

THE ANSWER

Take the AirTrain (\$8.75) to Jamaica station, then the LIRR - about \$13.75-15.75 total, 30-35 min to Penn Station or Grand Central. Fastest on rails, and it skips the traffic that eats taxis alive.

Tight budget? AirTrain + E subway from Jamaica - ~\$11.65 total, 50-60 min to Midtown.

EVERY WAY OUT - REAL PRICES

AirTrain + LIRR *BEST FOR MOST*

\$13.75-15.75

30-35 min to Penn or Grand Central. LIRR \$5 off-peak / \$7 peak on top of the \$8.75 AirTrain. Tap contactless for both.

AirTrain + E subway

~\$11.65

50-60 min to Midtown. \$8.75 + \$2.90 subway. Cheapest real option - fine with one bag, painful with three.

Yellow cab (flat fare)

\$90-115 all-in

The '\$70 flat fare' is the BASE: + \$2.50 state surcharge + \$0.75 congestion fee + tolls \$6-12 + \$5 rush add-on (16:00-20:00) + 15-20% tip.

Uber / Lyft

\$45-160

\$45-70 normal hours - can beat the cab. Surge at flight-bank peaks pushes \$100-160. Check the quote before committing.

AirTrain group fare

max \$26.75

First rider \$8.75, each additional \$4.50, capped \$26.75. Ask at the turnstiles. 30-day frequent cap: \$43.50.

THE TRAPS - WALK PAST THESE

The arrivals-hall ride touts

Anyone approaching you inside JFK arrivals offering a ride is an unlicensed driver - illegal solicitation. Tourists get quoted \$120 cash for a \$50 ride, 'renegotiated' mid-highway. Yellow cab rank or app pickup only.

The '\$70 flat fare' sticker shock

The \$70 TLC flat fare is real but it's the STARTING number. Surcharges, tolls, rush add-on and tip stack it to \$90-115. Budget \$100 for a Midtown cab - or take the train and pocket \$85.

The AirTrain exit surprise

AirTrain is FREE between terminals but costs \$8.75 when you exit at Jamaica or Howard Beach. Same contactless card taps you out at Jamaica and into LIRR/subway - nothing to pre-buy.

The wrong AirTrain branch

Jamaica branch = LIRR + E/J/Z subway (for Manhattan). Howard Beach = A train (Brooklyn/downtown). Wrong branch = +40 minutes. Manhattan = Jamaica.

KNOW BEFORE YOU WALK

- Congestion pricing applies south of 60th St - already baked into the cab math above.
- Groups of 2-4: AirTrain group ticket - first \$8.75, rest \$4.50 each, max \$26.75.
- Peak LIRR = weekday commute windows - \$7 vs \$5 off-peak.
- After ~01:00, trains thin out - an Uber quote often beats the wait.