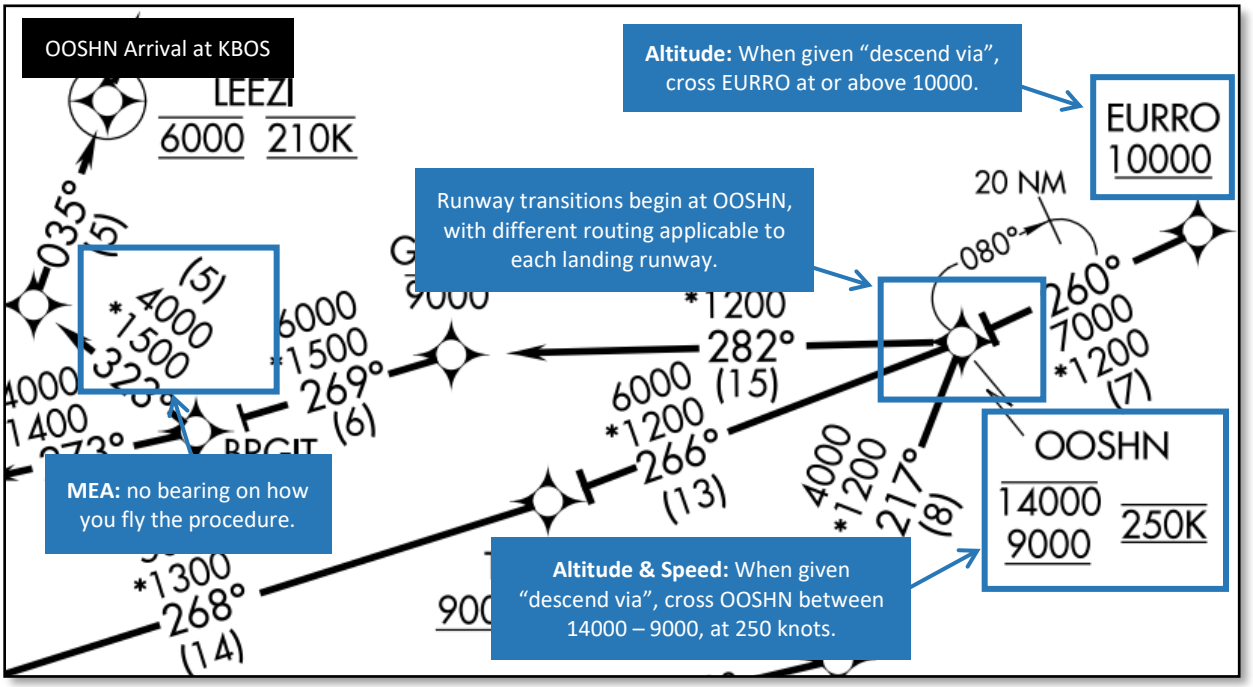
RNAV Arrivals at Boston

Jet aircraft landing at KBOS and area airports can expect to be cleared via an RNAV arrival with a “descend via” component. Examples include the ROBUC, JFUND, and OOSHN arrivals at KBOS.

When cleared on an RNAV arrival, remember:

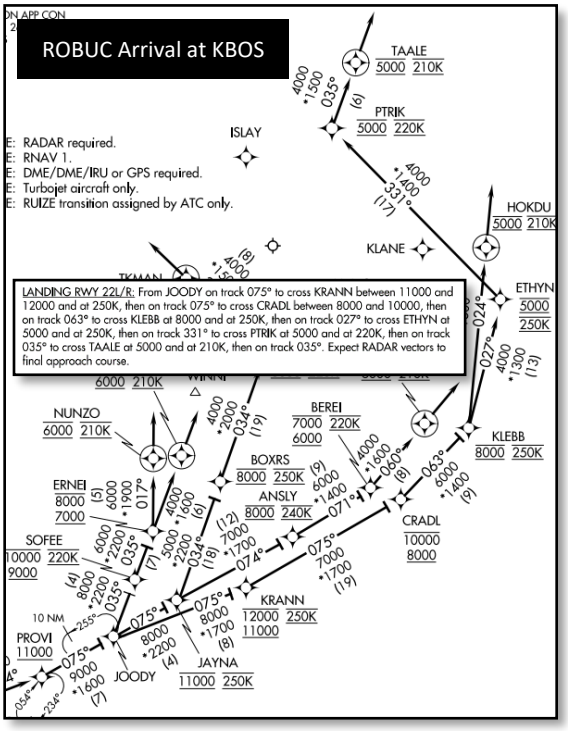
1. You may not begin to descend or follow the vertical profile of the STAR until you receive a “descend via” clearance. If you are at your top of descent, request a descent with ATC before leaving your last ATC-assigned altitude.
2. Altitude instructions (e.g., “descend and maintain FL240”, “cross KRANN at and maintain 11,000”) override the published altitudes on the arrival. Published altitudes only become applicable again if a new “descend via” clearance is received.
3. You may not climb after receiving a “descend via” clearance.
4. When you check onto a new frequency while “descending via”, include the arrival and runway on initial contact (example: “N12345, FL190, descending via the JFUND2 arrival, Runway 4R, with Kilo”).
5. If you were previously assigned a speed, the “descend via” clearance makes all published speeds mandatory again unless ATC specifically re-assigns a speed after/with the “descend via” clearance.



Approaching the airport, and usually between 60 – 100nm from the destination, pilots can expect to receive a "descend via the arrival" clearance and will be assigned a runway transition. This authorizes you to follow the published speeds and altitudes on the arrival procedure, for the specified runway. Once you receive "descend via" and the runway transition, read it back. Then, cross-reference the waypoints in your FMS or GPS with the chart to ensure you are following the correct runway transition. If your FMS or GPS waypoints do not match the chart, request vectors from ATC.

Example – ROBUC Arrival for Runway 22L

A portion of the ROBUC arrival is pictured to the right. You can find it anywhere U.S. aviation charts are published.



As you can see from the plan (map) view as well as the textual description, aircraft landing Runway 22L should see the following waypoints after PROVI: **JOODY > KRANN > CRADL > KLEBB > ETHYN > PTRIK > TAALE**. When first issued "descend via", make sure the Runway 22L transition is selected and that your GPS/FMS waypoints match the chart (if not, request vectors from ATC). For example, if you saw JOODY > SOFEE > ERNEI, you would be incorrectly flying the Runway 4R transition.

While flying the arrival, aircraft can expect vectors at or prior to TAALE. However, if you do not receive vectors by TAALE, continue flying track 035°, as stated in the description. Turning the aircraft toward the runway or approach after crossing TAALE is incorrect and could result in a conflict with other arriving traffic.

Until given a lower clearance, the lowest an aircraft may descend to is 5,000', while respecting the earlier crossing altitudes published for preceding fixes.

Pilots unfamiliar or unsure of how to fly this procedure should advise ATC "unable RNAV arrival, request vectors" and can then expect to receive headings and altitudes from ATC.

Letter to Airmen

For other helpful tips and recommended practices about flying online, read our Letter to Airmen.

About Boston Virtual ARTCC

Boston Virtual ARTCC provides air traffic control within the Boston ARTCC on VATSIM. We also encourage pilot members to join the ARTCC and take advantage of exclusive scenery updates, training programs, and one of the most active and realistic aviation communities. For more information about BVA, visit www.bvartcc.com.