**AIRLINE TRAVEL CHECKLIST**

**Well Before Flying:**

* Make reservations from late May to early June, in late August, or, between Thanksgiving and Christmas – to save money

**Before making reservations:**

* Check the safety and reliability records of the airlines you’re considering flying on

**Determine which airlines:**

* Offer discounts for seats for young children
* Carry heart defibrillators

**When deciding whether to use a travel agent and, if so, which travel agent:**

* Ask the travel agent if they deal with consolidators and if they have a good one they deal with (watch out for consolidators who are not honest and/or reliable) – to save money

**When deciding when to fly:**

* Fly as early in the day as feasible – to reduce chances of flight delays

**If considering using a charter airline:**

* Be aware that charter airlines tend to be less reliable (more likely than major airlines to be late or cancelled)

**When selecting an airline and a type of aircraft:**

* Ensure the aircraft will have adequate medical equipment on board – many U.S. airlines don’t carry adequate first aid equipment on the planes

**When selecting specific flights:**

* Avoid flights which originate or stop at airports with poor security – to reduce chances of a terrorist attack
* Avoid flights which have a short turnaround – to reduce chances of a terrorist attack – reduces time available to ensure security procedures are followed
* Avoid stops at airports which might experience bad weather, e.g., choose warmer locations – to reduce chances of flight delays
* Minimize the number of airlines and flights you fly on – to reduce risk of losing luggage

**If you can’t find a cheap fare to your desired destination airport:**

* Consider flying to another airport near your desired destination, then driving or riding public transportation to your destination

**Paying for your tickets:**

* Use a credit card – makes it much easier to get your money back if there’s a problem with your reservations

**When getting your seat assignments:**

* Request seats over the wing or towards the front – for a more comfortable ride
* Request aisle seats or seats right behind a bulkhead – to get more leg room to help prevent potentially fatal blood clot resulting from sitting in seat for long period
* Request seats which recline fully – seats at very rear and seats in front of an emergency exit usually don’t recline
* Request seats which aren’t close to the galley (kitchen) and lavatories (usually in the rear) – for a quieter ride
* Request a seat near the front – away from the engines – for a quieter ride

**After making reservations:**

* Consider obtaining travel insurance which protects you in the event the flights are cancelled or delayed excessively (read the policy very carefully for exclusions, etc.)

**After getting your ticket(s)/itinerary:**

* Check them carefully to ensure they are for the flight, time and airport you ordered
* Safeguard the ticket(s) – they are highly pilfer able and should be treated as if they were cash
* Write/type and make copies of your itinerary
* Provide itinerary to neighbors, friends and/or family
* Make plans to leave for the airport in plenty of time (anticipate unexpected delays, e.g., traffic, long check-in lines, security checks) – your flight may be overbooked and you could lose your seat if you show up later than approx. 15 minutes before departure time
* Arrange for transportation to airport, e.g.: \*Ask someone to drive you \*Taxi/shuttle \*Drive your own vehicle (ensure adequate parking available for reasonable price)

**If you are not satisfied with your travel arrangements (e.g., flights cancelled):**

* Complain to the airline or charter company

**If you’re still not satisfied:**

* Call the Department of Transportation: (202) 366-2220

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| **In-flight Comfort** | | | |
| * Sleep Mask | * Ear Plug | * Socks | * Neck Rest |
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| **Electronics** | | | |
| * Alarm Clock | * Camera | * GPS | * Laptop or Tablet |
| * Mobile Phone | * Universal Adapter | * Chargers | * Headphones |
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| **Bags & Accessories** | | | |
| * Backpack | * Business Cards | * Camera Case | * Ziplock Bag |
| * Coin Pouch | * Passport Cover | * Foldable Bag | * Wallet |
| * Luggage Strap | * Pens | * Luggage | * Safety Pins |
| * Sewing Kit | * Shoe Bag | * Refillable Bottles | * Flashlight |
| * Tote Bag | * TSA Approved Lock | * Sunglasses |  |
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| **Personal Care** | | | |
| * Body Lotion | * Breath Spray | * Comb | * Conditioner |
| * Contact Lens & Solutions | * Cosmetics | * Cotton Buds | * Dental Floss |
| * Deodorant | * Hand Lotion | * Foot Powder | * Hair Clip |
| * Hair Gel | * Insect Repellent | * Lip Balm | * Hand Soap |
| * Mirror | * Moisturizer | * Nail Clipper | * Make-up Remover |
| * Razor/Shaver | * Sanitary Napkins / Tampons | * Shampoo | * Perfume |
| * Sunblock | * Tissues | * Toothbrush | * Shower Gel |
| * Towel | * Wet Wipes | * Tweezers | * Toothpaste |
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| **Essentials** | | | |
| * Passport | * Supplements/Vitamins | * Credit Cards | * Emergency Contact List |
| * Itinerary | * Anti-Diarrhea Medicine | * Medicated Oil | * Mild Laxatives |
| * Internatl. Driver’s License | * Frequent Traveler Card | * Flu Medicine | * Mini First Aid Kit |
| * Visa | * Fever/Headache Medicine | * Prescription Meds | * Antacids |

**Day Before Flying:**

* Check the weather forecast for the origination, intermediate and destination airports for your flight

**If weather is not forecast to be good for flying:**

* Change your reservations
* Plan to wear loose clothing (e.g., no girdle-type articles, tight elastic) for the flight(s) – to help prevent potentially-fatal blood clot from sitting in seat for long period
* Pack (see Packing)
* Place your name, addresses (home and/or destination), phone numbers (home and/or destination) and itinerary inside your luggage
* Lock your luggage
* Take (swallow) an aspirin – to help prevent potentially fatal blood clot from sitting in seat for long period

**Once you’ve packed your bags:**

* Don’t let any strangers have access to your bags – a terrorist could place a bomb in your bags

**Shortly Before Flying**

* Avoid drinking alcohol or carbonated beverages, and, avoid drinks with caffeine (can cause dehydration), until after the flight(s) – to help prevent potentially-fatal blood clot from sitting in seat for long period
* Drink lots of water and/or fruit juices – to help prevent potentially-fatal blood clot resulting from sitting in seat for long period

**Upon Arrival at the Airport:**

* Don’t accept anything from a stranger to carry onto the airplane – a terrorist could have placed a bomb, etc. in the item
* Request a seat next to an empty seat (avoid the seats directly in front of emergency exit rows – the seat backs usually do not recline fully)

**If you would like more legroom and are physically able to open the emergency exit:**

* Ask for a seat in an emergency exit row

**If you are bumped because the airline oversold the flight:**

* Understand what you are entitled to – in most cases, approx. $400 in denied boarding compensation plus a seat on the next available flight
* Consider negotiating for more than just what you are entitled to

**AFTER BOARDING THE AIRCRAFT:**

* Avoid putting a lot of stuff under the seat in front of you – so you will have room to move your feet and keep blood circulating in your legs to avoid possible blood clot
* Take off your shoes – to help avoid blood clots

**If you have children with you:**

* Consider giving them a small dose of an antihistamine to help them sleep during the flight – it’s probably best for them to be awake for the landing – so they will notice ear discomfort during descent and can drink from a bottle, cry, chew, etc. to relieve the discomfort

**In-flight:**

* Spend as much of the flight as feasible in your seat with your seat belt securely fastened – sudden turbulence can cause serious injury
* Get out of seat and walk around occasionally (but be prepared for turbulence) – to help prevent potentially fatal blood clot from sitting in seat for long period

**Regularly:**

* Move and flex your ankles and toes – to help avoid blood clots At least every hour:
* Get up, walk around and stretch – to help avoid blood clots

**If you lose feeling in a leg:**

* Be aware that you might have a blood clot in your leg which could travel to your lung, heart, etc. – people with heart disease, cancer and/or varicose veins, and, smokers are especially at risk of developing a blood clot

**Before Descent:**

* Be prepared to chew gum, yawn, etc. to relieve ear discomfort

**If you’re travelling with an infant:**

* Give him/her a bottle to suck on – to help relieve ear discomfort