

Tips for Packing Light & Traveling with Just Carry-On Luggage

Some people are born "light packers." The more I travel, the more I'm convinced of this fact. For them it's nothing to throw a few items in an overnight bag and be off for a weekend or even a week or more.

For the rest of us, packing light isn't as difficult or daunting a task as it may seem. Yes Virginia, you can learn to travel with just your carry-on luggage. You really can fit an awful lot into a carry-on bag; all it takes is a little planning.

Not checking baggage truly has advantages. Below are some favorite light packing tips. If you have additional tips for traveling with a minimum of luggage, we'd love to hear them and share them in future updates. Please email tips to Tommy@trvlcorp.com.



- Airlines do not usually count purses or briefcases towards your carry-on baggage. Carry large ones and use them to pack extra items. I usually have a large purse that can carry toiletries, makeup etc, leaving my real carry-on bag for clothing.
- Wear your heaviest clothes and bulkiest shoes on the plane, not in your bags.
- Layer on clothing. A T-shirt under a sweater or sweatshirt, under an overcoat gives you a lot of clothing options without having to pack them all. Packing many lighter pieces of clothing that can be layered is much more space efficient than packing items like a big bulky sweater.
- Plan clothing so you get a variety of outfits out of just a few pieces. Black pants or skirts can easily be dressed up or down as the occasion dictates. A scarf, tie or jewelry can complete the look without taking up a lot of space.
- Pack a large, long T-shirt instead of a bathrobe. It can be used for the same purpose, plus double as a beach over-up or even casual wear on the street and it takes up a lot less room in a bag than a bulky bathrobe.
- Choose a color scheme for your clothing so that everything goes with everything else, thereby giving you the most wardrobe options from the least amount of clothing pieces.
- Invest in a good pair of stylish walking shoes. These can also be dressed up or down depending on what you wear them with. Shoes take up a lot of space in luggage so try to limit them. You might also want to wear a pair of boots for the flight, but pack a smaller pair of more dressy shoes.
- Rolling clothes rather than folding will not only help prevent wrinkles, but allow you to pack more into a smaller space.
- Tilley travel gear, a mail order company catering to frequent travelers, makes some wonderful clothes that wash easily in hotel sinks and dry quickly. My friend, the late travel writer Bob Carter, swore by Tilley underwear for this purpose. You washed them out at night and they were dry by the next morning. Packing one or two such garments eliminates the need to carry more. For more information, visit the Tilley website at www.tilley.com.
- Get small sample sized products, like shampoo, conditioner, medications like aspirin, etc.
- If you want to do some shopping at your destination, pack a collapsible bag in your carry-on that you can check as luggage on the return leg of your journey. That way you have the option of shopping and buying extra souvenirs at your destination, without carrying around extra luggage.
- If you will be traveling with just carry-on luggage on both legs of the trip, consider packing old clothes that you can leave behind, thereby freeing up space in your bag for purchases made while on your trip. Take along old socks, underwear, t-shirts or even shoes.
- Depending on where your travels take you overseas, you can sometimes earn a decent price for selling your blue jeans (especially Levis) at second hand stores before returning home - not only earning you some bucks, but freeing up valuable suitcase space as well.
- Try to eliminate, as much as possible, your need for appliances such as hair dryers, electric roller, shavers, etc. If you do take any electronics, make sure you also pack the appropriate electric adapters for the countries you'll be visiting.

