

Holiday Travel Tips

From InsureMyTrip Contributor Johnny Jet

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Want your travels to go smoothly this holiday? Follow these seven tips from our favorite frequent traveler, Johnny Jet!

1. Sign up for flight notifications

Always sign up for flight notifications. It will save you a ton of time and hassle because the airline will (or at least should) alert you if the flight is delayed. If your flight is delayed, canceled or the gate changes you will be the first to know - many times even before the gate agents.

Here are some direct links to airlines flight notifications:

[American](#) | [Delta](#) | [United](#)

[Additional airline and flight notification information](#)



2. Print your boarding pass

Most airlines allow you to check in and print your boarding pass 24-hours in advance. If you aren't checking bags (and hopefully, you aren't) you can then go straight to security. If you do have bags there's usually a bag drop with a much shorter line or you can use a porter outside. Don't worry about losing your boarding pass because you can always reprint another one at the airport.



3. Find the best seat

Almost everyone wants an aisle or window seat, or even better, one in the bulkhead or exit row. To find out which seats are the best on your particular aircraft go to [SeatGuru.com](#). They highlight in green which ones they are and list exactly how much legroom and pitch. They also inform you if there are power ports or personal TVs. Keep in mind airlines can change aircraft types at the last minute so there are no guarantees. If the seat you desire isn't available at booking then just keep checking or create a seat alert at [ExpertFlyer.com](#). Usually the good seats will open up because the elite frequent fliers eventually get upgraded or they change their plans, which means the best coach seats may be available again. As a last resort check when you get to the airport at the check-in counter and at the gate.

“Be sure to push and wait for your belongings to go into the machine before going through the detectors.”

4. Airport security

You would think by now everyone knows to take their shoes, belts and jackets off before going through security. It still blows me away that people are surprised they can't carry liquids over 3.4 fluid ounces (100ml). Learn the [3-1-1 rule](#). Also be sure to pull your laptop/coins/keys/phones/computers out, or better yet, put them in your jacket pocket and have your ID ready to go. I always put my shoes on the belt first and then my bag with all my electronic gadgets last so while the screeners are trying to figure out if my bag is safe I can put my shoes back on (best to use slip-ons and wear socks). Tip: Very important - be sure to push and wait for your belongings to go into the machine before going through the detectors otherwise the person behind you can easily steal your valuables.



5. Don't check valuables or medicines

If you are checking a bag remember not to pack any valuables. Although the airlines claim they will reimburse you up to \$3,300 for lost domestic bags, they exclude “fragile” items, “valuables” and “business effects”- which includes things such as cash, electronics, jewelry, and art work. Look into [travel insurance for your baggage](#) to see if there's a coverage option that will work well for your needs. If traveling domestically seriously consider shipping your bags ahead of time with FedEx, UPS or USPS - just remember to do it via ground to save some cash and not overnight, but allow plenty of time – usually 5 business days.

6. Bring food and drink



On most flights in the U.S. airlines either don't serve food or if they do they charge for it. Instead of being at the flight attendant's mercy on when you eat, bring your own. Either buy it in the airport or bring it from home. Be sure to bring plenty of water too. Since you can't go through security with bottled water buy it on the other side or bring an empty bottle and fill it up at a water fountain or ask an airport attendant to fill it so you can stay hydrated. Here's a [water calculator](#) to see how much you should drink a day. In addition to your meal you should bring snacks in case of any lengthy delays. I always have granola bars and almonds in my carry-on.

7. Stay entertained

Some airlines don't have any entertainment options so be prepared. Before I had a laptop flights always seemed to take an eternity but now they usually go by too quick since I always do my work to pass the time. Make sure your computer, tablet or smartphone is fully charged and if you want to pass the time even faster log on to inflight WiFi. It's much cheaper if you [buy a pass in advance](#).

John E. DiScala (a.k.a. Johnny Jet) travels around 150,000 miles and visits over 20 countries each year. He and his website [JohnnyJet.com](#) have been featured over 2,000 times in major publications, including USA Today, Time, Fortune and The New York Times, and he has appeared on ABC, CBS, CNBC, CNN, MSNBC, NBC, FOX News Channel and PBS. [JohnnyJet.com](#) has been named "one of the top best money-saving web sites for travel" by Budget Travel Magazine, while the L.A. Times calls it "one of the top 10 essential travel resources on the internet." Outside Magazine touted Johnny for having one of the world's best "dream jobs". He writes for Frommers.com, The Huffington Post, LAX Magazine and has written for USA Today and ABC News. Sign up today for Johnny Jet's free weekly travel newsletter at [JohnnyJet.com](#).