

A GUIDE FOR

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Valid Passport

Expiration on Passport must be more than three months past scheduled return date. There are some countries requiring six months validity post-return date. Please confirm the requirement for your destination with your travel consultant. To be safe, we suggest following the six months validity post-return date.

Packing

1. MAKE A LIST OF EVERYTHING YOU PLAN TO TAKE

Pack clothes that travel well. Layer your clothing and **wear good, comfortable shoes**. Pack clothes with similar color schemes so you can mix and match. Roll clothes to save space. Keep your luggage fresh with a fabric softener sheet. Wear loose, comfortable clothing for your flights. **DO NOT OVER PACK!** Avoid wearing patriotic clothing (nothing with the flag or country displayed). Bring a small collapsible bag for souvenirs and a small umbrella for inclement weather.

We recommend placing important documents in a money belt. The neck/lanyard-style and fanny pack pouches identify you as a tourist. If you carry a purse, make sure you can carry it over your head for extra safety. If possible, always protect your documents with RFID protected pouches.

If you are taking any powder-like substances over 12 oz / 350 ml, TSA recommends putting it in your checked bag. Powders in carry-on baggage may require secondary screening, and powders that cannot be resolved by security officials will be prohibited from entering the cabin of the aircraft.

2. IN YOUR CARRY ON:

We recommend keeping all prescription medications in their ORIGINAL bottles. (TSA does not require prescription bottles, but some states and countries do.) It is a good idea to have a letter from your doctor stating what the medication is, what condition it is treating, and what dosage is required.



Other items to be placed in your carry on may include a change of undergarments, small change of clothing, eyeglasses, toothbrush and paste, wet wipes or anti-bacterial gel, any personal valuables (keep most at home), book, music, or anything to entertain you. If you bring deodorant in your carry on, make sure it is not aerosol.

It is a good idea to pack some snacks for your flight, however, **fruit is not suggested**.

3. REGULATIONS FOR LIQUIDS IN CARRY-ON LUGGAGE

<https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/liquids-rule>

Taking a few minutes to prepare may help to prevent some real hassles at security or even the frustration of having some personal property confiscated. Most countries now prohibit or strictly limit the size of containers with liquids, gels, and pastes that you can take in your **carry-on** luggage. (Aerosol containers are prohibited on flights.) Examples of liquids and gels included in these security measures are:

Beverages	Creams / Lotions	Liquid Makeup
Hair Gel	Shampoo / Conditioner	Toothpaste
Hair Spray	Suntan Lotion	Other Items of similar consistency

You'll go through the security check points in most countries smoothly if you follow these guidelines for your carry-on baggage. Limit all liquids, gels, and pastes to a maximum container size of 3 oz / 100 ml. Place all such items in a quart-size ziploc bag. Remove your quart-size bag from your carry-on and place in the bin provided at airport security. You can pack any size and quantity of these items in your checked luggage.

Special provisions are usually made for necessary items such as medications and baby formula. For specific guidelines and helpful tips on how to pack smart and get through the airport security faster, please refer to the TSA website: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening>.

Please Note: The above regulations are just for the carry-on luggage. In your checked luggage you can have liquids, gels, pastes, etc.

Toiletries ◀

1. If your school allows, create your own "first aid" kit with band-aids and over-the-counter medications for minor pains, upset stomach, motion sickness, etc. We recommend keeping it in the original packaging.
2. Use travel size toiletries to save space in your luggage.
3. Use ziploc baggies to protect your items from unexpected spills.



Luggage

1. You are allowed ONE checked suitcase, ONE small carry-on (or carry-on instrument that meets the carry-on size requirements), and one small personal item (purse, back-pack, etc.). Carry-on items must fit into the overhead bin or under the seat in front of you. Checked Luggage **must not exceed 50 pounds**. You are responsible for any overweight luggage charges at check in. The approximate maximum size check in bag is **62 linear inches (L+W+D)**. If your bag exceeds these weight or size limits, you will be charged the overweight/oversize baggage fees.
2. Carry-ons: Large “roller” carry-on bags are **not recommended** and could potentially have to be checked. Approximate maximum size for a carry on is **45 linear inches (L+W+D)** including handles and wheels. Bag must fit easily in the Carry-on Baggage check located near the check-in counters (approx. size 22” x 14” x 9”). Fees will apply to oversized baggage if it needs to be checked at the gate. Remember, you have to CARRY the bag, so try not to over pack it.

Please Note: these luggage rules are based on what fits in the European size motorcoaches. Even if your airline ticket allows you to check-in more luggage, please don't. It will not fit in the luggage compartment of the motorcoach!

3. Make sure to put your name and phone number INSIDE your luggage as well as outside. Know what your bag looks like: S/M/L, color, hard or soft, how many wheels, what bag tags are on it, etc.
4. Lost or damaged luggage. Take a photo of the packed suitcase (inside and outside) on the device you will use on tour. Should there be an issue with a missing bag, it will make it much easier to complete a delayed baggage report. When you arrive, if your luggage is not there yet or damaged, make your claim IMMEDIATELY.

Airports & Tickets

If you plan to sign up for a Frequent Flyer Program to receive miles, you are responsible for handling this in advance or while checking in. You can also take care of this on your return flight.

1. Know where your passport is at all times. It is the most important item you have with you when traveling internationally. Losing or finding it has been stolen will take some time to replace and may delay your onward travels.
2. Make sure to stay close to your gate an hour before take-off. They may board groups earlier.
3. During check in, have your Passport accessible to help expedite the process. Please have your boarding pass and passport accessible during all security checkpoints.
4. When going through security, DO NOT MAKE JOKES OR COMMENTS ABOUT ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS (bombs, guns, drugs, etc.).



Money ◀

Order EUROS (or GBP for United Kingdom) from your bank prior to departure. You can't rely on having an opportunity to exchange money on the first day. Ensure you have local currency in advance (e.g. EURO 100 to 200 or GBP 100 to 200 cash). If time permits, you will be able to get the proper currency from an ATM with your debit/credit card; however, there will be transaction fees.

Contact your bank prior to departure to activate your credit or debit card for international use. This must be done in your home country before traveling abroad. Know your daily limit when converted to the local currency. Your credit card can be used most everywhere; however, some shops won't allow use of a credit card **under 15 Euros**. Also, some street vendors only accept CASH.



It is recommended that approximately \$20 to \$25 per meal be brought to cover any meals not included in your trip package. Fast food meals anywhere in the world, such as hot dogs, hamburgers, etc., are approximately the same cost as in the US.

For pre-booked dinners, pitchers of water will be provided on every table. Sodas, juices, etc., can be ordered per person and must be paid for on-the-spot. Soft drinks/sodas will be approximately 3 to 4 Euros. (\$3.40-\$4.50 US) and are not refillable.

Don't forget to budget funds for souvenirs and other miscellaneous expenses.

1. Clean out your wallet of unnecessary items. ONLY bring what you need.
2. As you should do anywhere, when accepting change (cash) from a purchase, put your money in your wallet at the counter. Do not walk away putting the cash into your wallet in plain view of others.
3. If you bring a credit card, make sure to write down the toll-free number from the back of your card in case it is misplaced.
4. **Make a photocopy of your passport and license** to keep in a safe place where you will have access should you lose the originals. Leave a copy with a family member at home. (It is also a good idea to leave a photocopy of the front/back of all credit cards with a trusted family member back home.)
5. Try to spend your coins before returning to the US as many US banks will not accept them.
6. **Please do not bring travelers checks as they are not accepted in most places.**
7. Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. Some establishments do not accept American Express and/or Discover cards.

Shopping & Duty Free

1. All luggage is subject to inspection by US Customs officials. You are allowed up to \$800 per person duty free to bring back into the US per person, one liter of liquor, and 400 cigarettes. If you spend over that amount, you must claim it and pay the tax. It is recommended that you keep your sales receipts in your hand luggage, ready for declaring your purchases upon returning to the US. (You may want to bring an envelope to store your receipts throughout the trip.) Visit <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/what-expect-when-you-return> for specific questions.
2. Be prepared to fill out duty free forms on the airplane to claim your souvenirs. Take a pen in your carry-on luggage.
3. A great place for duty free shopping is at the airport in Europe before you return home.

Jet Lag & Flight Fitness

1. Avoid caffeine and pop the day of travel as they can dehydrate you on the flight.
2. Drink plenty of water. One glass per hour on the flight is suggested.
3. The air can be very dry. If you wear contacts, you may want to wear your glasses instead.
4. Take the opportunity to get up and stretch during the flight if possible. Some travelers wear compression socks to assist with circulation.
5. A small pillow or neck pillow may help you sleep more comfortably on the flight. Ear plugs and eye masks are also helpful.
6. Cabin pressure can be tough on the ears. Chewing gum during take-off and landing may help.
7. Sleep as much as you can on the plane.
8. Set your watch to your destination's local time immediately to help you adjust.
9. On the day of arrival, try your best NOT to nap. Your body clock will catch up.

Accommodations

1. Hotels in Europe are not like hotels in the United States. They are typically much smaller, as are the bathrooms. A Triple room could be either one twin/single bed and one double bed or three twin/single beds. A Double/Twin could be two individual twin/single beds, and a Single room could be a single twin bed.
2. Most of the 3-Star Hotels have hairdryers in each room. Towels are provided.



Miscellaneous Information

1. You will need to bring your own bows and mallets for string instruments and percussion, even if renting the instruments once you are overseas.
2. It is suggested that students who need stands for their performances pack folding stands in their luggage.
3. Check www.weather.com for the local temperature. Remember it will be in Celsius in Europe.
4. If you are bringing electrical devices (phone, curling iron, hairdryer, etc. that plug into the wall), you may require an electrical converter. They use 220 volts (Europe) compared to the 110 volts (US). Also, the European plug-in systems (sockets) are different, so you will need an adaptor from US plug-in to European plug-in. Bring a travel hairdryer where the voltage can be changed. A hair straightener may be world-wide voltage. Know that it will heat much more quickly than normal. We suggest leaving expensive electrical devices at home.
5. Calling home? Make sure to check with your cellular company for international rates. Contact your local phone company for the European access numbers to call the USA from Europe. Most people use the WhatsApp where voice and video calls use your phone's internet connection instead of your cell plan's data, so you don't have to worry about expensive calling charges. For more information, go to <https://www.whatsapp.com>.
6. Make sure to leave ALL travel information with family members back at home in case they need to contact you.
7. Keep your passport with you at ALL TIMES in a **safe place**.
8. SAFETY is important! Always make sure to keep an eye on your purse/bags. NEVER set them on the floor in a restaurant or restroom, or swing them over the back of your chair out of eyesight. Do not leave your bags unattended at any time. Never ask anyone to look after your bag.
9. Stay in a group with your Chaperone – **NEVER go off by yourself**.

Miscellaneous Q & A

Q: What about ATMs?

A: ATMs are everywhere; however, be aware of high transaction fees.

Q: Should the girls be prepared to cover their heads for any of the churches we are visiting?

A: No, they do not have to cover their heads, but both men and women should have their shoulders covered in most churches and cathedrals. Also, girls should have their knees covered (no shorts or short skirts) and men should cover their ankles.