



Traveling Abroad

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a passport for international travel?

Yes. A passport establishes your identity and United States citizenship to anyone who needs to know. It also guarantees your admittance to the U.S. following an international trip. It is a requirement for any person traveling out of the country.

Will my electrical appliances (ex. electric shavers, hair dryers, irons, chargers, etc) work abroad?

Not always. The outlets abroad may support a plug that looks different than the one used in the U.S. and may use a different voltage. Most U.S. outlets are 110V while most European outlets are 240V. Many non-U.S. electrical outlets have differently shaped plugs. To get the correct setup for your device, you should check the power standards of the country of travel. Some devices only work on 110V (U.S. standard) and therefore need a transformer. You will want to check the documentation for your device to determine what you need.

If you plan on bringing electric shavers, hair dryers, irons, laptop/phone chargers or other electrical appliances, you should bring a small converter kit. These can be found at most hardware and electronic stores (i.e. Radio Shack). Do not forget to bring one, as the converter kits can be very expensive while abroad.

Will I be able to make calls with my cell phone while overseas?

Your coverage will depend on the service provider or carrier that you use and roaming charges can be high. If you have a personal cell phone, check with your provider on coverage issues. You will want to know whether your existing phone will work in your country of travel, and whether you will be able to get both voice (phone) and data (email/web) services.

AT&T: widely available; [coverage page](#)

T-Mobile: widely available; [coverage plan](#)

Verizon: available in [some countries](#)

Nextel/Sprint: no international coverage

Can I get a cell phone for my trip?

If you would like to use a phone while overseas, and your carrier does not have a plan or coverage that is suitable for you, there are some other options. You can rent a cell phone upon arrival at your destination or buy a disposable phone in the country of travel or purchase a compatible SIM card for your existing phone, in the country of travel.

Make sure to review the capabilities, limits and charges of your new cell phone plan. If you use a phone other than your own, you will not have access to your address book, so you may wish to print out a copy before you leave.

Will I be able to access the Internet with my laptop while overseas?

Most laptops have both WIFI (802.11) and wired Ethernet ports that can be used in many hotels and convention centers around the world. Check your computer manual for basic instructions on configuring Windows XP, Windows ME and Apple Macintosh computers.

There are other alternatives if wireless and Ethernet service is not available, including cellular cards, WIFI hot spots and dial-up connections at your hotel.

How do I exchange my money?

You can exchange currency before you depart at some banks and currency exchange outlets. However, we recommend you wait until reaching your destination to exchange your money. There are several ways to do this:

The quickest and most convenient method is through ATM machines. ATM cards are widely accepted across Europe and generally give you the best exchange rate. Please contact your bank with specific questions regarding fees and eligibility.

Traveler's checks are also accepted at some places, but they may require more time to exchange. Many exchange outlets and banks will also accept U.S. cash dollars in exchange for the local currency. Please be aware that some places charge commission or adjust the exchange rate. International exchange rates change on a daily basis. Be sure to write down the exact exchange rate of your destination before departure to ensure you get a similar rate.

What will the weather be like where I'm going?

As with any place, the weather in your destination will vary depending on the time of year and time of day. Be sure to check an [official weather report](#) to get an idea of the current conditions. It's also beneficial to research the climate of your destination(s) during the time of year you expect to travel.

How long is the flight? What is the time difference?

Flights vary depending on distance, amount of stops and direction of travel. You can check with your airline reservations to find the exact time of departure and landing. Often times the airline can tell you the duration of your flight or trip. Remember, the departure and arrival times listed apply to the local time of the corresponding city.

What *can't* I pack in my carry-on bag?

The new rules ban almost all liquids, creams and gels from being carried aboard flights. That means you should not pack sunscreen, lotion, shampoo, toothpaste, hair gel or beverages in a carry-on. Those items must be put in your checked bags. If you are in doubt about an item, pack it in a checked bag or leave it home.

Are there any exceptions to the new rules in the USA?

A few. You can still bring baby formula, breast milk or juice if you're traveling with a child; prescription drugs if your name is on the bottle; and insulin or other "essential" non-prescription medications. Screeners should not make you sample the liquids.

Can I still bring medicine along if it's not in liquid form? What about bars of soap?

Yes, it is OK to put those in a carry-on bag.

Am I allowed to purchase toothpaste, drinks or other liquids after I get through security and then take them aboard the flight?

No. You are not allowed to carry aboard any liquid, no matter when or where you purchased it.

Besides the ban on liquids and gels, what else will be different about security?

The TSA said screeners will be checking passengers more thoroughly at checkpoints, including inspecting more bags by hand. They also will be searching some passengers a second time immediately before boarding — a practice instituted shortly after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks but discontinued several years ago.

Things to Bring

The clothes you need to pack will differ depending on your destination, the length of your trip, and the nature of the activities. Besides the basics, here are some things we recommend you bring for any international adventure:

Pack according to the number of days you will be gone

- Underwear
- Socks – numerous pairs
- Shorts
- Long pants (Jeans)
- 2 pair of sneakers (if desired)
- Jacket (Wind Breaker for evening)
- Sweatshirt
- Towel (large)
- Toiletries
- (You may want to pack small cloths line to put wet clothes on)
- Garbage bag for dirty cloths
- Snacks – example packages of crackers, cookies, etc.