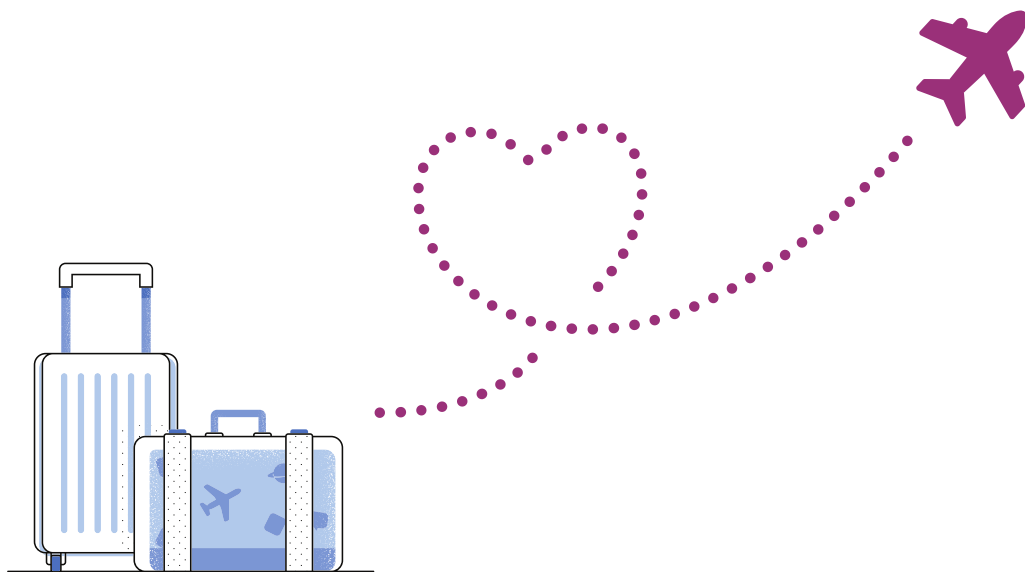


Travel Guidebook

By Grain of Sand Moments



Travel

CHECKLIST

DATE: _____

DESTINATION: _____

TOPS

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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BOTTOMS

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SHOES

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TOILETRIES

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FOR THE PLANE

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ACCESSORIES

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OTHER

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

IMPORTANT

<input type="checkbox"/>	Passport	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phone Charger	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Power Strip & Adapter	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medicine & Med List	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>		_____

TRAVEL *Details*

FLIGHT INFO

FLIGHT TO: _____

FLIGHT HOME: _____

HOTEL INFO

EXCURSIONS & ACTIVITIES

Packing RECOMMENDATIONS

CHECKED BAG

- Majority of your outfits
- Extra pair(s) of shoes
- Shoes to wear in the hotel
- Toiletry bag
- Hair straightener

CARRY-ON ITEM (OVERHEAD)

- Change of clothes
- A few pairs of underwear
- Change of socks
- Change of shoes

PERSONAL ITEM (UNDER SEAT)

- Passport
- Cell phone
- Bag of liquids
- Medicine
- Phone charger
- Headphones
- Book, magazine, puzzle book
- Pen
- Snacks
- Bottle of water (bought at airport)
- Disinfecting wipes

TIPS

- Take a picture of your luggage - if it gets lost, delayed, or damaged, it will help you fill out the necessary paperwork with the airline if you have photos of your luggage.
- If your luggage tag has a paper insert, flip the paper over so that your info isn't visible to everyone looking at your bag. You can put a note on the tag to flip it over for details. This way, people can't easily see your name and address, which could be a security concern since they know you're not home.

TSA & CUSTOMS GUIDELINES

- Pack most of your liquids in your checked bag. Here's info for those you take on the plane:
 - All liquids carried on the plane must pack into a single clear, quart-sized resealable bag.
 - Each container can't hold more than 3.4 ounces (100 ml).
 - Although it's called the liquids rule, it also applies to gels, creams, pastes, and aerosols. This means that things like toothpaste and deodorant will need to fit in the bag. That's why I recommend only putting things you may need during travel (or soon after) in your bag and packing the rest in your checked luggage.
- You're allowed to carry a disposable razor on the plane.
- You're not allowed to carry a pocket knife on the plane.

Packing

TIPS & TRICKS

- I like to use packing cubes, and I pack similar items in cubes rather than packing full outfits. Because similar items are similar sized, you end up with less wasted space.
- That said, if you aren't staying in one place during your trip, it can work better if you pack full outfits and combine a couple day's outfits into a single cube. That way when you get to each hotel, you'll only need to access one cube. If you're traveling with a spouse, combine suitcases so you each have half your clothes in each bag. That way you'll also only need to open one suitcase each day. For example, if you're at your first hotel for 2 days, you could have 2 days worth of clothes in a cube. Then at that hotel, you'll only need to open that one cube vs. multiple cubes/suitcases.
- Consider packing a capsule wardrobe so that you can mix and match items and don't have to pack as many things. For example, choose tops that will work with any of your bottoms and cardigans/sweatshirts that will go with any of your outfits. Not only will you need to pack fewer items, it's less stressful deciding what to wear each day because you won't have to worry about ending up with things that don't match at the end of your trip.
- Pack some of your clothes in each other's checked bags. That way if one bag is lost or delayed, you'll still have some clothes.
- Pack a change of clothes in your carry-on bag so that if your checked bags get lost or you spill something on the plane, you at least have a change of clothes.
- Pack your passport and medicine in your personal item, not your carry-on. This way you have easy access to it, and if they gate-check your carry-on, you'll still have these items should you need them during your flight or if your carry-on were to be lost or delayed.
- Pack your toothbrush/toothpaste, hand sanitizer, lotion, deodorant, and lip balm in your personal item (in your quart-sized liquids bag). I'd also recommend taking oil-absorbing face wipes. Your face can get oily after a long day of travel or sightseeing, and these will soak up the oil so that it doesn't get in your eyes when you rub them.
- Pack your cell phone charger in your personal item - many planes have ports for you to charge your phone.
- Pack a reusable tote bag. Not all stores will have bags, and it makes it easier to carry things.

Travel

TIPS & REMINDERS

PLANE TIPS

- Pack a few snacks for the plane. Personally, I like to have a granola bar and some pretzels with me. If I start to feel queasy on the plane, the pretzels help.
- Grab a bottle of water at the airport before boarding. You'll get dehydrated on the plane and you don't want to have to rely / wait on the flight crew to serve drinks. You can also pack an empty reusable water bottle and fill it at the airport once you get through security.
- Take headphones for the plane and make sure that you take a few adapters because different planes have different types of ports. Without headphones, you won't be able to watch a movie/TV, and that really helps to pass the time.
- Wear layers on the plane. Sometimes they're hot and stuffy and other times they're freezing cold.
- Take some disinfecting wipes and wipe down your tray table, arm rests, window, etc. when you board.
- You may want to consider wearing compression socks on the plane.

NAVIGATING THE *Airport*

PARKING

- If you drive to the airport, you'll need to note where you park. Make sure to note which lot you parked in, and which row. You can take a picture of where you parked, and I'd also write it on a piece of paper that you keep with you because you may need to look at it when you get back to the airport and need to find your car.
- You may be able to pay for parking at the airport before going to back to your car at the end of your trip. If you aren't sure or if you're afraid you could lose your parking ticket, leave the ticket in your car.

GETTING TO YOUR GATE

Note: not all of these tips may be relevant or applicable to the airport you're flying out of. Follow the signs and instructions of your airport.

- When you first enter the airport, you'll need to check in and check your bags. Look for your airline. There should be kiosks where you can print your boarding passes and luggage tags. Then go to the desk to check your bags.
- After that you'll go through security. If you have TSA Precheck, follow the signs for Precheck.
- You shouldn't need your passport, but they'll check your boarding pass to make sure it says Precheck.
- You won't need to take off your shoes or get out your liquids bag. You will need to put your carry ons and personal bags into a bin to go through the scanner, and then you'll need to walk through the metal detector. It's pretty easy.
- After that, just follow the signs for your gates.
- You don't need to do anything when you get to your gate - there's no check-in or anything there. You just wait to board. That means you can feel free to walk around, go to a restaurant and eat, or go to the lounge if you have access.
- Your boarding pass will have a boarding group number on it. First, they'll pre-board military members, people with disabilities, and families with young kids. Then they'll start boarding group 1 and go in consecutive order.
- Boarding takes a while and everyone tries to rush to be first in line - it can be a little annoying, so just try to be patient.
- Have everything you'll want during the flight in your personal item before you board. You'll need to quickly put your carry-on in the overhead compartment as soon as you board, and there isn't time or space to rummage in it to pull stuff out at your seat.

TIPS FOR WHEN YOU'RE ON *Vacation*

VACATION LOGISTICS

Getting Cash - When traveling internationally, I recommend getting cash from an ATM, not from a currency exchange, because the exchange rates will be better.

- If it asks whether you want to accept or decline the conversion, choose decline. Another way it may word this is by asking if you want to withdrawal the money in your home currency or the local currency - choose the local currency.
- You should be able to find an ATM in your hotel or outside a bank.
- I would plan to pay for most things with your credit card and limit the number of times you need to use the ATM. You'll need cash for tips, to use public toilets, and at some smaller shops/street vendors, but most restaurants and stores will accept your credit card, just like in the US.

Using Your Credit Card

- Europe uses chip and pin credit cards. If you have a credit card that doesn't have a chip, it likely won't work there. Discover and AmEx may also not be widely accepted, but Visa and Mastercard should be.
- If the payment terminal has the option to tap to pay, do that, if your card supports it. Since your credit card doesn't have a pin, tapping to pay will let you avoid needing to enter one.

VACATION TIPS

- **Phone** - if you don't have an international plan, put your phone on airplane mode after boarding the plane and before take off. Leave your phone in airplane mode during your vacation so that you don't have to pay for roaming or data. You won't be able to text or call, but you can connect to wifi and send email and use Facebook Messenger.
- **Night Light** - you may want to pack a night light so that you can see if you have to get up to use the bathroom overnight.
- **Room Lights** - There's a good chance that the lights in your room won't work unless you have a keycard stuck in a slot inside your room, it's normally located near the door. This is so that you can't leave lights on when you're not in the room. Sometimes, the heat/AC also won't run unless there's a card in that slot.

IDEAS FOR WHEN YOU'RE ON *Vacation*

VACATION TIPS

- Look for a grocery store or market near your hotel - some common ones are Coop and Sainsbury's. If you see a department store like Marks & Spencer (similar to Macy's or JC Penney), they often have a cafe and a grocery store inside. Not only is it fun to walk through and see the types of things they sell, it's a great place to pick up bottled water and snacks. The grocery store will likely be on the lowest level of the store.
- When scrolling through your camera roll later, it can be hard to remember where the photos were taken. At the start of each day, take a picture of that day's itinerary or a note with the town name(s) written on it. That way as you scroll, your photos will be separated by day and you'll be able to more easily see at a glance where each group of photos were taken.
- When eating at a restaurant in Europe, you'll need to ask for your check when you're ready for it, they typically won't bring it to you like they do here. If you don't ask, you'll sit there forever waiting for it.

SOUVENIR IDEAS

- Pick up a postcard(s) at each place you visit and write down a few memories or highlights on the back. You'll have a pretty picture of each place and a few memories, all in one place. It's easy to forget some of the cool things you experience because you'll see and do so much, so do your journaling as you go.
- Aside from the Christmas ornaments that I get each place I visit, I've also gotten a few pieces of clothes and accessories. Each time I wear or use them, I think of that trip. These are also practical souvenirs, so they won't just sit on a shelf collecting dust.
- When you enter the US, you'll have to fill out a customs form and it'll ask if you're bringing food into the country. Avoid bringing fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, and cheese. Chocolate, bakery items, and snacks are okay.

CUSTOMS

- When you arrive back in the States, you may not walk through the terminal to get to customs. You'll likely get off the plane and be directed right to customs. This means you can't run to the restroom when you get off the plane, you'll have to wait until you clear customs and get to the baggage claim which could take a while. You likely won't be able to get out of your seat during the plane's descent (which will be about the last 30 minutes of your flight), so keep that in mind and plan ahead.
- Download the MPC app - It's the Mobile Passport Control app. You'll add your traveler info to it, and then when you land, you'll open the app, select the airport you're at, take a selfie, and complete the customs form (about 5 questions). When you get to customs, look for the MPC signs and get in that line - it'll be considerably shorter than the main line and should be near the area labeled for Global Entry, Crew, and Diplomats.
- When it's your turn, you should be able to go to the customs' agent together with the person you're traveling with (if you're traveling with someone). It's a little intimidating, but don't be nervous. They'll scan your passport and take your picture. They'll probably ask you a few questions - where you traveled, how long you were there, and if you brought any food back with you. Just be friendly and answer their questions briefly, don't go into extra detail or share extra information, and don't try to joke with agent.