

Travel_Packing_List_2004.txt

Round-The-World Travel Guide PACKING

To travel light, collect everything you think you need, then cut it in half. You will still have more than you need. The pack should not be full, since you will inevitably acquire things along the way, and you will need room for extra water and food in remote areas.

There are only a few important things, since most items can be obtained overseas (except X-Large clothing). You can buy and sell, or rent, cold weather-gear as you need it. As a general rule, the longer you are going the less you should take.

"I have yet to find anyplace in the world where you could not buy clothing, low to middle quality footwear, and toiletries, although it costs more in Europe and Scandinavia.

Next time I travel to the third world, I will take an empty pack and fill it up with cheap clothing on arrival. Do not carry all the clothes you will need for the whole trip, but wear them out and replace them along the way.

Do not take stuff you *might* need, but could acquire along the way (like a set of dress-up clothes). And do not take a lot of technological garbage intended to isolate you from the very places you want to experience, like walkmen, fancy cameras, etc.."

"Oh, one more thing, do not worry about fitting everything into your pack -- there seems to be some magical expansion and contraction going on as you add and delete items from the pack. Our universal rule after the trip was that your pack will adjust to however much stuff you end up having in your pack.

A corollary to that is -- do not pack more than you REALLY need, because your pack will adjust and forever get heavier. This is

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especially true as one moves from a colder climate to a much warmer one -- the weight and size of the pack is inversely proportional to the climate!

You will not find a packing list here! Please refer to the "Universal Packing List" by Mats Henricson, available at:

ftp://ftp.digimark.net/pub/rec-travel/general/packing_list (198.77.86.2) e-mail: mats.henricson@eua.ericsson.se

If you have a radio, camera, or electric shaver, you will need to determine if batteries will be readily available, or decide whether you are willing to carry a battery charger and adapters. "Consider rechargeable batteries and one of the little lightweight solar AA battery rechargers available at good backpacking supply stores.

I've seen them for around US\$ 20 - 40. Be kind to the planet, and yourself; go rechargeable." <R.S. LaMorte>

"You only need to take information for the first few destinations, then have the rest mailed to you, or buy it along the way. Books are usually more expensive outside the US, but you can look for used ones. You can also trade books with those travelling in the opposite direction.

In Bangkok, Khao San Road is the famous backpacker's area, and there are lots of used travel books. You can even buy fake press cards and student ID cards, the latter being useful in Europe." <Russell Gilbert>

"India was an excellent place to buy books, either new or used. Very cheap, and lots of selection!" <Dave Patton> The same

is true in Nepal.

BACKPACKS

Many travellers carry large backpacks and check them in, without any problems. However, most recommend that you resist the temptation to carry large packs, since you can live indefinitely out of a single carry-on.

They save you a lot of hassles at airports, and you always have all your possessions with you. There are times when you may have to check them due to airline regulations. Also, if you are carrying a tent or sleeping bag, you may not be able to fit it all into a small pack.

A small backpack is no greater than 114cm (45") when the length, width, and height are added. A pack with dimensions of 53x38x25cm (21"x15"x10") will qualify as carry-on luggage and still fit under your seat.

Many travellers are using small, internal frame backpacks, that distribute the weight to their hips. These have wide, well-padded waistbelts and shoulder straps. Two of the many packs that meet these criteria are:

The Eagle Creek "Solo Journey Pack". It has an outside pocket and a panel-opening main compartment, of maximum legal carry-on size 51x38x25cm (20"x15"x10"), weighs 3.4 pounds, and has an internal aluminum frame, foam padding, shoulder straps, and hip belt. The straps tuck away to convert to a conventional suitcase.

Very high quality Cordura construction , true lockable zippers, tie-downs, and is dressy enough to look like formal luggage when the occasion calls for it (it comes in Evergreen, Black, and

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an insipid Harbor Blue). It sells for around \$100.

The Eagle Creek "Continental Journey" 53x38x25cm (21"x15"x9") is the "Solo Journey" with a zip-on daypack 41x30x15cm (16x12x6"). It weighs 4 pounds and lists for around \$210, but Magellan's carries it for \$165, and REI sells it for \$150.

Dana's Arcflex series, and particularly the Terraplane and Bombpack come highly recommended, but may be expensive. They are "bombproof" and the close to a custom pack. They are superior for off-trail because of an aluminum stay which you can manipulate to fit your back perfectly and spread the load of the pack.

Note: There have been comments that the daypack can give you an awkward feeling due to the extra weight farther from your back, the security problem of someone stealing the daypack, and another potential zipper failure.

Carry a supply of monofilament fishing line, and a needle with an eye big enough to take the line, to repair a pack while on the road. Use the internal and external compression straps on the pack once it is closed to take the load almost entirely off the zipper.

"Rather than monofilament line (for backpack repair), I would suggest waxed dental floss. It is much more multi-purpose, very strong, better suited to 'sewing', and some travelers might already be taking it along."

OTHER FORMS OF LUGGAGE

Whether you carry a backpack or a normal suitcase can be influenced by the types of transportation you take, as well as security considerations: anyone can easily break into either a backpack or a

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suitcase, but sometimes the suitcase takes longer to get into and also offers more protection for fragile contents, and better protection from dust and rain. No zippers to get jammed, either.

Although you are entitled to two suitcases on transatlantic and transpacific flights (the second one maximum 55" length, width & height combined), the limit for checked luggage elsewhere is only 20 kilos (however I checked 27 kilos everywhere RTW and was never charged excess except where the in-country airline allowance was only 10 or 15 kilos, which occurred several places). The 20 kilo allowance goes into effect after your first stopover in a foreign country.

Luggage that is easy to handle at airports and on airplanes may be difficult on trains or busses. For example, the largest suitcase officially permitted on a transatlantic/transpacific flight (62" length, width & height combined) is too large for most First Class train compartments in Europe (the place a Eurail pass allows you to sit) and may be impractical for bus travel as well.

When changing trains, you may find you have to manage several flights of steps with your luggage, which can be a chore, especially if you are travelling alone.

Most places you stay will keep luggage for you at low cost, so you may want also to carry or buy a smaller pack or duffel bag for in-country excursions, leaving your souvenirs and other excess items behind.