Westerly Operations

Runways 24L, 24R and 25L, 25R

Westerly Winds (normal)

Westerly Operations is the normal traffic pattern used at LAX during the daytime (6:30 a.m. to midnight) throughout the year. Aircraft approach and depart the airport to the west due to the prevailing westerly wind. This procedure routes louder departing aircraft to the west over the ocean, primarily from the two "inner" runways that are further from the communities; while arriving aircraft fly to the west over the communities on the eastside of LAX (including the Cities of Los Angeles and Inglewood, and the communities of Athens and Lennox) and land primarily on the two "outer" runways. This is the preferred runway use during the daytime. For the more noise-sensitive hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., the use of in-board runways is to be maximized for both arrivals and departures.

Over-Ocean Operations

Runways 6R, 7L, 24L and 25R

Midnight to 6:30 a.m.

During the more noise-sensitive, nighttime period between midnight and 6:30 a.m., aircraft normally operate in accordance with the Over-Ocean Operations procedure. In this procedure, all landings and takeoffs usually occur on the "inner" runways. Aircraft continue to depart over the ocean to the west, as in normal Westerly Operations, but arrive from over the ocean to the east. This reduces the noise impact on communities directly to the east of the airport during the most noise-sensitive hours. Over-Ocean Operations may be canceled and Westerly Operations re-instituted if the FAA's ATC Tower determines that conditions are unsafe for these procedures. Such conditions may include fog and low clouds at the shoreline, winds from the east, run/way maintenance and repairs, FAA equipment problems, and air traffic considerations.

Easterly Operations

Runways 6L, 6R and 7L, 7R

Easterly Winds

Easterly Operations are implemented when wind conditions (generally during rainstorms and Santa Ana winds) require reversing the entire traffic flow of the airport so that aircraft arrive and depart to the east. This routes the departing aircraft over the communities to the east, as well as areas to the north and south depending on an aircraft’s destination. These operations are employed only when absolutely necessary for aviation safety considerations. To assist with noise mitigation, as with Westerly Operations, the Preferential Runway Use procedures are in place, with the two "inner" runways used primarily for takeoffs, and the two "outer" runways used primarily for landings.