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Did I Pack My Toothbrush? Getting Organized for Travel

By Stacey Agin Murray

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by: **Stacey Agin Murray**

For many of us summertime = vacation time. Some people will spend their days off at the local pool. Some may choose to sightsee in their own town. Many will leave behind the comforts of home for the open road. Regardless of the destination or mode of transportation, it is important to be organized for travel.

A few benefits of being organized for travel:

1. Being organized will save you time.

Having a copy of your packing list on the computer will cut down on the time used for re-creating it every time you travel.

2. Being organized will save you money.

Doing pre-travel shopping at home will save you big bucks (especially on film and batteries...) that might be otherwise be spent at a tourist trap.

3. Being organized will save you stress.

No need to stress while scrounging for your tickets and ID at the airport if all of your paperwork is organized in one place.

Follow these organizing tips to keep your vacation a stress-free, time and money saving event:

Plan ahead. Create a general itinerary before you travel. Grab pen and paper and jot down your travel times, hotel check-in/check-out times, and a list of activities/places you'd like to visit. This will help you make sure you have allowed enough time to get to your destination, and whether or not you've

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scheduled too many activities for one day.

* Stop by your local `AAA' office for a Triptik and other travel–related services to help map out your route if driving.

Create a checklist to help you pack. Keep it on the computer so you don't have to write it over every time you leave home. Use it as a template and update it before each trip to include anything new such as medications, toiletries, accessories, etc.

Keep all information related to your trip in one place. Create a folder for papers such as reservations, confirmations, and tickets. When you look for the information you need before or during your trip, you'll have it all at your fingertips.

Keep a toiletry bag packed with small sized travel sized–containers all year round. By doing so, you're

always ready for a long trip or an overnight stay. Take a quick inventory of its contents before you leave home—you might have run out of toothpaste on your last trip.

*If your favorite products don't come in sample sizes, purchase small, travel sized containers and fill them with your favorite shampoo and creams. Label them clearly so you don't accidentally condition your hair with a facial moisturizer...

Place items you'll need immediately at the top of your suitcase. Items such as comfortable shoes, pajamas, and toiletries are more easily accessible if they're closer to top. When you're tired from a long journey, the last thing you want to be doing is rummaging through your suitcase.

Use suitcase organizers to separate outfits or types of clothing. Products such as Pack–It Cubes or Ziploc bags do the job well. Hefty makes One–Zip 2.5 gallon bags (found in many supermarkets) that are large enough to organize clothes and later can be used to keep laundry or wet bathing suits away from the rest of your belongings.

*Wearing your bulkiest pair of shoes while traveling will give you more space in your suitcase.

Organize your wardrobe around one basic color such as black, navy, or brown to prevent overpacking. You'll be able to mix and match easily and you won't need to bring a ton of different shoes. Also, when packing—think about your vacation activities. Will they include hiking? Days at the beach? Having dinner with relatives? Think ahead and pack items you may need for those activities such as band–aids for hiking, aloe vera for sunburns, and the scarf Aunt Shirley gave you for your birthday if you'll be seeing her.

Travel safely and have an organized trip!

Stacey Agin Murray, professional organizer and owner of Organized Artistry, LLC, transforms 'mess' into 'masterpiece' with patience, organizing know–how, and a sense of humor. For more articles and to get your FREE e–list of 'Top Ten Tips for Organized Living' visit

Seven Tips for Organized Holiday Travel

By Myers

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Traveling for the holidays? Here are seven tips for organized packing and traveling.

1. Check the weather forecast at your destination. Build your travel wardrobe around one basic color (black, navy or brown) to expand wardrobe options and limit luggage.
2. Use mini toiletry items to save space. Fill them only three-quarters full. Place in freezer bags to avoid leakage.
3. Use plastic dry cleaner bags around clothing to reduce wrinkles.
4. Pack these separately: camera, jewelry, keys, money and jewelry. Make them accessible if you're traveling by car.
5. Pack snacks and bottled water for yourself and the kids. Fill a cooler if you're on the road.
6. Stock up on entertainment. Music, books and toys are life-savers if you are stuck in traffic or on a delayed flight.
7. Pack an extra bag for items you buy or receive on your trip. This especially applies during the holidays.

Myers is a professional organizer, speaker and author. FREE "50 Ways to Manage Your Time" tips booklet. Visit <http://www.ineedmoretime.com>

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