Making that trip to your dream destination doesn’t have to be a hassle. Follow these tips for a more comfortable in-flight experience and carefree journey, whatever class of traveller you are.

WORDS
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TRAVEL

For Families With Babies

Dreading the idea of entertaining your baby in a confined space? These recommendations will help you get through your next flight in one piece.

Schedule your flight time If you decide to take the red-eye, you may arrive at your destination exhausted. Imagine trying to keep up with your overly excited toddler upon your arrival! It may be better to book a flight that coincides with his or her nap time or bedtime. That will keep your baby sleeping through most of the flight.

Be prepared for take-off and landing Your most challenging moments are during take-off and landing. This is when babies are most vulnerable to ear congestion due to air pressure changes. To prevent a meltdown, ensure that your baby is feeding during the ascent and descent. The act of suction (breastfeeding, drinking from a bottle or using a pacifier) can ease pressure changes.

Plan for nappy changes Unfortunately for long-haul flights, you can’t avoid a nappy change. To do this efficiently, plan a nappy change before boarding, and pack a compact nappy-changing bag for mid-air changes. Remember to pack enough for before boarding and during the flight itself.

For Corporate Warriors

Business travel demands high performance despite the stress, hectic schedules and late nights. Before you pack your bags, here are a few tips on making your business trip tolerable and — wait for it — fun.

Book a seat at the back of the plane Some planes tuck in-flight entertainment boxes under specific rows of seats, which leaves you less legroom. To steer clear of those, visit websites such as SeatGuru to read reviews on your aircraft’s seat map. Book a seat at the back of the plane for a quieter flight since baby bassinets are usually at the front of the cabin.

Avoid alcohol and caffeine As much as you’d like to drink your stress away, alcohol and caffeine are diuretics. Coupled with the dry cabin air, these may leave you dehydrated. Remember, one drink in the air is like two on the ground. Clink glasses all you want when you touch down.

Block out the noise A pair of noise-cancelling headphones are a must. Whether you need to get work done or wish to tune things out to relax, these quiet achievers can mean the difference between a good flight and a great one. Besides enjoying a superior audio experience, you also get to avoid hours of awkwardness with your neighbours.

BEAT JET LAG!

• Put yourself in your destination’s time zone ahead of the trip.
• If flying east, move your bedtime earlier: if flying west, sleep a little later.

DIAPER BAG CHECKLIST

• Diapers
• Wipes
• Plastic bags for soiled wipes
• Pacifiers (bring extras)
• Two outfit changes
• Formula or breast milk kept cool with portable ice packs
• Sippy cups
• A changing pad
• Bottles
• Waterproof bibs
• Blankets
• A teething toy
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For Wheelchair Users
Wheelchair-bound passengers are concerned with accessibility, bathroom trips and pressure sores. While it is impossible to plan for unforeseen situations, you can make the most of and enjoy every moment with these expert tips. These apply beyond the flight itself.

Book a lie-flat seat A wheelchair-bound traveller can enjoy comfort in a lie-flat seat, which is usually found in Business or First Class cabins. Although these seats may be pricier than those in Economy, they can keep one in an outstretched position and enable the shifting of weight. Some aircraft are designed with seats with direct-aisle access. This way, passengers won’t have to climb over one another to head to the bathroom.

Get finer details Wheelchair accessibility may vary. If the details of a wheelchair-accessible bathroom are not listed, ask if it comes equipped with a roll-in shower, a grab bar, and a removable showerhead. Get pictures from your host and enquire ahead about door widths and heights, as well as that of stairways, to ensure that the facilities of the hotel or apartment accommodates your needs.

Pick the right itinerary Those familiar with cruising would know that passengers may have to get onto small boats to get to shore. Unfortunately, most cruise operators prohibit wheelchair users from boarding these vessels. Wheelchair-bound travellers should therefore select cruise itineraries where the ship docks at most ports of call. In addition, specialised tour operators and accessible shore excursions should also be available ashore.

For Backpackers
You have manoeuvred your busy schedule to make this trip to explore new cities and meet people around the world. Travelling light doesn’t mean you have to compromise on comfort. Here’s how.

Use a soft bag If you are on a full flight, chances are that overhead lockers would be crammed with suitcases and hand baggage. Take the stress out of your trip by easily finding room for your own carry-on luggage. Ditch hard cases for soft bags such as a rucksack or a duffel bag, which are perfect shapeshifters for slotting in between bags.

Prepare an essentials kit Don’t let the ‘fasten seatbelt’ sign come between you and your book. Keep essential items at hand by preparing a small zip case or a seatback organiser before boarding. Stuff it with headphones, a phone charger cord, vanity items such as body lotion and lip balm, as well as a pen for filling out landing documents. For hygiene purposes or simply to hide a worn face, be sure to add a disposable face mask.

Indulge in a nifty travel gadget To get all the rest you can get, invest in comfort gadgets such as a foot hammock, which elevates your feet and legs on pillows, or an inflatable, huggable travel pillow with cut-outs for your arms and face. Put an end to the elbow war with a portable armrest divider that creates extra elbow room for two, or install an anti-slip window shelf for your phone, beverage, and snacks.

Searching for accessible holiday accommodation can be a breeze on websites like Handiscover and i-escape as listings are filtered by mobility needs. Get more travel tips from online communities such as Lonely Planet’s Travel for All Google+ community, and Tarita’s Travel Connections.

MAGAZINE TIPS

- For the lowest prices, secure your plane ticket three months to 30 days from departure. Prices will spike in the final three weeks. (Forbes)
- If you tend to feel hungry easily, pack protein-rich snacks such as almonds, cheese and protein bars to keep you feeling full longer. (Business Insider)
- Plan ahead for your in-flight entertainment. Not a fan of movies? Download the free Kindle App on your phone for a great selection of books to keep you occupied. (Backpacker Guide)