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Five Tips for Packing Your Bag for a Trip

By **AB**

Traveling is always fun, but it can also be stressful. Your mind is filled with so many different things you feel there isn't enough time to get it all done. Packing is one of the things many people do at the last minute, and it can be frustrating to reach your destination and discover you've forgotten something important.

There are a number of ways to pack for your trip that will keep you organized and enable you to find things quickly. Staying organized and as compact as possible also helps if you're flying by air and go through security. Having things organized can speed up the process if they decide to pull you over and check your bags.

One, make a list. This is the single most important thing you should do before packing. As you gather items and pack them, check them off on your list. A list can make all the difference in remembering to pack something or leave it behind. If you're traveling with your family, have each member make a list as well, so you can all pack neatly and efficiently.

Two, plastic containers and bags are your friends. If you're talking any toiletries, put them in plastic before you put them in your bag. During air travel, bottles can burst open at the top, so put them in a bag to ensure no lotion, shampoo, or other material ruin your bag.

Three, put anything in your check-in luggage that will be confiscated during security checks. This includes: pocket knives, hair pins, nail scissors, nail clippers, metal files, large objects, and any other items you think might alarm security. Stick your nail clippers in the little pocket outside your suitcase, and use them later to clip off the plastic locker security will put on your luggage to ensure it remains tamper free.

Four, put an identification badge on your luggage, complete with name, number, flight number, date of travel, airport at final destination and hotel, aircraft changes, and any other important information. Copy all the information on a piece of paper and put it on the top of your luggage so it can be easily found in case it is misplaced or sent to the wrong place.

Five, put an identifying item on your bag so it's easily recognizable at baggage claim. Tie a ribbon or bow at the top; wrap a strand of colored tape, or anything else that will help you tell your luggage apart from similar shaped or colored bags.

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