



Quick Tips for Air Travel



By: Don McCarty



Try to Fly on Tuesday's and Wednesday's

If you are flying for personal reasons, try to always fly on Tuesday or Wednesday because there is a lower volume of business travelers. Most business flights are on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Because of the lower volume, Airlines sometimes have better rates for travel on these days.

Try to avoid flying on Monday

Unless you like flying in a plane PACKED with business people, you might want to avoid flying on Monday's.



Avoid the Last Flight

When making your reservations, you need to try to avoid booking the last flight of the day to/from your destination. You will experience fewer unexpected cancellations due to weather, mechanical failure, and dropped flights.

Watch out for "hidden" charges

In the current environment of additional fees and penalties such as luggage charges, etc., it is recommended that you review your flight information carefully. Call the airline if you have any questions.

Check-In Online

Many airlines allow you to check-in online for your flight and print your boarding pass, 24 hours prior to your flight. This will expedite your check-in process at the airport. If you purchase the tickets online, there is typically a website link in your confirmation email that will take you to the correct webpage so you can complete the online check-in.

Keep Your Travel Documentation Handy

Keeping your travel documents (tickets, boarding pass, I.D.) in a fast and easy to get to location, will expedite the processes of checking in, clearing security and boarding the flight

Make Sure Your Carry-On Fits!

The rule for the size of a carry-on bag states that it must be able to fit under the seat in front of you. The airlines have baggage-sizers located at the check-in counters. If your bag does not fit in the sizer, you will be required to check it. The typical proper size of a carry-on bag should not exceed 8"x 13" x 23". Regardless of whether you know that your bag will fit in the overhead; space in an overhead compartment is never guaranteed. Thus, the reason for the "under the seat" rule.



NEVER Leave Your Bags Unattended!

VERY IMPORTANT! Not only will this protect you from theft, it will save you from having your bag confiscated and the embarrassing chat with security personnel that follows.

Liquids, Pastes, Gels, and Aerosols in Your Carry-On.

Per The Transportation Security Administration's, the regulation is as follows:

All liquids, pastes, gels and aerosols in your carry-on bag must be in containers of 3 ounces or less. All of these containers must then be placed together in a single – 1 quart zip-lock baggie. Only 1 baggie per passenger is allowed. Visit their website (www.tsa.gov) for the latest up-to-date information before traveling. Also, when passing thru the Security Check-point, remove the baggie from your carry-on bag and place either in a separate bin or on top of your carry-on bag before placing it thru the X-ray machine. Otherwise, the bag will have to be run thru the X-Ray machine a second time.

Keep an Extra Change of Clothes in Your Carry-On.

When your travel requires that you must also take along checked bags, be sure to keep your toiletries and an extra change of clothes in your carry-on bag. Unfortunately, checked bags can get delayed or even lost during the process of your flights. Having these items in your carry-on can help to alleviate having to purchase additional or necessary items, once you reach your destination.



Got Cash? Carry Small Bills

It is a good idea to consider carrying smaller denomination bills, such as **\$1 and \$5 Bills**. This makes the process of paying for drinks, head-sets, blankets and such go much easier. The flight attendants seem to never have enough to change out larger bills. It's also great for tipping.

Request Special Meals in Advance

When you take a flight with meal service, and you have any special dietary needs, such as low-sodium, diabetic, kosher, etc..., be sure to place your order with the airline no less than **3 days prior** to your flight, otherwise they will not be able to accommodate your request.

Baggage Screening Equipment Can Ruin Film

With the advent of newer baggage screening equipment, there is a good chance that this technology may ruin your film. So place your film in a lead-lined bag; these bags are available at most camera shops. You may also carry the film in your pocket and place it in the basket when you deposit your keys to go through the screener. And if you find this too hard, you may just need to buy it when you arrive.

Dress for Comfort and Security Screening

The temperature on an aircraft, during flight, can get quite cool and uncomfortable. Also, to clear security, you will have to remove your shoes and any items that contain metal, such as belts. The more you have on, the more you must remove. So keep these things in mind when dressing for your flight.

Boost Your Immune System Prior to Flying

The cabins on aircraft can be quite cramped and the air inside is being re-circulated. Germs, bacteria and viruses can be everywhere. So be sure to boost your immune system before entering this environment. "Airborne" is one herbal seltzer that may help. Vitamins and exercise are also good ways to keep your system guarded.

Be Ready for Delays in the Airline Terminal

With delays becoming more and more common for flights, every traveler should anticipate them and prepare accordingly. Pack something in your briefcase, carry-on, or purse that will keep you occupied if your flight is late. Perhaps a book or two, crossword puzzles, a cell phone with games in memory, or an MP3player/iPod loaded with an audio book or language lessons. Be sure to have a snack or two handy as well.

Keep Hydrated



For those travelling on a long-haul flight, be sure to drink large quantities of water 2-3 days prior to the day of the flight. It is also a very good idea to avoid caffeine (or little caffeine) during the flight. This will help your body adjust to the air pressure and jet lag. Ask for fruit on the flight and try to limit salt intake.

Alcohol and Air Travel – Always use moderation!

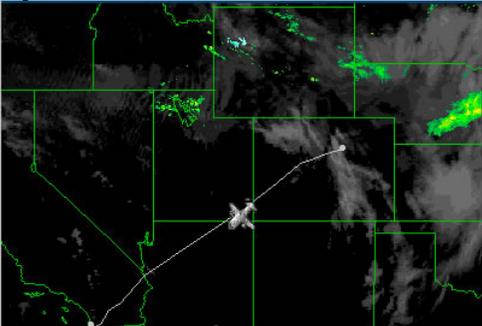
If you are going to consume alcoholic beverages, consume them in moderation. The lack of oxygen while flying greatly intensifies the effect of alcohol in your blood stream. Drinking alcohol is not a good idea on the long-haul flights; as it will contribute to jet lag.

Get Up and Move Around

On flights longer than 5 hours, be sure to get up and move around some. This will help keep the blood circulating in your legs and help you to avoid Deep Vein Thrombosis that can be fatal!!! Also to avoid cramps, prior to long distance flying, I always have a workout in the gym. (Go for a long fast walk if you're older.) It helps to avoid getting cramps.

Use the Internet to track your flight

If you are flying to meet friends or family, give them your flight information (Airline and Flight number) and they can track your flight on the computer easily. Send them to <http://flytecomm.com> and have them input your flight information on the website. They can watch the status and location of your flight "real-time". This is really cool, and it allows your family/friends to be aware of your flight's status so they can make arrangements to arrive at the airport at the appropriate time. You can use it with your Smartphone or iPhone which is very cool!

Flight Details	
Detailed Flight Information: United Flight 1183 to San Diego, CA (SAN-San Diego International Airport)	
Airline	United
Flight Number	1183
Departure City (Airport)	Denver, CO (DEN)
Departure Time	11/14/2008 11:34 AM
Arrival City (Airport)	San Diego, CA (SAN)
Arrival Time	11/14/2008 12:33 PM
Remaining Flight Time	01:59 (scheduled)
Aircraft Type	
Current Altitude	0 feet
Current Groundspeed	0 mph
Flight Status	Scheduled
	
Airline	United
Flight Number	1183
Departure City (Airport)	Denver, CO (DEN)
Departure Time	11/13/2008 12:08 PM
Arrival City (Airport)	San Diego, CA (SAN)
Arrival Time	11/13/2008 01:02 PM
Remaining Flight Time	01:04
Aircraft Type	Boeing 757-200
Current Altitude	38,000 feet
Current Groundspeed	519 mph
Flight Status	In Flight

Protect your Ears - Pack Disposable Earplugs or Noise-Cancelling Headphones

It's a good idea to carry some type of hearing protection such as disposable earplugs when you fly. Using them reduces the stress associated with flying. Noise-cancelling headphones are an even better solution and they have now come down to affordable prices. These really help reduce stresses related to noise (especially when dealing with noisy children). They cancel out especially the low frequency noise such as the engine and part of air conditioning and allow for great sound quality when watching movies. There are many brands available like Aiwa, Sony or BOSE.

A Little Preparation...

I find that a combination of several common tips goes a long way toward preventing flying problems, or at least making them more tolerable. I go with one carry-on, make sure it's a little smaller than the minimum size, bring my own food and drink onto the plane, bring at least one good book if not two, eat in the airport before the flight, and get to the airport a little early. I've never had to check a bag, and I've never had missing or damaged luggage. I've never been bored during flight delays. I've never been hungry or thirsty on flights. A little preparation goes a long way.

Save Time and Confusion at Baggage Claim

I used to travel almost weekly with my job and have had my share of lost luggage. Since I usually had documents and other work related materials in my luggage, it was always important that I locate it as quickly as possible. Tips to help ensure this are:

1. Purchase luggage that is a color other than black - because with the high percentage of black luggage out there, yours will stand out.
2. Make your luggage stand out! Put a sticker on it, or put an identifiable tag on it. My mom tags her luggage with a multi-colored piece of yarn connected to the zippers! Very effective!
3. Carry a photograph of your luggage. This makes it easier to identify your luggage when you need assistance.
4. Be sure to place a name tag on the inside of the bag; as well as on the outside. This way, if the tag on the outside is torn off, the airline can open the bag and know who it belongs to.





Hello Traveler!

My name is Don McCarty.

I hope these quick tips make your travel experience more enjoyable!

I've been a travel consultant for over 25 years. As the owner of a prominent travel consulting firm in Northwest Arkansas (just a few miles from the Wal-Mart home office), I have the continued privilege of planning travel for some of the highest profile clientele in the country.

In 2008, at the urging of some dear friends and colleagues, I have decided to share what I have learned over the years with the general public. To do this, my partner and I have created the My Travel Tools website. (www.mytraveltools.com).

I look forward to arming you with the MOST IMPORTANT information that you should possess; before booking your next trip!

Until then.....

Be Safe!

Don McCarty



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