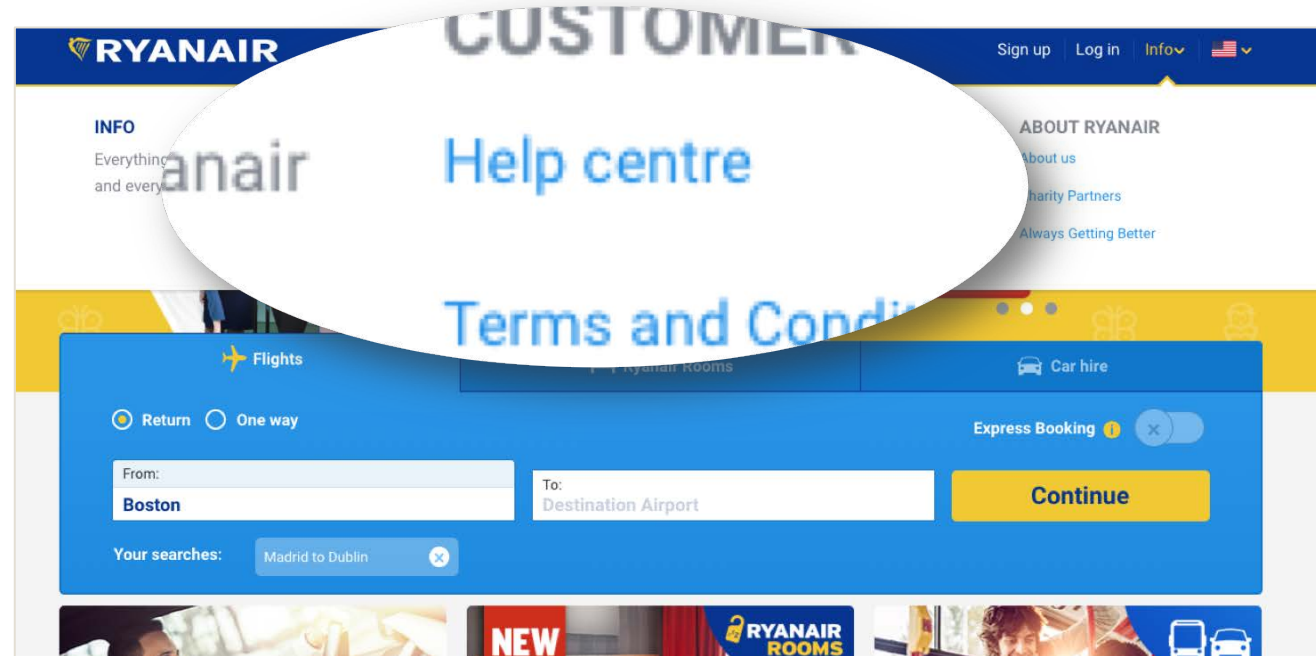


jetblue.com

Recommendation: Display the term “round trip” instead of “return” for users in the United States.

localization: “Help Centre”

Despite specifically indicating that this is the American version of the site, the British spelling of “Centre” is used instead of the American “Center.”



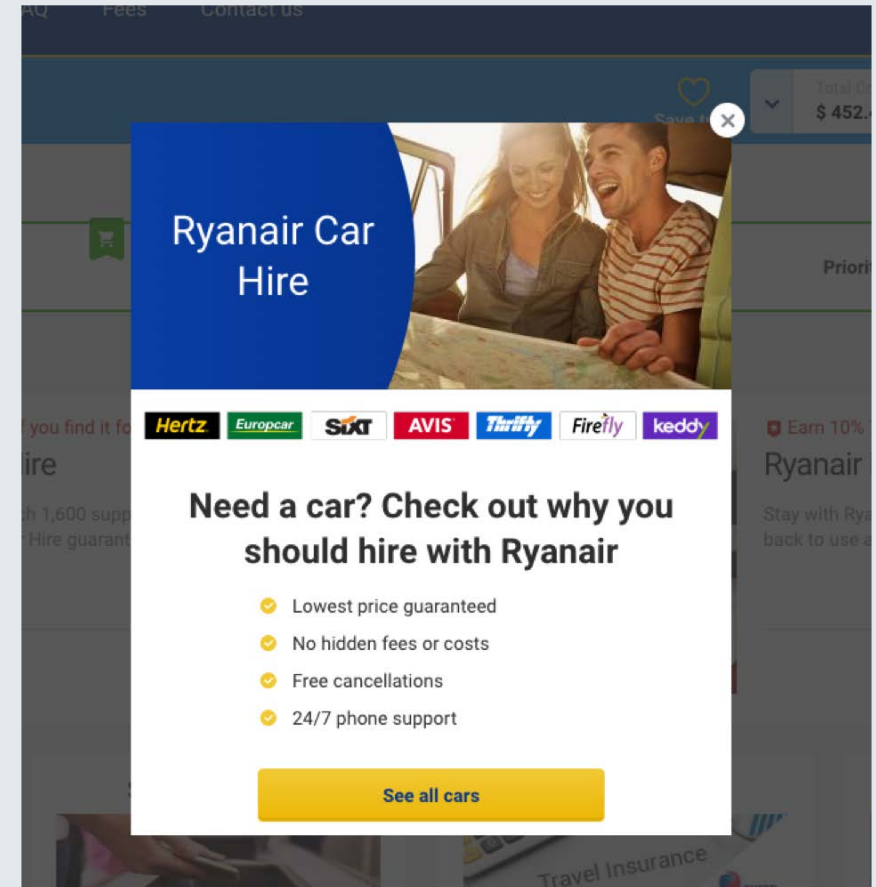
Recommendation: Use American English spellings for users in the United States.

localization: “car hire” vs. “rental car”

Americans do not typically use the term “car hire.” Instead they will “rent” or “book” a car.

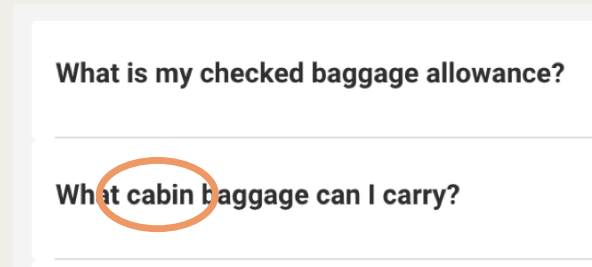
As no tasks required the use of this function, it did not interfere with their use of the site during this study. It may however still present a point of friction for US-based users of the site.

Recommendation: Use typical American terminology for users in the United States.

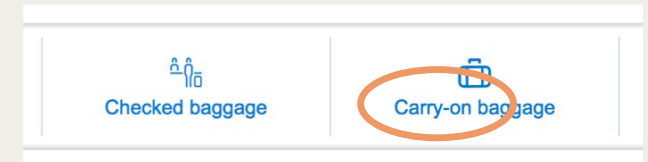


localization: “cabin” vs. “carry-on” bags

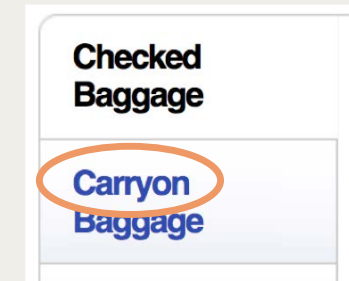
The site’s use of the term “cabin bags” instead of the more familiar (to them) “carry-on bags” did contribute to users’ substantial difficulty in completing Task 2.



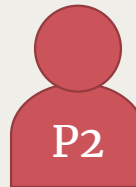
ryanair.com



americanairlines.com



southwest.com

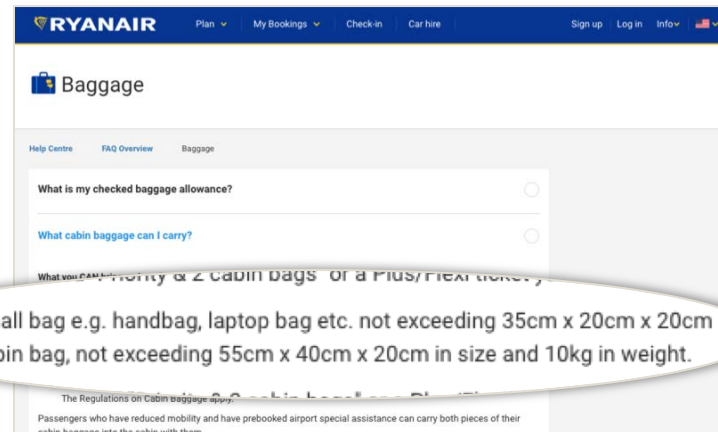


“I’m looking
for ‘carry-on.’”

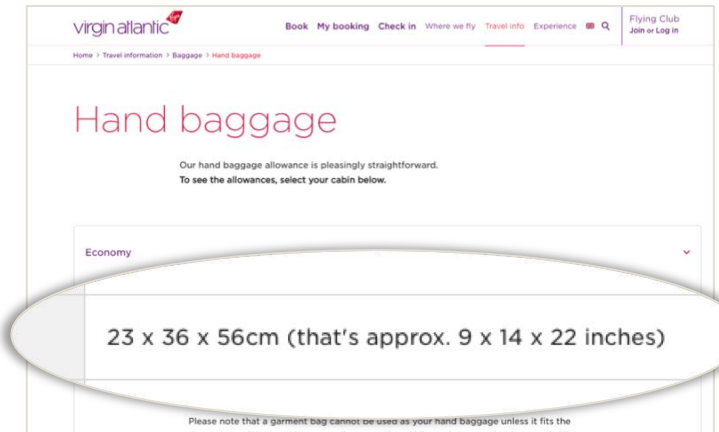
Recommendation: Use typical American terminology for users in the United States.

localization: metric units

Study participants noted the metric units in the Help content and indicated they would need to look up a conversion to imperial measurements to be confident that their baggage met the stated requirements.



ryanair.com



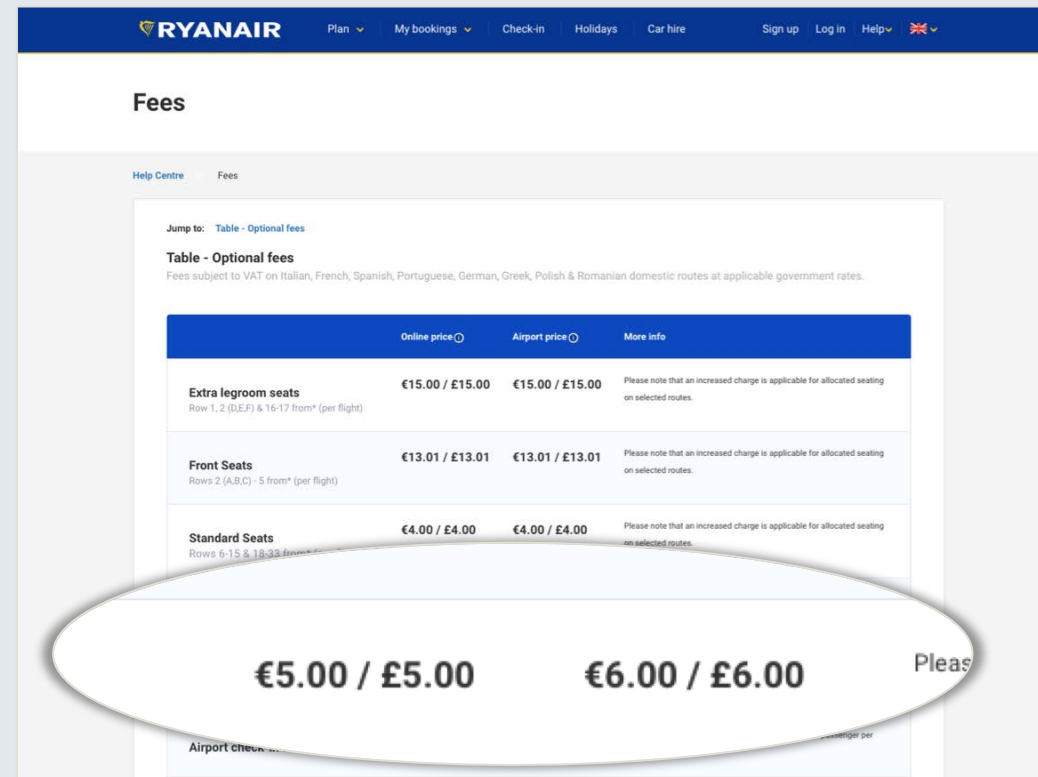
virginatlantic.com

Recommendation: Provide imperial measurements for users in the United States, either instead of or in addition to metric units. See Virgin Atlantic for an example of how one global airline handles this issue.

localization: currency units

While flight costs are displayed in US dollars, help content shows various fees as euros or pounds. At the time of the sessions, one of the promotional banners also advertised a special in euros.

Participants did comment on this discrepancy. Some did not recognize the € symbol at all.



	Online price	Airport price	More info
Extra legroom seats Row 1, 2 (D,E,F) & 16-17 from* (per flight)	€15.00 / £15.00	€15.00 / £15.00	Please note that an increased charge is applicable for allocated seating on selected routes.
Front Seats Rows 2 (A,B,C) - 5 from* (per flight)	€13.01 / £13.01	€13.01 / £13.01	Please note that an increased charge is applicable for allocated seating on selected routes.
Standard Seats Rows 6-15 & 18-33 from* (per flight)	€4.00 / £4.00	€4.00 / £4.00	Please note that an increased charge is applicable for allocated seating on selected routes.
Airport check-in	€5.00 / £5.00	€6.00 / £6.00	Please note that an increased charge is applicable for allocated seating on selected routes.

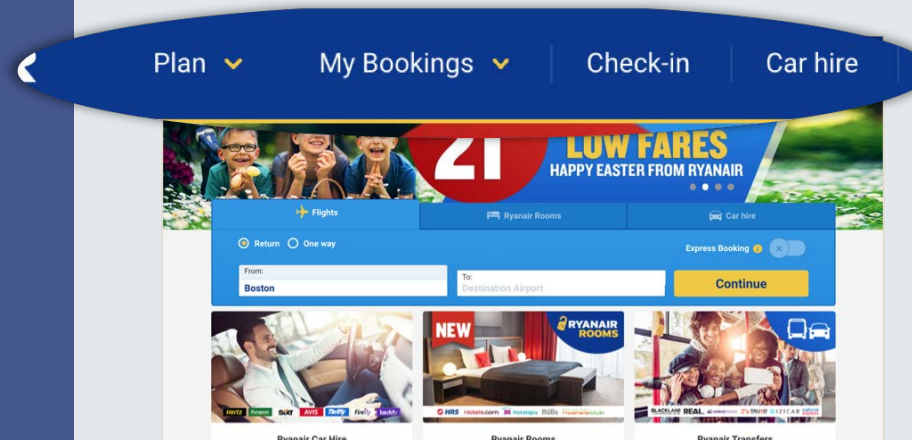
Recommendation:
Show all monetary
content in US
dollars for users in
the United States.

inconsistent navigation

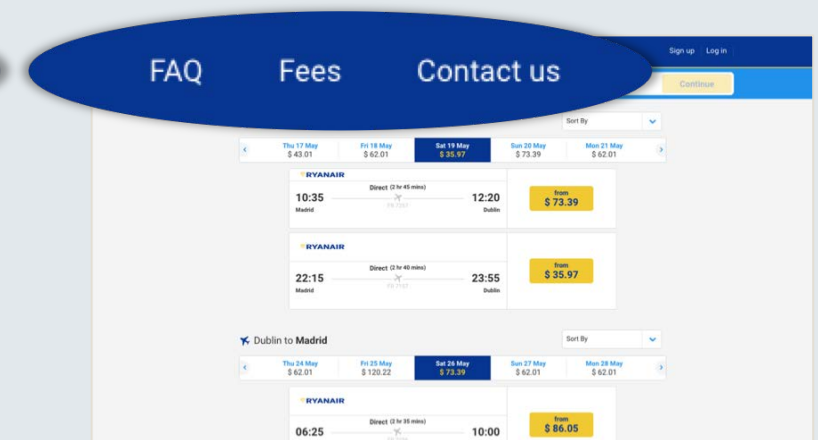
inconsistent navigation: changing header

The site header changes depending on where the user is in the site. Study participants who had previously found and used the “FAQ” link had difficulty finding help information in a later task when the header had changed.

This change occurs both pre- and post-login.



ryanair.com navigation for the majority of the site, including home and help pages



ryanair.com navigation during flight and options selection

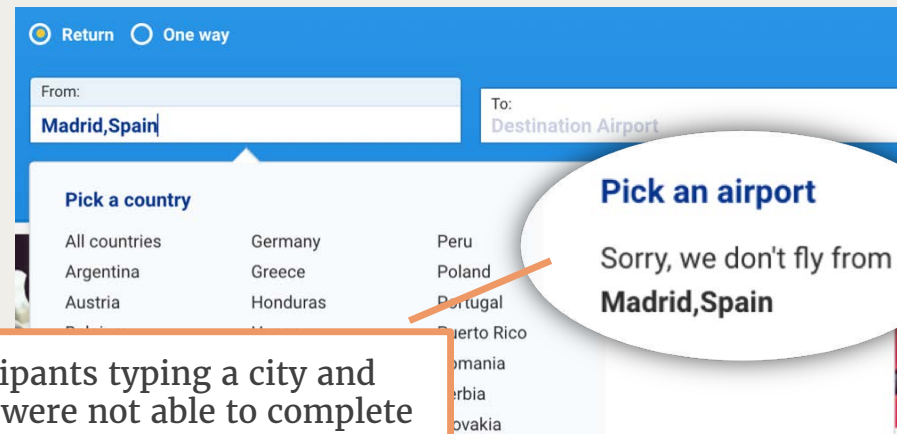
Recommendation: Keep navigation consistent throughout the site.

specific interactions

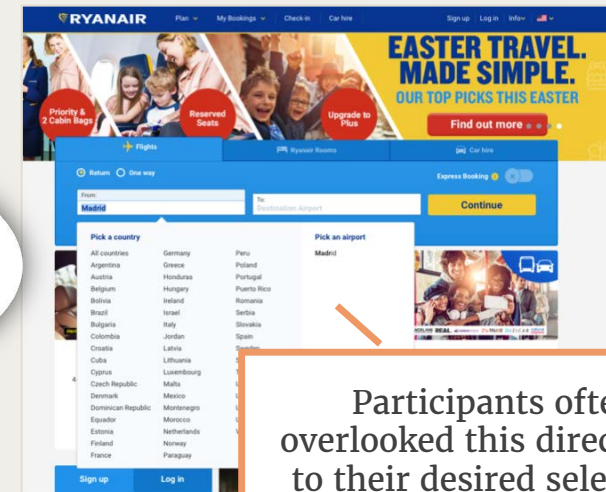
The study revealed issues with various design patterns throughout the site.

specific interactions: airport selection

When typing in a city name, participants first noticed the list of countries instead of the specific airport highlighted on the right. Often, this led them to select a country and then choose an airport instead of the more efficient path of selecting the airport directly.



Participants typing a city and country were not able to complete their search directly. (Ryanair does indeed fly from Madrid, Spain.)



Participants often overlooked this direct path to their desired selection, instead focusing on the list of countries to the left.

Recommendations:

- Support “City, Country” searches.
- Reconsider the need to show all countries in a search, especially if there is an exact city or airport match.

specific interactions: airport codes

Airport codes are not recognized in the home page flight search. One participant noticed this but didn't have trouble adapting to the supported search behavior.

The screenshot shows the Ryanair website's flight search interface. The 'From:' field contains the text 'Stn'. A dropdown menu is open, showing a list of countries under the heading 'Pick a country'. The countries listed are: All countries, Argentina, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, France, Peru, Poland, Portugal, and Puerto Rico. To the right of the dropdown, a message states 'Pick an airport' and 'Sorry, we don't fly from Stn'. The background of the website includes a banner for 'EASTER TRAVEL. MADE SIMPLE.' and navigation links like 'Plan', 'My Bookings', 'Check in', and 'Car hire'.

STN is the airport code for London Stansted, which Ryanair does service.

Recommendation: Support airport codes in this search in addition to country and airport name.

help

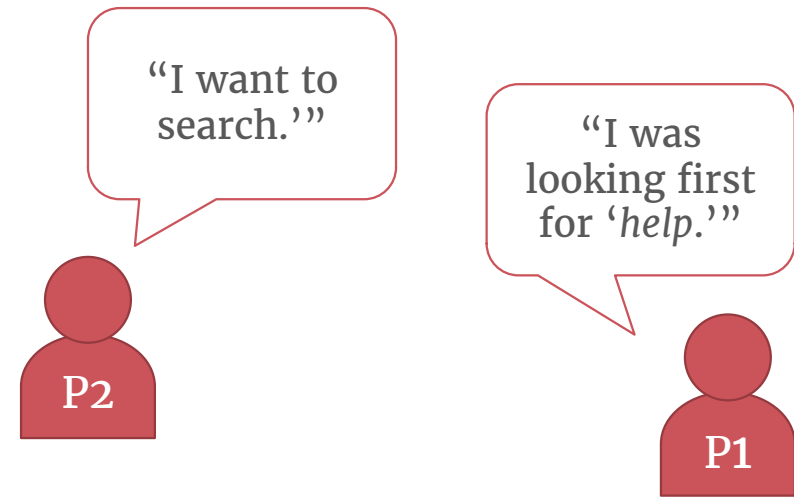
Two tasks involved participants' use of online help, yielding several observations.

help: findability

Participants were consistently able to find the help content.

- When the “FAQ” link was visible in the header, participants found it very easily.
- Participants had more trouble when forced to navigate through Info > Help Centre.
- At least one participant was looking specifically for the word “Help” instead of “FAQ.”

Once participants found the FAQ, they were able to navigate it easily.
Multiple participants requested a search feature for online help.



help: copy

Specific help content was often too wordy. Participants had to read the help content about baggage requirements very carefully or repeatedly to ensure they fully understood it.

Some participants requested quicker visuals instead of long body copy.

What cabin baggage can I carry?

What you CAN bring on board

If you have purchased "Priority & 2 cabin bags" or a Plus/Flexi ticket you can carry the following on-board:

- One small bag e.g. handbag, laptop bag etc. not exceeding 35cm x 20cm x 20cm
- One cabin bag, not exceeding 55cm x 40cm x 20cm in size and 10kg in weight.

If you have not purchased "Priority & 2 cabin bags" or a Plus/Flexi ticket you can carry the following on-board:

- 1 small bag on board (35cm x 20cm x 20cm)
- If a second cabin bag (55cm x 40cm x 20cm) is brought to the gate, it will be put in the aircraft hold free of charge. The Regulations on Cabin Baggage apply.

Passengers who have reduced mobility and have prebooked airport special assistance can carry both pieces of their cabin baggage into the cabin with them.

Passengers who are carrying special medical items (e.g. CPAP machine, Portable Oxygen Concentrator) can carry these into the cabin in addition to their 2 pieces of cabin baggage.

Oversized cabin baggage will be refused at the boarding gate, or where available, placed in the hold of the aircraft for a fee of £50/€50 (fee subject to VAT on domestic flights at applicable government rates). See our table of fees at [this link](#).

If you are unsure whether your bag is the correct size, check it at the Bag Drop desk before going through security.

Priority costs €5 if purchased at the time of the initial flight booking. If added via the manage my booking facility on our website, or via the Ryanair app (up to 40 minutes before the scheduled flight departure time) the fee is €6.

[Learn more](#)

ryanair.com's cabin baggage content

Hand baggage

Our hand baggage allowance is pleasantly straightforward. To see the allowances, select your cabin below.

Economy

Number of items	Two
Maximum size	23 x 36 x 56cm (that's approx. 9 x 14 x 22 inches)
Maximum weight	10kg (22lb)

Please note that a garment bag cannot be used as your hand baggage unless it fits the dimensions of the hand baggage allowance. If you'd like to bring one but it exceeds 23 x 36 x 56 cm, it will need to be an additional checked-in bag.

If you want to take your laptop onboard, you'll need to place it in your original hand baggage or check your hand baggage in.

You must be able to place your hand baggage in the overhead bins unaided.

Premium

Number of items	Two
Maximum size	23 x 36 x 56cm (that's approx. 9 x 14 x 22 inches)
Maximum weight	10kg (22lb)

Please note that a garment bag cannot be used as your hand baggage unless it fits the dimensions of the hand baggage allowance. If you'd like to bring one but it exceeds 23 x 36 x 56 cm, it will need to be an additional checked-in bag.

If you want to take your laptop onboard, you'll need to place it in your original hand baggage or check your hand baggage in.

You must be able to place your hand baggage in the overhead bins unaided.

Upper Class

Number of items	Two
Maximum size	23 x 36 x 56cm (that's approx. 9 x 14 x 22 inches)
Maximum weight (combined)	16kg (35lb)
Maximum weight (individual item)	12kg (26lb)

To help with baggage concerns, we've compiled the following list to clarify the bins and bags you can take onboard in addition to the allowances above:

- Your handbag, small backpack, rucksack, satchel or purse, as you would normally use it (in other words, not just being used to contain items that would otherwise be regarded as baggage)
- Your passport or visa
- Your umbrella or walking stick (these cannot be pointed or sharp)
- A small camera and/or pair of binoculars
- A reasonable amount of reading matter for the flight
- An electric shaver (for use on the flight)
- A small amount of duty-free goods
- Prescription for medical use (that's not the standard 3 item pack)

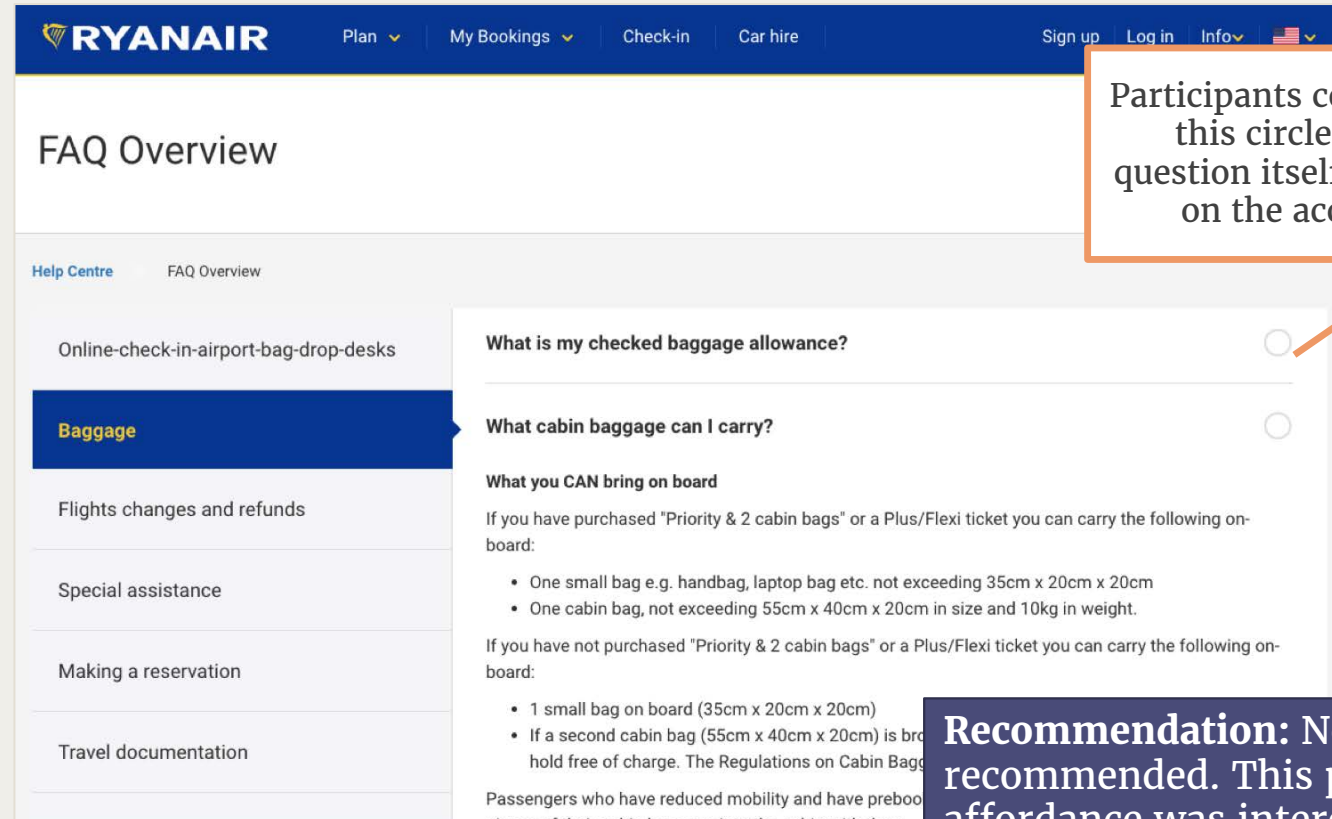
If you bring large electrical items with you (such as laptops), please remember that you'll need to remove them from your bag for security screening. You'll be asked to place them in a tray so they can be clearly scanned.

Mobility aids such as walking sticks and manual collapsible wheelchairs can also be taken onboard some of our flights. Where space isn't available onboard your wheelchair will be placed in the hold and brought out free after landing so that it is ready for you at the gate or baggage reclaim area. Depending on the security rules at the airport, bear in mind that they'll need to be inspected or searched thoroughly at security through.

virginatlantic.com's cabin baggage content is longer but more clearly organized

help: FAQ interaction

Several participants specifically clicked the circle to the right of FAQ headers, perhaps mistaking it for a styled radio button. In fact, the full horizontal panel is clickable.



Recommendation: No change recommended. This perceived affordance was interesting but did not hinder participants in any way.

help: volume of content

One participant commented on the quantity and obscurity of questions presented in the baggage FAQ. *21 different questions* are presented there, presumably approximately in their order of importance or frequency of need.

What is my checked baggage allowance?	Can I buy a Ryanair approved cabin bag?	Do I need to book an extra seat for my wedding dress?
What cabin baggage can I carry?	Can checked baggage allowances be pooled?	What should I pack?
What liquids can I carry onboard?	Does Ryanair carry human remains?	Can I carry a drone/quadcopter in my cabin baggage?
What items are prohibited onboard a Ryanair flight?	Carriage of Ashes	Can I bring my pet on the flight?
What items are not allowed in my checked bags?	Can I carry a parachute on my flight?	Can I carry footballs/rugby balls?
What do I do if my baggage is damaged, delayed, or lost?	Can I carry a self inflating lifejacket onboard?	Are Christmas crackers/party poppers accepted on flights?
What are Ryanair's excess baggage charges?	Can I carry an avalanche rescue pack?	Samsonite terms and conditions



“There are some unique questions on this tab.”

Recommendation: Consider de-emphasizing content that is less-frequently needed, perhaps behind a secondary link or similar, to improve the likely signal:noise ratio on this screen.

appendix A: task list

Six tasks were planned for this study.
Participants attempted as many as five.

Tasks

1. Book a round-trip flight for two adults from Madrid (Spain) to Dublin (Ireland). Outbound Saturday 19 May, return Saturday 26 May. Choose the flights and options that you would choose if you were going on this flight. Please stop when the website asks you to create or log in to an account.
2. What are you allowed to take on board a Ryanair flight as carry-on baggage?
3. Assume that you need to take a trip but that you want to pay as little for the ticket as possible. What is the absolute lowest price for a one-way flight for one adult from London (England) to Copenhagen (Denmark) on Friday 11 May 2018?
4. Rolf Molich has booked a Ryanair flight on Wednesday May 16 from Dublin (Ireland) to Glasgow (Scotland). Return Wednesday 23 May. See the confirmation you receive from the moderator.
Rolf wants to change the outbound flight from Dublin to Glasgow to Friday 18 May at about the same time as the original flight. The inbound flight is unchanged. Is this possible? If so, how much will this cost?
5. Book a one-way flight for two adults from Copenhagen (Denmark) to Cagliari (Sardinia, Italy) on Saturday June 9, 2018.
Stop when the website asks you to create an account or log into an account.
6. Check a passenger in on a flight based on the confirmation you receive from the moderator. The passenger isn't happy with the assigned seat. Select another seat for them.
(Due to time limitations, no participants attempted Task 6.)