

50 Ways To Save Money At The Airport



Airports are vibrant hubs of activity, full of travelers doing their best to get from A to B with as little disruption as possible. As much as we love exploring new places, it's no secret that things often go a little bit awry when flying, but did you know there are things you can do to make the journey as smooth as possible?

Airlines like [Southwest](#) might be able to help you out more than you think, or packing something extra could make the difference between an awful flight and a great one. Even if you think you've got your airport routine down to a T, you might want to consider these helpful tips and tricks.

1. Bring your own headphones

Pros: No need to pay for extra

What you need: Your own set

Cost: \$5+*

Bringing your own headphones to the airport is highly recommended for a number of reasons. Not only will it stop you from buying your own set when you want to watch the in-flight movie, but they will be more comfortable and won't fall out of your ears at a moment's notice.



It's good of airlines like [American Airlines](#) to provide them, but they aren't exactly top-quality. If you want to truly relax and watch the entertainment without interruption, you're better off sticking with your own pair than taking a risk and buying a set of theirs.

2. Don't be afraid to ask for a free upgrade

Pros: You might get a better seat

What you need: Confidence

Cost: Free

Most people are so polite that they would never dream of asking for anything for free, but that's where we're going wrong. It's a dog-eat-dog world out there, and if making it known that you're celebrating a special occasion means you'll get special treatment, do it.



Airlines like [United](#) have been known to give passengers free upgrades if they're able to, just to make their experience as memorable as possible. Of course, it doesn't always work, but if you don't ask you don't get – and you have nothing to lose!

3. When entering the security check, head to the left checkpoint

Pros: Get through quicker

What you need: To be able to tell right from left

Cost: Free

We all know how excruciating it can be to be stood in the security line forever, but there could be a way to eliminate this stress forever. Instead of going automatically right when you get to security, head left and for the one furthest away from you on that side.



The thinking behind this is simple. As most people are right-handed, they head for the right checkpoint. By going left, you'll play the system and likely end up getting through it all faster. It might not be a hack that will save you a ton of money, but it will save you precious time!

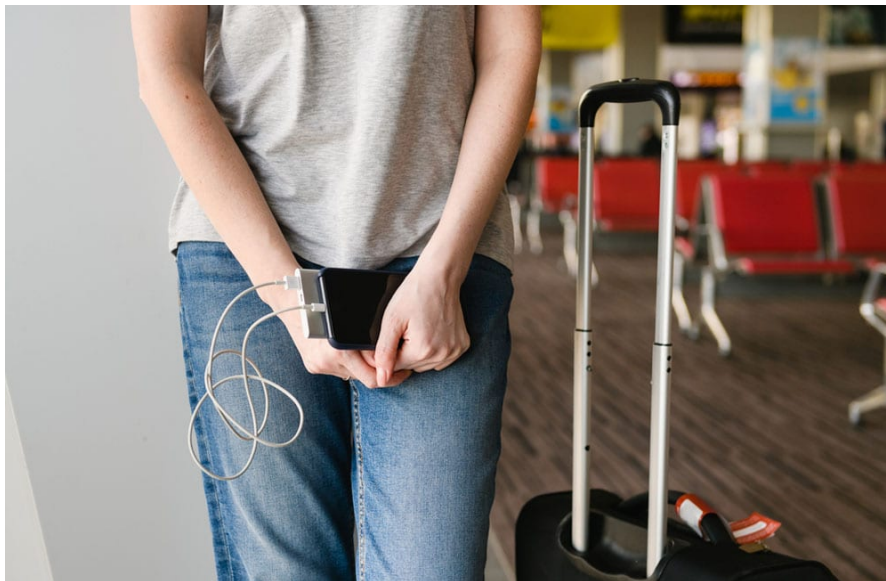
4. Don't forget to bring a portable charger

Pros: You'll never run out of power

What you need: A portable battery charger

Cost: \$10-\$20*

There's no denying that we love our tech, so keeping it charged is often top priority. Traveling without access to a phone can be incredibly annoying as well as unsafe. Airports have plenty of charging points, but the chances of landing a seat next to one is unlikely. Instead, bring a portable charger with you.



When your [iPhone](#) starts to run out of charge, you can just get it out and start charging. Bonus tip: turn your phone off or put it into airplane mode after takeoff. Otherwise, it could keep scanning for a network which will end up draining the battery at a very fast pace.

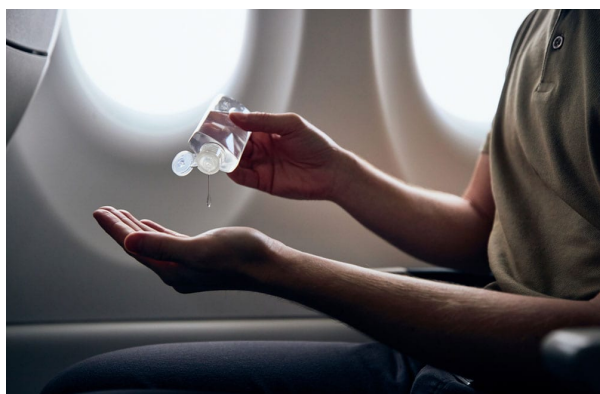
5. Bring wet wipes and hand sanitizer

Pros: You'll be protected against germs

What you need: Wet wipes, hand sanitizer

Cost: \$3-\$5*

Planes are essentially floating tin cans, and with so many people in such close proximity to you, it's only natural that the chance of catching a bug is increased. To be on the safe side, make sure you travel with a pack of wet wipes and hand sanitizer.



Use them at every available opportunity to try and keep the nasties at bay. Plus, wet wipes will help you feel refreshed after a long flight. Everyone feels a little groggy after spending a long stretch of time on a [American Airlines](#) plane. You may not be able to shower straight away, but at least you can wipe yourself down.

6. If you don't like turbulence, book an early morning flight

Pros: A more relaxing flight

What you need: A morning flight

Cost: Free

Turbulence is a horrible part of flying that no one really enjoys. A white knuckle ride that lasts for hours isn't going to do anyone's nerves any good. Some people even have to buy costly medication to get them through it. Sometimes it's simply unavoidable, but there are a few things that you can do to lessen your chances of experiencing it.



Most turbulence tends to occur in the afternoon, so booking a flight in the early morning could mean a smoother ride. It won't eliminate the chance of it happening totally, but it will lessen the odds and hopefully allow you to watch that downloaded [Netflix](#) movie in peace.

7. Bring your own spare ziploc bags

Pros: Traveling with liquids, keeping stuff safe

What you need: Ziploc bags

Cost: \$4*

When you're packing to go away for a trip, it might not occur to you to run into the kitchen and grab the pack of Ziploc bags. That being said, it's actually a really good idea to make some room for them in your suitcase for a variety of reasons.



Even if you've already packed all of your liquids, you might end up buying something last minute at the airport. On the flip side, if you're planning on going to a beach, putting your tech inside a clear bag can actually protect them while you use it. If you don't have any at home, you can pick them up at stores like [Walmart](#) for a fairly minimal amount.

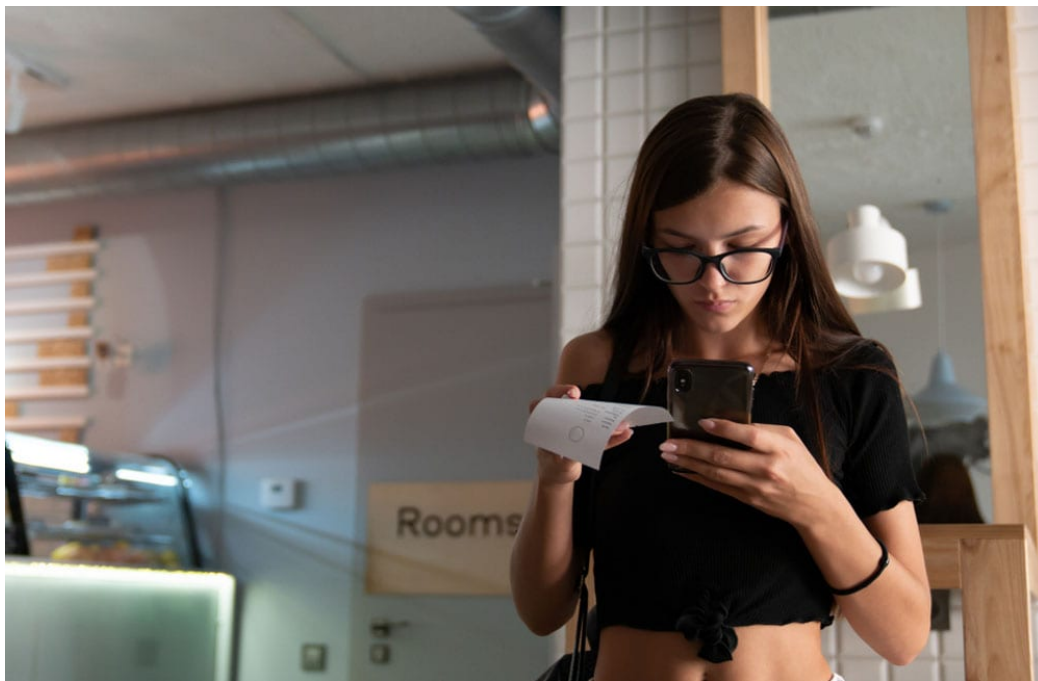
8. Check-in 24-hours before your flight

Pros: No waiting in the check-in line

What you need: Online check-in

Cost: Free

Many moons ago, online check-in wasn't even an option. But, these days, thanks to the wonders of modern technology, almost every modern airline has this option as standard. You can check in online up to 24 hours prior to your flight time. Say goodbye to expensive last-minute cab rides to the airport.



That way, you don't have to stand in line to have someone do it for you, you can just shuffle on through with your electronic boarding pass already printed. There's a lot to be said about the internet, but this is definitely one of the better perks. It's a modern marvel.

9. Take a photo of your checked luggage

Pros: Easier to spot at baggage claim

What you need: A camera phone

Cost: \$100+ (free if you already have one)*

When it comes to luggage, there are tons of people out there that have the same bags. There are things that you can do to make your suitcase look more identifiable so it's easier for you to spot. Even then, it's best to get out your phone and take a quick picture of it before you check it.



That way, you'll be able to refer to the picture while you're standing at baggage claim so you know you're definitely picking up the right one. Even if you think you know which one is yours, someone could have got the exact same one at [Target](#). Better to be safe than left red-faced!

10. Freeze your liquids to bring on planes

Pros: Get your liquid through security

What you need: A frozen bottle of water etc

Cost: \$1*

It's no secret to anyone that liquids have been banned on planes for a while now, with only smaller containers allowed. If you really want to bring a drink onto the plane and don't want to mess around with buying one, then you can always freeze your bottle of water first.



The only downside is that it must still be totally frozen when it goes through the checks with you. Even if that bottle of [Pepsi](#) is just a little bit defrosted, it won't pass and it will be a big waste of time and money. So, if you've got a long trip to the airport, this one might not be for you.

11. Find the best seat on the plane when you check-in

Pros: You'll be super comfortable

What you need: SeatGuru

Cost: Free

Different airlines have different planes and different seat layouts, so it's sometimes difficult to know whether the seat you go for is going to be a comfortable one. That's where SeatGuru comes in. You can use it to search for reviews on your seat, so you'll know if you made the right choice or not.



\It's a novel idea that has helped many tired travelers in the past. Just remember to return the favor and leave a review for your own seat when you've disembarked. You never know, it could really make a difference for the next person that walks in!

12. Fly red-eye

Pros: Peace and quiet

What you need: A red-eye flight

Cost: Free

Not many people actually chose to fly red-eye. It makes sense, considering most of us would rather be asleep in a cozy bed at night rather than on an airplane, but if you hate crowded airports and would rather have a quieter experience, book a plane that leaves late at night and arrives early the next morning.



All you'll have to do is read your [Amazon](#) Kindle, take a long nap, and by the time you wake up, you'll be at your destination. It's not for everyone, but if you like peace and quiet then try to opt for the red-eye. You'll be surprised with the difference it makes to your flight, at no extra cost.

13. Check ahead to see which restaurants and shops are at the airport

Pros: You'll be organized

What you need: The internet and a good sense of direction

Cost: Free

It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of traveling and just think you'll grab dinner at the airport. However, not all airports have a great choice of restaurants and shops. Quite often, fast food restaurants dominate the space, which can mean a poorer quality of food and a bigger waste of money.



Instead of settling for something unhealthy, check ahead before you embark on your journey. If you know what's there, you'll have more time to plan and look at menu options instead of being flustered when you arrive and panic buying something you don't really want.

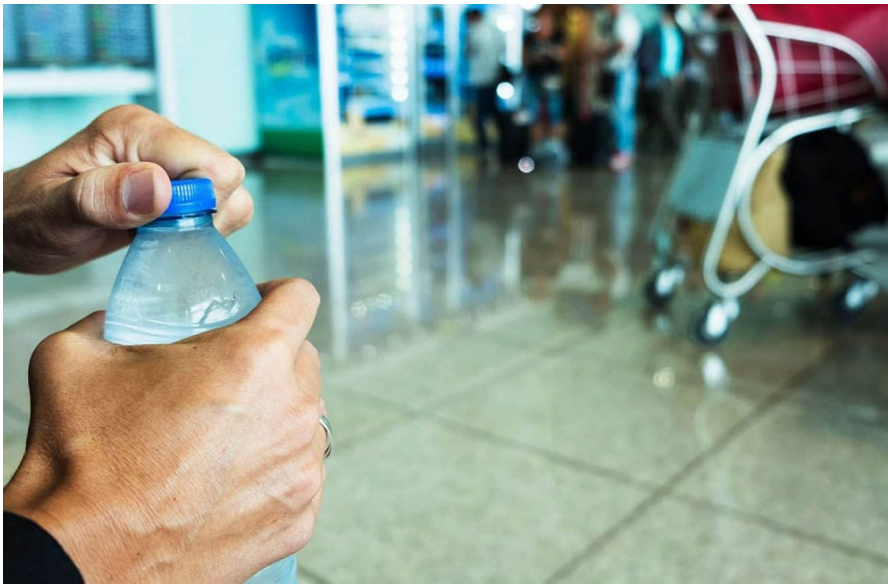
14. Bring an empty water bottle

Pros: Free water

What you need: Empty water bottle

Cost: \$1/Free*

One of the major ways that airports make money is by people grabbing snacks when they are waiting for flights. If you always find yourself buying a bottle of water when you check-in, then don't. Bring an empty water bottle with you and fill it up once you get through security.



That way, you'll end up with as much water as you want, without having to pay extortionate prices. It's a simple little hack, but one that will end up saving your wallet a lot of heartache in the long run.

15. Always wear red clothing

Pros: It will help your friends find you

What you need: A red scarf, coat, hat, etc.

Cost: \$5+*

This tip might seem a little strange, but it makes a lot of sense. Battling through a busy airport can be stressful at the best of times, but when you're trying to stay close to your travel companions it can be easy to get separated.



Thankfully, there's an easy solution. Wearing a bright red scarf, coat, hat, or anything similar can help you to stand out in a crowd and be easily identifiable. Even if red isn't your color, it's worth considering a style switch-up if it means you won't be frantically trying to spot your friends at security.

16. Always check your flight's status before heading to the airport

Pros: You won't be waiting forever

What you need: Internet

Cost: Free

Getting to the airport with plenty of time to spare is often the mark of a successful trip, but there are instances when you'll arrive, only to be presented with a huge delay. Instead of assuming that everything is running on time, it's best to check your flight status before you head over to the airport.

That way, if your flight is delayed by 5 hours, you won't have to sit around in uncomfortable seats waiting for it to arrive. You can relax a little bit at home and take your time double-checking your luggage before locking up and starting your journey.



17. Keep a collection of hotel toiletries

Pros: No need to buy travel size

What you need: Hotel toiletries

Cost: Free

Checking into a hotel is fun for a variety of reasons. Fluffy pillows, big heavy blackout curtains, and room service. We also love the small collection of toiletries that they usually have in the bathroom. Those are yours to keep, so take them even if you didn't plan on using them during that trip.



By stocking up on toiletries from places like Hilton, you could save yourself a lot of money on buying travel-sized items in the future. Instead of rushing to the store and grabbing some for a few dollars, you could just take a couple of bits from your collection.

18. Sign up for a VIP airport lounge

Pros: Comfortable VIP lounge experiences

What you need: Frequent flyer miles/a spare \$40-\$50

Cost: As above

The more you fly, the more perks you get. It's only natural that airlines want to keep you in the sky, so many offer frequent flyer miles. These can sometimes be exchanged for VIP lounge memberships. VIP airport lounges are often very luxurious, offering comfortable seating, free drinks, and entertainment.

Even if you don't have frequent flyer miles, you can still get into these lounges in some airports. Depending on the location, the lounge might offer day passes for around \$50. While it's not cheap, it will greatly improve your airport experience and help you feel more relaxed when you travel.



19. Avoid waiting in line to get your flight re-booked

Pros: You won't have to wait in line

What you need: A phone

Cost: Free

When something happens and a flight is canceled, everyone automatically rushes to the desk to try and rebook. It seems like the only thing to do at the time, as everyone is so concerned about getting where they need to go. Instead of being part of the crowd, head to a phone instead.



Call the airline and talk to someone there. The rep on the end of the phone has the exact same abilities as the one at the airport, so they will be able to take care of your problem in a heartbeat. No long lines, no battling to get to the desk. Just a simple resolution. Plus, you'll have more time to talk to the operator to discuss your financial options, too.

20. Avoid wearing brightly colored coats and other clothing

Pros: You're less likely to get noticed

What you need: A neutral wardrobe

Cost: \$5+*

One of the most stressful parts of flying is getting through security without any issues. If security has a reason to pick you out of the crowd, then it can become a long and arduous

process. According to flight attendants, you can avoid random checks by wearing neutral clothing and nothing brightly colored.



For instance, a bright blue coat might make you more likely to be stopped than wearing a cream one. While it's not a hard and fast rule, it could be worth keeping this in mind next time you have to run to catch a flight.

21. Take a nap at the airport

Pros: You'll be refreshed

What you need: A quiet place/a sleep pod

Cost: Free

If your flight has been delayed, then it's often difficult not to get cranky. Actually, the best thing you can do is try and take a nap. Sleeping on the hard seats isn't always a breeze, but some airports actually have sleeping pods that you can rent. London's Heathrow is one of them.



For around \$60 you can get your very own pod for four hours. Not only that, but you can also have access to the showers and towels, too. It's a surefire way to make your entire airport experience more enjoyable. No one likes waiting when they're tired.

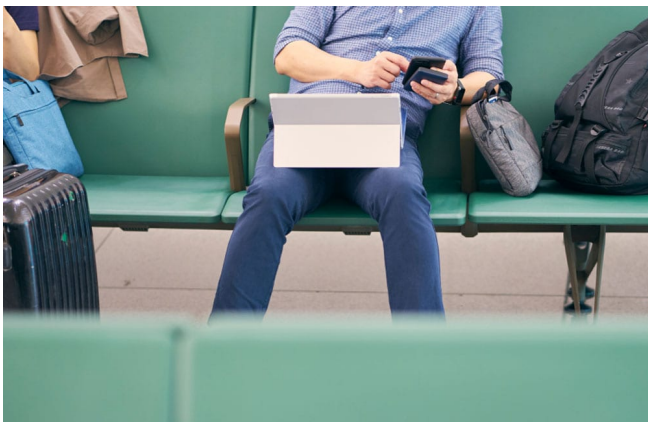
22. Store your laptop in an easy-to-access place

Pros: You can reach it at any time

What you need: A laptop case, a big bag

Cost: \$10*

This one might go without saying, but how many of us have packed our laptop in our carry-on luggage, only to struggle to get it out mid-flight? The solution is so simple: buy a laptop case. If you use a case, all you'll have to do is dive in and pull it out. No more rummaging, no more struggling.



Laptop cases don't have to be expensive either, with some going for as little as \$10 on Amazon. It's a small investment that will save you a lot of time in the future, considering just how much more organized you'll feel while traveling.

23. Take a photo of your parking space so you won't forget where you parked

Pros: You'll never get lost again

What you need: A camera phone

Cost: \$100+ (Free if you already have one)*

They say that the best things in life are free, and with a tip like this, they might just be right. Parking at an airport can be difficult at the best of times. Finding a space can be challenging, but once you've got one, don't just dump the car and run.



Take a picture of the space so you know where it is when you come back. Even if you think you'll remember, you might forget by the time your trip is over and done with. If you've got visual evidence, you'll easily be able to find the spot.

24. Wear your extra luggage

Pros: More space in your suitcase

What you need: Extra clothes

Cost: Free

No one wants to pay more money to check an extra bag when there are only a few essentials inside, so instead of giving in, think outside of the box. Put your bulkiest clothing items on and wear them to the airport if you can. It might be slightly uncomfortable, but you can always take it off once you're past security.



Even if you're traveling with hand luggage but are concerned about the weight, this works just as well. Just put the jacket on when you're going through checks, and then stuff it inside your luggage later on. It's a no-brainer.

25. Wrap your luggage or bag handle

Pros: No more standing at baggage claim wondering what's yours

What you need: A bright scarf/tie

Cost: \$5/Free if you already own one*

When you've spent the last ten hours on a flight and are just ready to collapse at your hotel, the last thing you want to do is spend forever at baggage claim playing spot the bag. If you've gone for generic black luggage, then the job is even harder.



There's a handy little trick that can get your baggage to you faster. Just tie a brightly colored scarf, tie, or another piece of material to the handle. You'll be able to spot it from a mile off and be in that cab en route to your destination before you can say "lost and found."

26. Sign up for TSA precheck or global entry

Pros: Quicker entry

What you need: To meet the criteria and apply

Cost: \$100*

Getting stuck in a long line to be let into the country you've already arrived in is no one's idea of a good time. Regardless, there's often nothing we can do but stand there and wait to get to the front. There is a way around this though, but it may cost a little bit of money.



If you're eligible and don't mind splashing around \$100, you could apply for TSA Precheck or Global Entry. Essentially, this means you can skip past the long lines and get to where you're headed a lot faster.

27. Always check for free WiFi

Pros: You don't use your own data/incur hefty charges

What you need: A phone

Cost: Free

One of the biggest drawbacks of visiting another country is whether you'll be able to get a decent wifi connection when you're there, without it costing you a small fortune. If you really need to make a call or check your emails while on the move, it's worth asking if the airport has free wifi.



A lot of them do, as do the restaurants that are situated within the building. If it's not advertised, it's still worth asking around to see if it's as simple as adding in a code. You could save yourself a lot of stress, worry, and unintentional data charges.

28. Pack your liquids and electronic devices at the top of your carry on bag

Pros: No digging through your bag in line, saves time

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

TSA has a million and one rules about what you can and can't carry onto an airplane, and, even when you're allowed to carry something, it still has to be screened. That's the way it is, and there's no way around it.



So, make it easier on yourself by storing your liquids and electronics near the top of your carry-on. That way, they're a quick reach away when you have to take them out to go through security. You won't be digging through your bag to find them, annoying everyone else behind you in line with the holdup. The best part? It doesn't cost you a single penny.

29. Book your flights on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for better deals

Pros: Save an average of \$73 on tickets

What you need: A computer/phone

Cost: Free

CheapAir did a study on the best time to buy airline tickets, and they found that Tuesday and Wednesday were the best times to book. On average, you saved \$73 per ticket when you booked your flights on Tuesday and Wednesday. The cheapest days to travel were Thursday and Friday.



Sunday was the worst time for both ticket-booking and traveling, as it was way more expensive to fly out before the workweek began. In terms of what month to choose, *CheapAir* said that January and February had the best deals on flights, while the summer months often led to more expensive ticket prices.

30. Get a portable weight checker to avoid overweight baggage fees

Pros: You don't get fined or have to pull stuff out of your bag in front of everyone

What you need: Portable weight checker

Cost: \$11.99*

Nothing, and we mean nothing, is more irritating than finding out your bag is over the weight limit. You can usually tell, walking into the airport while rolling or carrying your suitcase, that you're going to be close. When you don't make it and are a couple of pounds over, it's a nightmare.



In addition to being charged \$1,000 extra, you then have to remove items until you meet the weight limit. Save yourself this hassle by buying a portable weight checker. Check your bag at home to make sure it's within the limit. This is a doubly-smart purchase for people who fly often.

31. Don't listen to your music

Pros: You won't miss important announcements

What you need: Nothing, just your ears

Cost: Free

It's tempting to want to put in your headphones and blast music in the airport. Otherwise, you'll be stuck listening to the sounds of TSA making announcements, babies crying, and families arguing with one another. However, there *are* benefits to turning off the music when you're in the airport.

Sometimes, airlines do make important announcements. For example, they might come over the loudspeaker and offer a voucher for people who agree to take the next flight (a common practice if a flight is oversold). Flight delays and transit warnings are two other important announcements you could miss if you're listening to music instead.

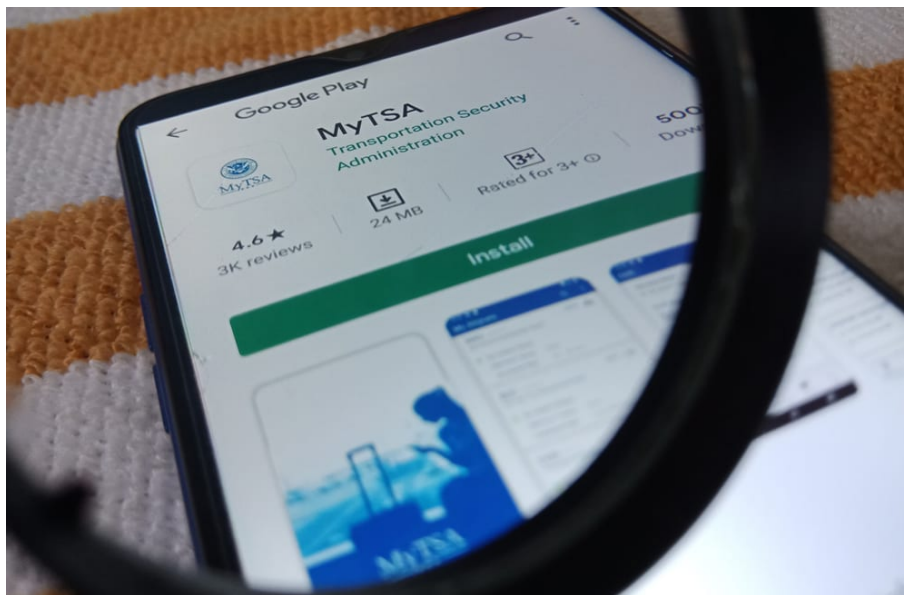
32. Use the TSA app to find out wait times

Pros: You can find out wait times and receive important news updates before getting to the airport

What you need: Phone, MyTSA app

Cost: Free

Most people just hope for the best when they get to the airport and are gauging security times. If the line looks long, you're in for a wait. If it doesn't, hurry up and get over there, so you can get through. If you want to be more prepared when it comes to security lines, download the TSA app. MyTSA was rated the "Best Government Mobile App" by the



American Council for Technology. You can get information on wait times, traveler warnings and tips, and receive important news updates from the app. For people who travel frequently, downloading this app is a must – and it's free!

33. No need to rush to board

Pros: You won't be freaked out and stressed

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

There are always people who rush to board. They'll push and shove just to get a seat on the airplane, even though, for most airlines, seats are assigned. This airline hack is more just good general advice: don't rush. There's no fire. The airplane isn't going anywhere.



Just meander over there once you feel ready. Everyone's going to the same place: the plane. The only time you should be rushing in an airport is if you're late for your flight. In that case, don't be afraid to sprint. Otherwise, you'll save yourself and everyone else hassle if you just chill out.

34. Pack the most important belongings in your carry on

Pros: You'll have the most important things with you even if your luggage is lost

What you need: Your carry-on bag

Cost: Free

This hack has been around since airlines were invented and began losing peoples' luggage almost immediately thereafter. When you're traveling, make sure you pack your most

important items in your carry-on. This includes daily medications, phone chargers, important documents, underwear, toothbrush and toothpaste, and any valuables.



That way, even if the plane loses your luggage and you have to go through the tedious process of tracking it down and getting it back, you'll have your essentials. This hack is extra important for people who rely on daily medication. You don't want there to be any disruption to your medical routine and you certainly don't want to have to buy it again.

35. Carry a power strip

Pros: You'll have multiple power sources for all your devices

What you need: Power strip

Cost: \$5*

It can be hard to find an outlet in the airport. And, even when you do find one, you really only get one outlet. Bring a power strip with you to the airport; that way, you can charge your phone, Airpods, laptop, and tablet, all at the same time.



If you're feeling generous, you can even share some of the outlets with the person next to you. The power strip shouldn't give you too much hassle going through security, especially if it's not battery-operated. Even if you're stopped, there won't be an issue, just a small delay while they take it out of your bag and check it over.

36. Invest in laptop stands so you can work in reclined seats

Pros: You can work on your laptop from a reclined position

What you need: Laptop stand

Cost: \$20-\$30*

Many people try to work when they're at the airport or on an airplane. After all, vacation doesn't always start the second you leave, and there are things you have to do. If you're going to be traveling on an airplane and are one of those people who recline your seat on the plane (why?), consider a laptop stand.



You can find them on Amazon for \$20-\$30, usually. These laptop stands give you a surface to prop your laptop on while you work from a reclined position. Make sure to ask the person behind you if they mind you reclining your seat before you lean back.

37. Sit on the front side of the plane

Pros: You might get less sick or uncomfortable if you're sensitive to flying

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

SmarterTravel found that the best seats on the plane are near the front. Our center of gravity is around 28%, and the center of pressure acts around a quarter of the way down the plane's wing. Choosing a seat near the front is better for people who get sick on flights or are sensitive to flying.



The other high points on a plane include exit rows and window seats. You might want to take an aisle seat near the front if you want to disembark quickly. Though you'll sacrifice the window-seat view, you'll get off the plane ASAP.

38. Rent a car through the website rather than wait in line

Pros: More availability and possibly lower prices

What you need: Computer/phone to book

Cost: \$50+*

Often, you need to rent a car when you travel to a new place. The airplane gets you to the destination, but you still gotta get around. Book a car online at the rental website instead of waiting in line. You'll have better availability, and you can even save money if you prepay.



Also, you won't have to wait. Plus, when you book online, you can check to make sure the car fits your specifications and budget. For example, if you need a car with more space, you won't have to rely on luck to make sure you get what you need. Reserve yours before you even land.

39. Download or print your boarding pass and airport map

Pros: Saves time and confusion

What you need: Printer

Cost: Free/minimal at the local library*

Consider downloading and printing your boarding pass and a map of the airport before you even get there. If you have a printer at home, you can check in early and save time.

Checking in early, if you're flying with an airline like Southwest, often gets you a better boarding position.

You can skip the kiosk line at the airport and go straight to baggage check. Printing out an airport map is also a good idea if you are traveling to a bustling airport like LAX or ATL, both of which were ranked two of the most confusing airports in the world by *TravelTrivia*.

40. Switch to glasses from contacts

Pros: Your eyes won't dry out mid-flight

What you need: Glasses

Cost: \$50+/Free if you already own them*

Those of us with contact lenses have likely heard the stories about why you shouldn't fly with them in. Often, flying with contacts dries them out, making your eyes irritated. When you're 30,000 feet in the air, the atmospheric pressure, oxygen, and humidity are reduced, causing your eyes to dry out and wreaking havoc on your contacts.



Unless you want to keep reapplying contact-safe eye drops the entire time, do yourself a favor and switch to glasses. You will likely have to pack your contact lens solution in your suitcase, not your carry-on. Your lenses, by contrast, can (and should) go with you in your carry-on.

41. Wear shoes with socks

Pros: Can be extra comfortable without being weird

What you need: Socks and shoes

Cost: \$3*

We've all seen the pictures and memes making fun of people who take their shoes off on planes, exposing their bare feet to the world. And rightfully so. There's no reason to just have your bare feet out on an airplane.



However, if you're flying eight hours or more, why have shoes on the entire time? Make sure you wear socks and shoes so that you can slip off your shoes during long-haul flights. More than likely, everyone else will be doing this, so you won't be the odd man out. Don't do anything crazy like put your feet up on the back of the chair in front of you, but just having your socks on should be fine.

42. Airport lounges sell all-day passes

Pros: You can experience a way more luxurious airport visit

What you need: Lounge pass

Cost: \$20-\$25*

For most of us, we just get to the airport, get through security, and get on our flight. Some people might end up having to stay at the airport a little longer to catch their flight, and, for those people, buying an airport lounge pass might be a great idea.



Airport lounges have been around for at least seven decades, and they cost \$40-\$50 per person (though some places charge as little as \$20-\$25). They are super comfortable, with TVs, comfy chairs, couches, fast Wi-Fi, and even showers. You can book them through the airline or through third parties like LoungeBuddy.

43. Start emptying your pockets when on the security line

Pros: TSA doesn't get mad at you, you don't get held up passing through security

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

One of the key checkpoint mistakes that drives TSA agents nuts is when people don't empty their pockets before they get into the security line. In order to go through security and the scanners with no problem, you can't have anything in your pockets.



TSA will yell this at you while you're in line, but, for some people, that still doesn't track. Even a big piece of lint can be enough to set off the scanner's alert system. Though you won't be in trouble, it'll be a hassle to step out of line, and TSA will probably be annoyed that you didn't listen. In conclusion, empty your pockets before you get into the scanner line.

44. Compression socks help with jet lag, if you wear them for more than 5 hours

Pros: Blood won't pool in your feet, and your circulation won't be damaged by long flights

What you need: Compression socks

Cost: x

Even healthy people with no circulation issues can benefit from this hack. Jet lag is tough, and it can feel extremely tiring, almost as though you're coming down with the flu.

Consider, instead of medication, compression socks. Compression socks help prevent blood from pooling in your feet, instead circulating it back to your heart.



The recommended tightness is between 30 and 40 mmHg (extra firm). This hack is especially important for long flights, as the risk of developing blood clots while flying increases with the travel time. Though it's not a high chance, you still should take precautions against swelling or something even worse, like deep vein thrombosis.

45. Don't fly on the eve of major holidays

Pros: Lower ticket prices, fewer people at the airport

What you need: Nothing

Cost: \$12*

This one is a bit of a no-brainer. Everyone flies out on the eve before major holidays like Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, or the Fourth of July. They want to get to their families before the holiday begins, but not too far out, as that would mean they're stuck there for a while.



The worst days to travel, according to *APR Finder*, are December 23-26, November 25 (the day before Thanksgiving), July 3, May 22, and September 4. If you're planning a trip and don't want to be bothered by high ticket prices and hassle at the airport, consider booking around those dates.

46. Be the last one on board

Pros: Less people crowding your space, cuts wait time

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

The Points Guy, a travel hack guru, made a compelling case for why boarding last on a plane isn't the worst thing in the world. This hack is recommended for airlines that have assigned seating; otherwise, boarding last means a seat next to the back toilets.



Boarding towards the end, according to *TPG*, means far fewer people clogging the jet bridge and gate area. In addition to this social distancing hack, you also minimize the time you spend on the airplane itself, which, for people who hate flying, that's a lifesaver. Boarding last cuts your wait time by fifteen to twenty minutes.

47. Pack a lot of snacks

Pros: You save money

What you need: Your own snacks and a carry-on bag

Cost: \$5-\$10*

Snacks are incredibly expensive at the airport. The markup is crazy, and you might find yourself paying three times more for snacks and drinks than you would otherwise. Airports charge more because their business operating costs are higher. So, they're part of the reason their food prices are so high.



The solution? Bring your own snacks to the airport. Treat it like a movie theater. Solid food items can be transported in your carry-on. You might have to separate these items out of your carry-on bag, but they can go through the scanners. As for a bottle of soda, that'll have to wait until you're past security, sadly.

48. Stand in line near the business class check-in

Pros: You save time when it's time for you to board

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

For those who don't like boarding at the end, they should get ready to board near the front by standing in line near the business check-in area. Though you'll get booted if you're not in business class, standing near there will put you in an optimal position when it comes time for *you* to board the plane.



According to *Thrifty Traveler*, you might as well splurge and go for business class if you're taking long-haul flights. Business-class offers decent food, extra space, and comfortable seating. Why be miserable for ten-plus hours, when you can spend extra to travel in comfort?

49. Take the seat near the Emergency Exit, and opt for the 2nd row instead of the 1st one

Pros: More leg room and reclining space, no kids allowed

What you need: Exit row seat

Cost: Free

If you're tall and/or hate sitting next to babies on flights, consider picking an exit row seat. There is more legroom in these seats, which means you can stretch your legs, something that can be pretty valuable on a long-haul flight. Exit row seats on long-range aircraft provide the best legroom. The second exit-seat row in particular has a lot of room and incline.

Also, kids aren't allowed to sit there, which will make your flight much quieter. You just have to be prepared to help out if something actually *does* happen. For safety reasons, the flight attendant will usually ask you to give them a verbal "Yes" to indicate that you're ready for exit-row responsibilities.

50. Shrink wrap your luggage to minimize scratches and dents

Pros: Your luggage won't get damaged or dented, keeping your suitcase looking nice

What you need: Shrink wrap or an actual luggage cover

Cost: \$10-\$20*

In 2017, according to *Luggage and Suitcase*, it was estimated that 22 million pieces of luggage were mishandled. This means they came back damaged, battered, and just not in the same condition in which they left their owner.

To prevent damage to your luggage, you can shrink wrap it. It's allowed, and your bag will still pass through the scanner, even if it's shrink-wrapped. If shrink-wrap is too much work, consider buying an actual luggage cover. You can buy a Yotako clear PVC suitcase cover on Amazon for \$16.99. The average price for suitcase covers is \$10-\$20, an expense that's worth it to keep your suitcase looking pristine.

51. Charge your battery portable battery pack, not your phone

Pros: No risk of data theft from using the USB charger at the airport

What you need: Portable power bank for your phone, USB cord

Cost: \$15-\$25*

The Los Angeles District Attorney's office was one of several law enforcement organizations issuing some stern warnings for travelers, regarding the use of USB chargers at the airport. The LA DA's said to avoid using USB charging stations at public locations like hotels and airports because these stations could "contain dangerous malware."

So, if you don't want your phone to die, what can you do instead? The solution is simple. Buy a portable power bank for your phone. You'll pay \$15-\$25 for a portable bank on Amazon. You can charge that at the airport, with no risk of data theft.

52. To get extra time on the airport WiFi, roll back the time on your device

Pros: You won't have to pay for Wi-Fi

What you need: Just your phone

Cost: Free

There are a lot of airports that offer complimentary Wi-Fi with no restrictions, though, sadly, quite a few still have time caps on their Wi-Fi. Once you hit the time cap, you either have to pay for more Wi-Fi or go through the tedious reboot process.

One way to get past that is to roll back the time on your device. The Wi-Fi's time gauge is based on your device's time gauge. If you roll back your device's time, that might be enough to trick the Wi-Fi into continuing without shutting you off. It's worth a shot unless you want to pay some exorbitant price for another hour of access.

53. Resist the urge to drink before your flight

Pros: Won't get dehydrated

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

While getting plastered on a flight is no doubt the fastest way to pass the time, sadly, we're going to have to advise against it in large quantities. Avoid drinking before your flight, especially if it's a long journey, because alcohol can cause dehydration.

Alcohol works as a diuretic, which means it makes your body remove fluids from the blood through the renal system (kidneys, bladder, and ureters) at a faster rate than other liquids. On a flight, you might not be able to drink enough water with the alcohol, leading to dehydration. Headache, confusion, extreme thirst, and dry mouth—not exactly symptoms you want while arriving at your destination. Plus, buying a ton of water mid-flight won't help your wallet.

54. But, you can bring alcohol under 3oz

Pros: Can drink on the plane

What you need: 3 oz. (or less) mini alcohol bottles, single, 1-quart plastic zip-lock bag

Cost: \$10*

If you just can't help yourself, you *can* bring alcohol bottles under three ounces. The TSA prevents you from taking containers of liquid with more than 3 ounces of liquid. Miniature liquor bottles, which are sold in pretty much any store, have to be packaged a certain way in order to comply with TSA rules.

You have to carry your mini-bottles in a single, one-quart plastic bag. The bag has to have a zip-top. You can buy these bags at Target, Walmart, Amazon, and most grocery stores. You can only bring one of these bags, so that'll cap your alcohol intake at whatever you can fit in the zip-lock. As an extra bonus, it's cheaper than buying in-flight alcohol.

55. Bring gum if traveling with children

Pros: Will help unclog kids' ears

What you need: Sugar-free gum, hard candy

Cost: \$1*

Kids can be annoying, but they do have a reason to complain on flights. Children are often more prone than adults to ear issues caused by takeoff and landing pressure changes. Though the pain goes away after a few minutes, it can be pretty unpleasant. You shouldn't even attempt to fly with your kid if they have an ear infection or cold.

Bring sugar-free gum or hard candy for the flight. Have your child (if they're old enough, of course) chew the gum or suck on the candy during take-off and landing. This will help with ear pressure. Also, give your kids plenty of fluids on the flight, as that will help unclog their ears.

56. Don't wear a belt

Pros: Less hassle and holdup going through security

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

The goal of the entire airport experience is to get where you're going with as little hassle and effort as possible. If you want to be a real travel pro, wear a belt-free outfit. This will save you time when you're going through security. TSA requires you to remove them anyway, and you don't want to be fumbling with it when you could just not wear one breeze through.

Belts are banned by TSA because of the buckles, which almost always set off the metal detectors. Though a plastic belt won't set off the scanners, TSA will still ask you to remove it if they see it, as it isn't always easy to tell the difference.

57. Put jewelry in a ziplock bag

Pros: Won't lose valuables, and less likely to get your bag searched

What you need: 1-quart ziplock bags

Cost: \$4*

TSA, on its website, actually strongly suggests that you travel with your jewelry in your carry-on bag. It's permitted in both, but, if your jewelry is valuable and/or sentimental, you should carry it with you to avoid losing it if your checked bags are lost (an all-too-common occurrence).

Place each individual piece of jewelry in a one-quart, clear, Ziploc bag. This will make it easier for TSA to scan it, lessening the chance that your bag will be pulled aside and searched. TSA advises that, if you're worried about your valuables being spotted by other passengers, you should ask an agent to search your things privately.

58. Catch a cab home from departures, not arrivals

Pros: Faster to catch a cab from departures

What you need: Cash or cell phone to call the rideshare

Cost: Free

According to the *L.A. Times*, traffic is up to 80% faster on the departures level (people flying out) than it is on the arrivals level (people flying in). This is especially true for big airports like J.F.K. or L.A.X. If you're going to catch a cab home from the airport, go up to the departures.

There are a lot of possible reasons why it's faster to catch a cab from departures, instead of arrivals. One reason is that people block traffic trying to get out of baggage claim with all their luggage. By contrast, when you're on the departure side, your driver practically

pushes you and your bags out of the car while it's still rolling. It's easy to hail a cab there, but you have to be quick about it.

59. Get a universal adapter

Pros: You can plug your electronic device in anywhere

What you need: Universal adapter

Cost: \$10-\$15*

At the airport, you never know what kind of plug you'll stumble upon. Will it be a two- or three-prong plug? A USB port, which you shouldn't use because it might get hacked? Or something else?

Cut through the guessing game by buying a universal adapter. That way, no matter where you are, you'll be able to plug in and charge your phone, tablet, computer, or any other electronic device. You can buy a universal adapter on Amazon for just \$10-\$15. For example, the NEWVANGA International All-In-One Travel Adapter has a 4.5/5-star rating out of 4,272 ratings. It costs just \$11.99.

60. Pick the furthest security line, it'll be the shortest

Pros: Less wait time

What you need: Nothing

Cost: Free

There are plenty of websites and travel guides dedicated to finding the shortest security line. There almost seems to be a mathematical formula to it, though it can be overwhelming and disheartening to arrive at security and see a sea of people milling about.

According to *PopSugar*, the security line at the far end, especially to the far left, is usually the shortest. The reason why is simple: most people don't look that far, and most people are right-handed, so they're going to prefer the right. Go where fewer people have gone. Walk yourself and your bags down to the furthest security line for check-in. You might be pleasantly surprised at how much shorter it is.

61. Add a FRAGILE sticker so luggage will be loaded last/off first

Pros: Bag might get special treatment, will be there quicker at baggage claim

What you need: "FRAGILE" sticker from check-in

Cost: \$2*

We're not going to say that this is a for-sure win, because there's always the chance that baggage handlers won't even notice the sticker. Or, if they notice it, they won't care about it, and just throw your baggage around anyway.

It's worth a shot. Attach a "FRAGILE" sticker to your luggage (baggage check will usually provide them in some type of kiosk near the counter. If you can't find a sticker, just ask for one). Technically, that means that your bag has to be loaded last and taken off first, and it means that handlers have to treat it gently – and that you won't have to fork out for a new case.

62. Make sure checked luggage can withstand a six-foot fall

Pros: Luggage will be durable and less likely to sustain damage during transport

What you need: Durable luggage from brands like Samsonite, Rimowa, and Pelican Elite

Cost: \$129+*

We've talked about shrink-wrapping your luggage and attaching a "FRAGILE" sticker to it, but there's another option for making sure your bags don't get obliterated. You can always just buy luggage that is super durable.

If your luggage can withstand a six-foot fall, it will be able to handle the journey. *Expert World Travel* gave its list for the most durable luggage of 2021, including Pelican Elite Luggage (“Most Durable,” \$419), Samsonite Omni (“Great Budget Option” at \$129), Samsonite Winfield 2 (\$194, “Best Value”), and Rimowa Topas (“Best High End”, \$1,499). You should be prepared to shell out some money for extra-durable luggage, but the purchase will be worth it, as your things will be protected from all but a nuclear blast.

63. Wrap breakable items in clothes and cushion with socks

Pros: Can protect breakable items easily

What you need: Socks, clothes

Cost: Free

It’s the morning that you’re due to leave, and you realize that you don’t have any packaging material. There are no packing peanuts or Styrofoam to cushion your breakable items, you’re facing a long flight ahead of you. You know your luggage is about to get jostled and thrown around, so what can you do?

Use your clothes and socks to protect valuable, breakable items. For example, if you have a small, glass trinket that you’re trying to transport and can’t bring in your carry-on, stick it in a sock. Then, wrap that sock in t-shirts and other clothing to keep it safe on the journey home.

64. Put checked liquids inside more than one plastic bag in case of leaks

Pros: Liquids won't leak all over your stuff

What you need: Quart- and gallon-sized Ziploc bags, hair tie or rubber band

Cost: \$5*

If you're checking liquids like mouthwash and makeup foundation, the last thing you want to have happen is the liquids leak. It can happen, especially in transit, when your luggage is jostled and thrown about. There's nothing more annoying than opening your suitcase and seeing that all your clothes have to be re-washed.

To mitigate and even prevent leakage, place your checked liquids in more than one plastic bag. Another trick is to take a small Ziploc bag and place it over the bottle's lid. Then, wrap a hair tie around the base of the lid, sealing it off before you put the entire bottle into a gallon-size Ziploc.



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