

The Top Nine Suitcase

1. Never unpack.
2. Double everything.
3. Get ready essentials.
4. Snacks.
5. Clothing extras.
6. Cloth handkerchief.
7. Pajamas that are like clothes.
8. Medical back up.
9. Blockers.

I could leave in five minutes because my suitcase is always packed! I never unpack. I just roll my bag home, refill the toiletries, and switch out the laundry. It took me years to build up a double stock of everything. I have a very huge toiletry and makeup bag with all I need to get ready. I have some extra masks for the perfect in-room spa evening, a set of hot rollers and a curling iron that never leave the suitcase.

My dad gave me the great idea that in addition to your luggage tag, print off your phone numbers and tuck that sheet in the pocket of your suitcase. Another layer of hope that you will get your suitcase back if it is lost.

I always have my glasses and contacts in my carry-on because these cannot be replaced if my bag is lost. Hotels are great for toothbrushes etc., but contacts and glasses you can't get!

I always travel in an outfit I can speak in, OR I pack my outfit in my carry-on. I learned this the hard way, when my suitcase didn't show up! As fun as it might sound to find clothing, paid for by the airline, it is NOT fun and adds stress to an otherwise peaceful hotel evening.

I have teas, oatmeal and chia seeds packed. I have flown in on late flights and having oatmeal with chia is a quick way to get something to eat before you go to bed. I eat oatmeal for breakfast and it is easier to make it in the room. I have a variety of teas for what I need, sleep, digestion, energy etc.

Flip flops are essential. I don't like to walk on hotel carpet with bare feet AND they are great for those spontaneous summer walks. I have running shoes that never leave my suitcase if I want to go for a walk, a workout or if my feet are killing me from a day in heels. I always have a pair of leggings in my suitcase and a hat in the summer, toque in the winter. I am ready for any adventure! I have a fold-up tote bag to throw my wallet and phone in while I walk.

I have backup clothing essentials; white and black tank top, Spanx and tights. A sewing kit and safety pins are a must. No time for wardrobe malfunctions, and they are great if I buy something new on the road that needs adjustments.

I have a big cloth handkerchief that I use for ironing my outfit. Another thing I learned the hard way - speaking with a huge iron mark on my shirt! Lay the handkerchief over everything you iron and it will protect it. I used to own a tuxedo rental store and you never iron a wool suit without a cloth, it will make it shinny and destroy the fabric.

You have to have pajamas that are more like clothes, just in case you need to go to the lobby when the hotel alarm goes off - been there, done that! Then your pajamas can be layering pieces if needed. I have a huge fuzzy sweater that doubles as a housecoat and cozy socks. When you didn't expect the mountain walk to be so cold, you have a layer.

I am a very healthy person. I don't take a lot of over-the-counter medicines, but I have a small bag FULL of Tylenol, nose spray, anti-nausea, essential oils etc. I can't be sick, ever; if I start to feel sick on the road, I need to zap that quickly to perform the next day. Finding these medications late at night in a new city is very stressful.

Earplugs and eye masks are essential! They drown out the partying neighbours and any light you don't want to come into the room. I am all about white noise, so I will run the fan or put on some radio static. I need sleep!

I roll this bag home, refill anything I used, switch out the laundry and it is ready to go again.

Happy Traveling!