



Guest Senior Editor MPL, Milwaukee WI: I traveled frequently on business for 40 years, and since retirement my spouse and I still wander at least once a month. After making all the possible over-packing mistakes, we have some very simple rules:

Unless you're sailing on a super-formal cruise or will attend a function at the White House or Buckingham Palace, take only basic, comfy clothing. Many airlines charge for all check-in bags, \$25 or more each. They pile on more fees for those weighing more than max allowed. Take only what you can carry and wheel yourself. At first we went everywhere with one or two big suitcases each. They had to be lugged, checked at the airport and, after flights, we waited by the merry-go-round hoping they hadn't been sent to Timbuctu.

Getting smarter, we went to Europe and enjoyed three weeks of casual travel. We each took only a wheeled carry-on and a small backpack. Nothing is checked at the airport. We didn't make plans for the next day until the night before. We stayed at small hotels, hostels and b&bs in England, France, Holland and Italy.

For several days before we leave on a trip, we make stacks on the bed of everything we'll absolutely need for the trip. Then we pack about half of the stacks and leave the rest at home.

We take along some old clothing that gets one or two days' wear, and then discarded. We take other washable clothing into nightly showers with us. We wash it, wring it out and let it dry overnight.

Don't anticipate you'll have essential hygiene items available at local stores all times. Take small supplies of alcohol wet wipes, toothpaste, mouthwash, bathroom tissue and basic first aid items. Make sure you bring only approved items on flights.