



Travel Tips from the Trenches

Geraldine Markel, Ph.D.

The following checklist is a guide for simplifying the often overwhelming task of planning a trip. If you are traveling with others, consider sharing the responsibilities of packing and preparing. Most importantly, modify this checklist to complement your travel needs.

Before you leave (one to four days prior)

ESSENTIALS

- Check that credit card(s) are in an accessible, safe place
- Withdraw enough cash
- Get traveler's cheques or foreign currency, if necessary
- Have \$2 to \$4 in change
- Keep an additional \$20 to \$50 tucked into a separate compartment of your wallet
- Confirm reservations (flight, hotel, car rental, dining, entertainment)
- Pack any coupons redeemable for discounts at travel destinations
- Select a location to keep itinerary (tickets, confirmations and directions)
- Print out electronic ticket boarding pass (less than 24 hours from departure time)
- Bring business cards and extra card holder
- Place a hold on your mail through the post office, or ask a neighbor to collect mail
- Pay bills in advance that are due while you are away to avoid finance charges

CLOTHING

- Make a list of what you'll be doing on each day of your trip (morning, afternoon, evening)
- Determine appropriate apparel for these activities (i.e. pants, sneakers, bathing suit)
- Pack jewelry and coordinating accessories (i.e. handbags, cuff links, belts, ties)

ELECTRONICS

- Gather plugs and chargers for laptop, cell phone, pager, Palm-like device, DVD player, micro cassette recorders, MP3 players, and handheld games
- Purchase extra batteries
- Pack computer discs or external devices (including keyboard for Palm-like device)

SUNDRIES AND SUPPLIES

- Create a list of toiletries (including medications and first-aid essentials such as Band-Aids)
- Fill a travel bag with toiletries and store it for unexpected trips
- Include organizing supplies (rubber bands, tape, paper clips, permanent marker)
- Organize contact information (address, telephone and directions to destination)
- Have blank paper and pen conveniently available for directions

DIRECTIONS

- Time permitting, call your destination and ask them to fax or email directions
- If receiving directions over the phone, listen and repeat each step to the person assisting you before writing them down (include telephone number)
- Draw your own map or diagram to visually orient yourself
- If you plan to visit this location more than once, write the directions and contact information in your address book or Palm-like device
- If meeting others, exchange cell phone numbers in case you need to reach each other