

TRAVEL TIPS

Prepared by: Don Bogle, Brightspark,
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Travel is one of the best forms of education and enjoyment. To make travel experiences more satisfying, it certainly helps to read about and study the places to be visited, prior to the actual trip. Otherwise, you'll find that the visit is a lot less rewarding. This package of information introduces you to various aspects of your upcoming trip. You are encouraged to read it over carefully - several times, and especially just before your departure. The Internet sites, books, and movies are particularly recommended. By all means, purchase one of the well-recognized guidebooks (Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet, Rough Guide, Rick Steves, etc.), then read it before you leave and/or take it along on the trip. For even more up-to-date information, contact some Internet sites using any search engine. For example, Google & Yahoo have a lot on all European countries. Bon voyage!

WEATHER



The day before your departure, it's a good idea to check the weather forecast for your destination using the Internet. This will tell you the first few days of your trip, so you can decide on packing items accordingly. For March break trips in France, for example, the average daytime temperatures range from 6 to 12 C, with, on average, 7 rainy days.

MONEY – With the increasing prevalence of ATMs around the world, many travelers travel with less cash and traveler's cheques than ever before, since these days it's fairly easy to access your bank accounts at home from abroad. However, you should always have some cash on hand – don't rely entirely on credit cards and ATM machines. Bring along whatever amount feels comfortable to you.



It is quite easy, usually, to get Eurodollars out of Cirrus and Plus affiliated ATMs in Europe by using your VISA or MasterCard card, or your bank's ATM card. Most banks are on the Cirrus or Plus system and offer instructions in English. You must remember to bring along your four digit PIN number. Exchange rates at ATMs tend to be better than those offered at banks. Some cash machines in convert foreign bank notes into Eurodollars– you simply slide your crisp \$20 or \$50 bill into the machine, and the Eurodollars come out.

Here's a great currency conversion website <http://www.xe.net/ucc/>

LANGUAGE – Many people understand at least some English, especially in the tourist attractions. Here are two excellent web sites to help you brush up on foreign languages.

<http://www.travlang.com/languages>

<http://www.fodors.com/language>

DRESS – European tend to dress nicely and more formally than their North American counterparts. They don't look favourably on irreverent casualness or sloppiness. European elegance and proper dress do not usually oblige men to wear a tie and jacket; the fanciest restaurants will shun jeans, but usually don't require ties. Jeans are worn frequently, even at the office, but not in clubs or discos. Savvy travelers like black clothing as it goes with everything and hides dirt. Sneakers immediately give you away as a tourist; instead, bring along very comfortable walking shoes.

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR STUDENT TRAVELERS

1. Thou shalt not expect to find things as thou hast them at home ... for thou hast left thy home to find things different.
2. Thou shalt not let the other tourists get on thy nerves ... for thou art paying good money to enjoy thyself.
3. Thou shalt remember to conduct thyself in such a manner that will be a credit to thy school, community, and country.
4. Thou shalt remember thy passport so thou knowest where it is at all times ... for a person without a passport is a person without a country.
5. Thou shalt remember that if we were expected to stay in one place ... we would have been created with roots.
6. Thou shalt not worry. He/She that worrieth hath no pleasure ... few things are fatal.
7. Thou shalt remember thou art a guest in every land ... and he that treateth his host with respect is treated as an honoured guest.
8. Thou shalt not judge the people of a country by one person with whom thou hast had trouble.
9. Thou shalt not expect all planes, buses, and trains to leave on time, every time ... patience is an eternal virtue.

10. Above all, thou shalt remember thy flight number, seat number, room number, hotel phone number, passport number, and travelers' cheques numbers ... for these are thy aid and comfort when all else appears to be in confusion.

PACKING INFORMATION



Packing is always a problem for first-time or inexperienced travelers, or when you are going to a country where the weather may be an unknown factor. For this reason, we include a lot of information and suggestions for packing. An excellent section on packing is found on the Internet at - <http://www.ricksteves.com/tips/packlist.htm> - "Rick's Packing List."

One suitcase per person (one with rollers recommended) and a carry-on bag is strongly suggested. Luggage for transportation on the plane must be no greater than the dimensions of the space below the seat - 23.5 cms x 40 cms x 50 cms. The luggage piece allowance is 23 kilos, but remember, you'll be doing the carrying yourself; therefore, a weight in the 15-20 kilos is best. All luggage, including hand luggage, must be clearly labeled with your name address and phone number - both inside and outside the luggage.

SOME HINTS:

1. Do not pack aerosol cans in your luggage; keep them with you in the pressurized cabin.
2. If you intend to do a lot of shopping, your luggage should be one-third empty on the way over to leave room of your purchases.
3. If you are taking liquids or lotions, put enough for your stay in smaller plastic bottles. (see current regulations concerning liquids)
4. Break in new shoes and clothes before taking them on a trip. Your feet will thank you. Leave expensive jewelry at home.
5. Soft-sided luggage is useful for accommodating oddly-shaped packages. It doesn't crack, but it can be ripped. It does not offer the same protection as hard luggage but it is much lighter to carry. Luggage with wheels is easier on the arms. It is usually not worth buying new luggage specifically for this trip.
6. Useful items to consider packing include:
 - small pair of scissors
 - small notebook & pens, along with addresses for mailing
 - travel alarm clock (especially if you are hard to wake up or need extra time)
 - sunglasses & an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
 - bottle and can opener
 - shampoo & soap, small bag of detergent
 - plastic bags for soiled laundry or dirty shoes

a few J-cloths; they have many uses including facecloths which are rare in Europe and a real one starts to smell after a while; J-cloths can be thrown out
 needle and thread or very small sewing kit
 a few small packets of tissues
 toilet paper (if you are fussy about the quality of softness available!)
 elastics and some string
 hair dryer - share with someone else
 small mirror & hair brush
 Gravol or similar product if you suffer from motion sickness
 personal hygiene needs (deodorant, toothbrush & paste, etc.)
 prescription items (use original bottle)

7. iPods, etc - You are going a long way and spending a lot of money to see and hear things that are different from Canada. iPods should be kept for traveling time or if you are relaxing in your room. They have no place on the actual excursions and the guides will be extremely offended if you have an iPod with you during the sightseeing. On the flights, listen to flight attendant instructions concerning the use of all electronic devices.

8. Mail/E-Mail - Remember, you'll be home before cards or letters arrive, so it might be better to keep a daily journal and tell your friends and relatives about the trip when you get home. Too many students spend a lot of time writing cards and looking for stamps or a mailbox. Internet cafes might be available or internet access in the hotels, but don't count on it.



9/ Electricity - European currents have 220 volts compared with our 110 and often the plugs are different from ours. It's best to minimize the use of electrical appliances or to buy adapters for the wall plug and converters (110 to 220) if necessary.



SAMPLE PACKING LIST

(A) **FOR YOUR CARRY-ON:** The following items should be placed in your flightbag, as your suitcase will be checked straight through to your final destination. Experienced travelers pack their flightbags as though your suitcase was going to be lost for a few days. Keep with you your passport, travelers' cheques, and cash.

Place all toilet articles in a waterproof bag and buy small sizes of any container. Here's a checklist for your flight bag items:

toothbrush
 toothpaste
 deodorant
 hairspray
 hairbrush
 comb

small umbrella
 plastic raincoat
 camera & film
 guidebooks
 tissue packs
 detergent

small towel
 wash cloths
 shaving items
 change of clothes
 reading material
 pyjamas

soap

shampoo

cream or lotion

(B) FOR YOUR SUITCASE:

BOTTOM LAYER: Place all heavy and odd-shaped articles, remembering which side will be up when you stand it up. Wear your heaviest shoes. Tuck accessories and underclothes between these items and along the sides. Put underwear in a plastic bag to avoid turning red when your suitcase falls open in the airport or elsewhere! Other items such as belts, tuck in on the sides, and shoes, packed heel-to-toe, can hide small breakable items. Wear your heavy sweater; there's plenty of room for it in the storage space on the plane.

SECOND LAYER: Place your outfits here. Fold pants and dresses once only, and place a plastic bag or sock in the crease. Shirts and blouses are folded arm to arm, then across the chest and placed in the centre on top of the other items. Remember that your clothing should get lighter towards the top of the case; jeans near the bottom.

TOP LAYER: Should contain the clothes that match your traveling outfit, and your best clothes. Always fold your clothes where slight creases won't show; tops of slacks or pants rather than the legs should be folded over. Carry a few coat hangers to hang up easily creased items.

NOTE: plastic garbage bags of the kitchen size are the handiest things to carry; take along a few - put wet items, laundry, and souvenirs in them.

Sweaters	sets of underwear	coat hangers
good outfit	everyday outfits	plastic bags
shoes	socks/nylons	casual tops
travel alarm	travel diary	books
pants/skirts	prescription items	light jacket
travelers' cheque numbers	first aid supplies	

OTHER GENERAL TIPS:

1. Partners - have a room-mate with whom you can divide up heavy items such as hair dryers and curling irons. You'll need only one per room, plus electrical converters and adapters.
2. Wardrobe - Plan your wardrobe around one or two colour schemes so that every item of clothing will match. Pack with activities in mind, and when choosing a coat or jacket, pick one that will fit most occasions. Ski jackets are too bulky, act like sponges in rain, and too warm for spring, summer, or fall trips. All-weather coats or leather jackets are particularly good. Sweaters and pullovers are invaluable as the weather is unpredictable, and it's a good idea to layer your clothes. Select drip-dry or perma-press articles. There might be chances to wash clothes, but it takes a long time to dry laundry so carry enough socks and underwear for the whole trip.

NOTE: If you can, check the destination's long range weather report via Internet the day before you leave to see if your clothes will be sufficiently warm or cool.

3. **PACKING**: On the road - pack the night before you depart, and have your clothes that you are going to wear in the morning ready to go. Always check your hotel room before leaving and never pack on an unmade, messy bed. Look underneath the furniture and in all the drawers and in bathrooms and closets. Report all lost items immediately to your group leader; insurance covers you only if proper reports have been filed. Use your suitcase as a "safe" when you are out for the day and lock all valuables in it. Never take any really valuable items with you in the first place, especially jewelry.
4. **MEDICAL**: Prescriptions must be packed in their original containers and registered on the medical form that your group leader carries. If you need a prescription filled, or are afraid of losing the one you have, make sure your doctor describes your medication in international terms. If you wear contact lenses, please pack your old glasses and carry plenty of solution.
5. **SECURITY**: Overseas, security is knowing where your passport is at all times. Do not carry it in your suitcase. You will need it at the airport, you will need it to cash travelers' cheques. Girls should make certain they have a purse big enough to hold it. Boys should have a travel folder or pouch which will hold the passport and travelers' cheques as well.
7. **COURTESY**: Please keep or at least leave your room tidy. Be considerate of your room-mates and their clothing and luggage. Avoid borrowing except on a short-term basis.