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How to Travel with Only a Carry-On Bag



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How to Travel with Only a Carry-On Bag



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With airlines continually increasing checked baggage fees, a family of four is now spending over \$100 if each person checks a [suitcase](#). The quickest way to [save that baggage fee money](#)? Only bring [carry-on luggage](#).

How to Pack Only a Carry-On Bag

Use All The Space

If your kids are little (and thus their [clothes](#) are little), use some of the extra

space in the [kids' bags](#) for your own [clothes](#). Or if you have two kids that are close in age, pack one set of clothes and have them share. If you run out, you can find a laundromat just about anywhere — even on cruise ships.

Mix and Match

Lay out everyone's clothes before you pack and make sure they [mix and match easily](#). If they don't, put them back. You should pack neutral-colored clothing, a common tactic for [capsule wardrobes](#). For adults, this often means shades of black, white and gray. Also take a good, long look and see if you can put 25 to 50 percent back. Do you *really* need to pack three [sweatshirts](#) for a trip to the Caribbean? One should suffice (and your child can tie it around his or her waist so it doesn't take up any room in the carry-on).

Roll, Don't Fold

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[Roll \(don't fold\)](#) your [clothes](#). This is a big one that many a seasoned travel swears by. Rolling takes up less space and often, you can get more in your suitcase.

Pack It In The Backpack

Carry a [backpack](#) in addition to your carry-on. In the backpack, put bulky items (like a [travel pillow](#), [collapsible water bottle](#), or favorite [stuffed animal](#)), as well as liquids (easy access for TSA checks) and your [laptop](#) and other [electronics](#). Suddenly, it's like you have [two carry-on bags and plenty of space](#)

[for everything.](#)

Related: [What to Pack For The Kids In a Carry-On Bag](#)

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Less Shoes Equals More Space

Limit the [shoes](#) to two pairs. Rarely do you need more than two pairs of shoes when you travel. For kids, often you can get away with just packing [sneakers](#) (dress codes tend to be lax for the junior set). For parents, a [casual pair](#) and a [dressier pair](#) for night should suffice.

Related: [The Best Travel Sneakers for Moms on the Go](#)

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Best Carry-On Bags

One of the best ways to avoid overpacking? Use a [carry-on bag](#) that doesn't allow for expansion. We love [Away's "The Carry-On" bag](#), made with the brand's signature unbreakable German polycarbonate, a lightweight and ultra-durable material that's designed with a little flex so it bends, but doesn't break even under pressure.

Other features include an ejectable battery that can charge your devices; an

interior organizer with a compression pad that buckles down to make more space; a hidden laundry bag that separates dirty clothes from clean; the 360-degree Hinomoto spinner wheels, ideal for all kinds of rolling (think cobblestone streets or bumpy stairs); and a built-in [TSA-approved combination lock](#) to keep everything safe and contained.

But that's not the only carry-on bag ideal for traveling with kids. Here are some of our other favorites:

- [The Ultimate Carry-On Bag for Moms](#)
- [8 Best Teen Approved Carry-On Bags](#)
- [Roll With It: The Best Kids Rolling Luggage](#)
- [10 Weekender Bags for Your Next Family Escape](#)
- [7 Carry-On Bags That Take the Stress Out of Travel](#)

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Best Packing Cubes

Another way to fit everything in your suitcase is to invest in [travel packing cubes](#). Here are two great options:

EZPacking Starter Set

The [EZPacking Starter Set](#) is made specifically for carry-on bags and can fit a week's worth of clothes. It comes with a large cube for jeans and heavier times, a medium cube for [T-shirts](#), [lightweight sundresses](#) and [kids' clothes](#); and a small cube for [socks](#) and [underwear](#). There's an extra-small cube for [toiletries](#), too.

eBags Ultralight Packing Cubes – Ultimate Packer 7pc Set.

The [e-Bags Ultralight Packing Cubes](#) are super lightweight and literally have no bulk. The nylon mesh is resilient and flexible, so you can stuff a lot in each cube and it doesn't break or change its shape. The seven-piece eBags starter kit makes for a beautiful game of travel Tetris—you can stack and arrange each cube in a variety of configurations for how you need it most. Each family can get their own color and it's easy to unpack the cubes (and keep things organized) once you get to the hotel.

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Judy Koutsky is an award-winning writer and editor. Her work has appeared in over 30 publications including Conde Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Parents, WebMD, Prevention, and Scholastic. You can view her website at JudyKoutsky.com.

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Please don't assume that an "under seat" bag will fit . The addition of so many electronics to seat backs has added equipment below seats that severely limits the available space.

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Some airlines charge for carry on bags too...Spirit Frontier to name a few...

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