

Arranging a Trip? Need Some Help? Air Travel Tips Part Three

This is part three in a series of articles presenting travel tips related to air travel. Be sure to bookmark or print out the entire series for a comprehensive selection of tips that are sure to make your air travel more enjoyable and hassle-free.

This article presents several travel tips that will help you to get the most out of your next air voyage, whether domestic or international. Be sure to save and/or print out the entire series of articles.

1. Take care of your ears during take-off and landing. This is not the time to take a nap! Stay alert and chew gum, yawn, or use the Valsalva maneuver to clear your ears: Close your mouth, pinch your nostrils, and GENTLY try to exhale. This maneuver forces air into the Eustachian tubes.
2. Reading material onboard most planes is dull - usually a magazine or two published by the airline. Do not forget to pack something in your carryon that will keep you occupied during long flights or delays that could leave you stranded for long periods in airports.
3. Keep hydrated while you fly, and be sure to get out of your seat a couple of times per hour. This will help to prevent DVT (deep vein thrombosis, or clots) in your legs - a potentially fatal condition.
4. If the seatbelt light stays on for extended periods, take little in-seat exercise breaks: 1) Lift each leg separately a couple of inches from the floor while you rotate the foot at the ankle - several times clockwise, follow by several times counter clockwise. 2) Keeping both feet on the floor, rock the feet forward to simulate standing on your toes, then backwards to simulate standing on your heels. Do a few repetitions. 3) Tense and relax muscles in calves several times. Follow up with thigh muscles.
5. Avoid using luggage that looks like everyone else's. Be innovative with colored tape or fabric paint to make your suitcases stand out. Carrying a photo of your luggage in a wallet or purse makes it easier for baggage handlers to locate your bags if they should go astray.
6. Food onboard aircraft is often unappetizing. Consider packing snacks and drinks that fall within current security guidelines - especially for long flights.
7. When cabin crew or flight attendants are talking, pay attention. It is easy to become involved in personal conversations and tune them out. Attentiveness could save you from unexpected surprises later in the flight.
8. Aircraft cabins have extremely dry air. Carrying a small tube of moisturizing cream will help to keep your skin soft while you fly. Make sure you carry lip balm as well.
9. Constant noise creates stress, even if you are not consciously aware of it. Noise-cancelling headphones used to listen to your favorite music, in-flight movies, or an audio book will aid in relaxation and reduce the undesirable side effects of noise pollution.

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