

## Section 1: Preparing for the Trip

- When developing your itinerary, ask for travel brochures that will provide hotel and restaurant listings and sightseeing itineraries. This is how you can mimic vacation packages of expensive travel agencies for a fraction of the cost. The local Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) or Office of Tourism should be able to help with this as well.
- Before travelling to any city, do a search on the internet of the city name and word “coupon” (“Provo coupon”). Or check out the local CVB website for quick listings of coupons and free things to do in the area.
- Once you know where you are going, divide up the list of things you want to do and put someone in charge of each item on the list. This is also a great way to get teenagers excited about the trip, by asking them to research group activities they want to do on the vacation.
- Pay close attention to those newsletters enclosed in your frequent flier statements. They usually contain special offers and promotions that can earn you double or triple miles if you stay at a certain hotel or eat at a certain restaurant.
- This helpful website ([biddingfortravel.com](http://biddingfortravel.com)) gives potential bidders an idea of prices that are being accepted and declined on [priceline.com](http://priceline.com) for hotel, rental car rates, etc.
- Before leaving for a vacation, print out all reservations and directions, and create a contact sheet for emergencies. Place everything in one bright colored folder. Another recommendation is to place all of the important information on a flash drive or USB drive that is password protected. A third idea is to email this information to yourself so that you could easily access it while away from home if needed.
- If you want to stay on a travel budget, split each day’s spending cash into separate envelopes, one per day.
- Email your itinerary, including flights, hotels and confirmation numbers, to yourself and to family members. If your luggage is lost or wallets are stolen, all of this essential information is just a click or phone call away.
- If you are traveling to a foreign country, make sure that any money you plan on exchanging is absolutely crisp and clean because often banks won’t take bills with writing or damage.
- It is often cheaper to book hotel rooms online instead of calling over the phone. Look on the site for its “Web only” rate.
- Check out [YouTube.com](http://YouTube.com) and [Flickr.com](http://Flickr.com) to get ideas and see photos and videos of possible vacation destinations.
- Set a trip allowance for each child so that when they want to buy something, they know how much money they have left.

## Section 2: Flying Tips

- When looking for low airfare, in some cases the best rates pop up when searching for one traveler instead of two.
- Try to book the first flight out in the morning, because those planes often arrive at the airport the evening before. You won't have to rely on an incoming plane, which could be delayed for a number of reasons, resulting in your own flight to be delayed or cancelled.
- When flying with young children, consider flying on the redeye flight so that your children can still sleep their normal hours and not need as much entertainment and attention as they would have on a daytime flight.
- Have the whole family wear slip on shoes to make going through security easier and faster.
- Wait to wrap any gifts you may be taking because they may need to be opened for inspection.
- Attach bright colored ribbon to the suitcases or duffle bags so that it is easier to identify them at the baggage claim.
- It is often most convenient and cost-effective to take your own car seats with you on vacation. They are handy for keeping little ones in the hotel rooms during feedings or quiet time.
- [Flyingwithkids.com](http://Flyingwithkids.com) has more great tips and suggestions for flying with small children.

### Section 3: Driving Tips

- When going on road trips, always pack snacks and drinks in a small cooler. This will help everyone during the trip to have snacks and prevent having to stop at more rest stops than necessary.
- Music selection during a road trip is often a touchy subject. Consider allowing everyone in the family to select a few of their favorite songs and then compile a family CD to listen to during the drive.
- It is also a good idea to prepare some ideas for games to play in the car, to keep kids entertained and well-behaved. Here are 15 fun travel game ideas:
  1. Maps for the Kids: Show them how far you have come, how much further there is to go and let them mark it with a crayon. Include landmarks you will see along the way. Every time they ask “How much further?” have them take out their map and see for themselves. You could ask for these maps from your local CVB as well.
  2. Mystery Writing: One person holds out their hand and closes their eyes while the other person “writes” on his hand with their finger. The first person has to guess what the second person is writing without looking.
  3. Bubble Gum Blowing Contest: At the next gas station stop pick out a unique flavor of gum and have a bubble gum blowing contest.
  4. License Plate Game: Spot a license plate and call out the letters on it. Then everyone tries to come up with a different phrase using the letters in the order they appear on the license plate as the first letter of each word. For example, TES could be “ten elephants swimming.” When you can’t think of any more look for another license plate.
  5. Play Cards: Teach your kids to play “Old Maid” or “Go Fish” or any other card game.
  6. Tell jokes: Take turns telling silly jokes like knock-knock jokes or riddles. If you need help getting started, rent a joke book at your local library, or find jokes for kids online.
  7. Counting: This game could be altered to count any one specific object from cows, blue vans, red cars, police cars, billboards or people.
  8. Scavenger Hunt: Give each person a list of items to watch for while driving. The list can be made up ahead of time and adjusted for the scenery.
  9. Alphabet Game: Start with the letter “A” and find one on a sign, truck, billboard or license plate. Say the word and then move on to the next letter. Work your way through to the letter “Z.”
  10. Read: Take turns reading a book out loud.
  11. Sing: Sing songs together that everyone in the car can enjoy.
  12. Spelling Bee: See who can spell the most words correctly. You might like to bring a small dictionary for word ideas and definitions.
  13. Lines and Dots: Make a grid of dots on a sheet of paper. Each player takes turns drawing a line between two dots. The lines can only be horizontal or vertical. If a player makes a complete square, they get to mark the square with their initials in the center of it, and they get another turn. The player with the most squares when all the dots are connected wins.
  14. Twenty Questions: Think of an object, it can be anything as long as it is general. The players can then ask anything they want about the object as long as you are able to answer “yes” or “no” to their question. If they can guess the object in less than 20 questions, they win.
  15. Play Favorites: Go around the car and ask each person their favorite color. Then continue the conversation by having everyone talk about their different “favorites” such as movie, flavor of ice cream, song, game, toy, animal, etc.

## Section 4: Packing

- Put together a packing list several weeks in advance, in order to make packing easier so that you can simply check things off the list and you place them in the suitcase.
- If you are flying and travelling with others, split up clothing so that if one person's luggage gets lost, they will still have some clothes available until the airport can deliver their luggage.
- Also consider splitting up your valuables as much as possible in different pockets, bags, and wallets. In case you get robbed, at least you will have another stash to resort to.
- When packing a backpack, place the lighter items at the bottom and the heavier ones on top. Your bag will feel lighter this way as the pack rests on your lower back. Place the things you use the most, or need easy access to, at the top.
- Rather than folding your clothes, roll them to make more room in your suitcase. If you roll the clothes in tissue paper, the clothes will also get less wrinkled.
- If you are travelling with younger children consider placing each outfit (including socks and underwear) into a Ziploc bag and pack one bag for each day that you'll be on vacation.
- It is always handy to have a few plastic Ziploc bags to place certain items such as toiletries and dirty or wet clothes in.
- When packing something with batteries, turn the batteries around so that if the item is accidentally turned on, you won't empty the batteries unknowingly.
- Spread out any books or other documents that you are packing throughout your suitcase, rather than stacking them in a pile.
- Place a fabric softener sheet in your suitcase when packing because it will absorb odors and dampness and keep clothes smelling fresh.
- Baby wipes aren't just for babies. Take a travel-size pack in your carry-on bag and use the wipes to kill germs on public toilet seats or remove stains from clothes in a pinch.
- Allow young kids to bring along one comfort item from home such as a blanket or stuffed animal.
- Take an extra empty duffel bag with you if you plan on buying a lot of souvenirs during your vacation so that you have room to take them all home.

## Section 5: Out and About

- When travelling with others, always discuss a central meeting place in case you get separated.
- Always have a recent, clear photo of your child with you. If you do get separated, the authorities will want an up-to-date picture.
- If you start to feel a blister coming on, put some lip balm or Vaseline on the spot to help it stop rubbing.
- Don't save the best for last. If you wait for the end of your trip for must-do activities, you won't be able to reschedule if something unforeseen happens.
- When planning to visit a theme park or beach, take along a few sandwich-size Ziploc bags to protect your cell phone and wallet when you're riding on water attractions.
- Buying the whole family drinks at theme parks can be expensive so instead take in some water bottles and when the kids want a drink, just pour in the powder mixes and you instantly have a refreshing drink for less.
- Consider bringing along battery operated walkie-talkies in order to keep everyone connected in case you need or want to split up.
- Watch out for bugs. Avoid attracting stinging insects by wearing light colored clothing and avoiding perfume and cologne.