

TRAVEL FOR BUSINESS



Travel Tips for the Business Person

Essential Travel Tips & Ideas for the Business Person on the Move

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Table of Contents

1.Moving Around.....	4
2.Finances and Expenses.....	5
<i>Your Method of Travel.....</i>	<i>5</i>
Bicycling.....	5
Driving	6
Buses.....	6
Trains.....	7
Airplane.....	7
Boats and Ships.....	7
3.The Law of the Land.....	8
<i>Driving Your Car.....</i>	<i>8</i>
The Good.....	8
The Bad.....	9
<i>Taking the Bus.....</i>	<i>11</i>
The Good.....	11
The Bad.....	12
<i>5.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Train Travel.....</i>	<i>13</i>
The Good.....	13
The Bad.....	14
The Subway.....	14
4.Amazing Air Travel.....	16
<i>Overview.....</i>	<i>16</i>
The Good.....	16
The Bad.....	17
Airport Security.....	18
5.The Superior Sea.....	21

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6.Cities of Interest.....	22
Los Angeles, California (USA).....	22
New York, New York (USA).....	22
Paris, France.....	22
London, England.....	23
Berlin, Germany.....	24
Tokyo, Japan.....	25
Beijing, China.....	25
7.Traveling Tips & Tricks.....	27
<i>21 Basic Travel Tips.....</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Jet Lag: A Detailed Look.....</i>	<i>32</i>
8.Spice Up Your Travels.....	34
<i>Bring the Family.....</i>	<i>34</i>

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1. Moving Around

Depending on what type of business you're in it may be necessary to move around a lot. Whether it's taking frequent bus trips, flying to far off places or just driving to the next county, traveling can take its toll on anyone. In this book we're going to discuss travelling tips for just about every occasion. We'll cover everything you need to know about travelling on land (Trains, cars, buses), by air (planes, helicopters) and even by sea (boats, yachts). The only thing we're not going to cover in this book is travel by teleportation (and believe me if I thought I could get away with it I'd throw in a chapter about it anyway).

Who is this book for? Really it's a beneficial guide for anyone who's traveling more than twenty or thirty miles or anyone who's going somewhere they've never been before. That being said this guide is specifically geared towards people who are travelling for business reasons. Because of this you'll find that the book is light on tourism and sightseeing and focuses on utilitarian locations and important travel information.

Travelling can be a stressful venture for a lot of people. This is amplified when you're traveling for business reasons because you can't afford to get lost or held up. Even so, travelling can also be extremely rewarding and fun, if you know what rules to follow and which paths to take. A few simple decisions while traveling can be the difference between frustrating failure and gratifying success.

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2. Finances and Expenses

Before we talk about anything else let's get the number one concern everyone has out of the way: Money. Travelling can be extremely expensive, especially if you have equipment or cargo to take with you. It's very rare that you'll be paid in advance to travel anywhere so even if you're being reimbursed by the company you work for or a client, it doesn't take the financial burden completely off your shoulders until all is said and done. There are, however, a lot of different ways you can cut costs and travel for relatively cheap.

Your Method of Travel

How you travel can greatly affect the overall cost of the trip. Obviously there are big differences in prices for different methods of travel. Airplane tickets are generally more expensive than bus tickets and train tickets can be anywhere in between. A lot of people like to drive when they're traveling within their own country or region but it doesn't always save money, especially with the gas price fluctuations that have been going on since 2003. Each form of transportation has its own strengths and weaknesses; which you choose depends entirely on where you're going, how fast you need to be there are what your budget is.

Bicycling

I know it seems silly to include bikes in a book about traveling but if you live in a crowded city or even a rural area it may benefit you to keep the car in the garage and take your bike to work instead. Commuting is one of the most stressful forms of transportations there is, especially if you live on the west or northeast coast of the U.S. Bicycling is extremely energy efficient, requires very little physical effort and can save you thousands of dollars every year. If your route to work is less than fifteen miles and has easily accessible bike routes, you should really consider getting up an hour earlier and riding your bike instead of driving.

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- **Strengths:** Efficient, Cheap, Healthy & Economical
- **Weaknesses:** Short Range Only, Physical, Strongly Affected by Weather

Driving

Driving is probably the most common method of transportation (depending on the country you live in). Driving your own car is usually a fairly cheap option but it depends on a number of different factors. Gas prices control the effectiveness of driving more than anything else; high gas prices can make driving long distances a non-option for some people. Aside from gas you have to consider how far you're going, how it will affect the condition of your car and how long you're willing to take to get there. Carpooling is extremely efficient if you are just commuting to and from work; even with high gas prices it substantially raises the viability of driving.

- **Strengths:** Affordable, Convenient, Almost Any Distance, Easy
- **Weaknesses:** Gas Prices Affect Cost, Expensive over Long distances

Buses

Buses are generally the top choice for money savings by most people. They're usually substantially cheaper than any other form of transportation and have the same limitations as cars (pretty much limitless but can't go overseas). Most major bus companies will offer large reductions in ticket price for ordering early or ordering online (or sometimes both). As far as value goes, buses are tops. Unfortunately the same can't always be said regarding quality. A comfortable, well-air-conditioned bus is going to be an expensive one. Depending on the price premium it could be cheaper to fly. Buses also aren't particularly known for their lightning speed, generally making many stops along the way during a long trip. Lastly, in regards to value, buses are not cheap all though the year. During peak seasons of travel buses can actually be more expensive than planes and trains.

- **Strengths:** Very Cheap, Discount Options

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- **Weaknesses:** Usually Uncomfortable, Peak Seasons are Expensive

Trains

Trains are extremely economical and convenient. As far as energy input/output their efficiency is only matched by bicycles. Trains also have the clear advantage of not really requiring any sort of input besides handing in your ticket and finding your seat. The only drawbacks are availability and traveling conditions. If you can find a long-distance train you're probably not going to be sitting comfortable without paying a hefty premium.

- **Strengths:** Very Affordable, Very Easy
- **Weaknesses:** First-Class is Expensive, Not Widely Available

Airplane

Airplanes are well-known for being the most expensive option but it depends mostly on where you're going. Airplanes actually have a lot of discount options. You usually get a better price when you buy tickets way ahead of time. There are also discounts depending on the location you're going to; twenty-one-year-olds going to Las Vegas will get a very nice discount no matter where they're coming from. Like buses, airplanes have peak times in which they are substantially more expensive and very inconvenient. Airplanes are affordable ideas for long-distance and overseas travel; they can actually be less expensive the compared to other travel methods the longer the distance is.

- **Strengths:** Discount Options, Overseas Travel, Very Fast
- **Weaknesses:** Expensive, Peak Times are **very** expensive

Boats and Ships

Traveling by water has been made all but obsolete by the advent of the airplane. Still, it's sometimes the only available option for wherever you're going. There isn't a lot to say about the financial repercussions of traveling by boat because if you're traveling by boat you likely are doing so only because there's no other choice. If

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you ever do have a choice; don't travel by boat. You never really know what you're going to pay when traveling by boat. No strengths/weaknesses for boats as they're largely irrelevant.

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3. The Law of the Land

Traveling by land manifests itself in three primary ways: Driving a car, taking a bus or riding on a train. Those are just the most popular options. Trams, monorails, limos, taxis and trolleys are all viable options as well. The sea pretty much has boats and the sky is limited to planes and helicopters but land transportation is a sundry mix and with diversity comes convenience and sometimes complication.

Driving Your Car

This is the preferred method of transportation by most people these days. Driving your own car is generally thought of as affordable and convenient. The beauty of driving yourself is that you're not limited in your destination so it's really the freest option available. Even so it definitely has its downsides and occasionally they outshine the benefits. If you're lucky enough to own a car, you can't deny that, at the very least, it's a bit more fun than a lot of other ways of getting around.

The Good

There are a lot of benefits to driving yourself and others around in a car. The primary one that comes to mind is cost. Depending on the price of gasoline cars can be one of the most cost-effective ways to travel. They're almost essential for small commutes and it's much cheaper to drive a car to a hard-to-reach place than to get there by other means.

Cars are also very flexible and free. There's really no limit to where you can go when you're driving. You're not constrained to a particular route and if your plans change, you can easily change where you're going without the hassle of exchanging tickets and getting refunds, etc.

Speaking of freedom, there are many places on the map that are only accessible if you drive yourself. Many mountain communities and forest areas are made up of rural, small towns that major transportation companies don't bother

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going through. Sometimes the only good way to get anywhere is to drive your car (It's certainly cheaper than getting a taxi).

The most powerful tool a driver has is the carpool. Carpooling allows you to share costs among friends or coworkers. Adding three people to your car very scarcely affects your gas mileage but it divides the costs by four. Instead of paying twenty dollars to fill your tank and go to work, you pay five and your friends chip in the remainder. Carpooling is potentially the most cost effective form of transportation besides walking and bicycling.

Aside from being a lot cheaper than driving alone, it's better for the environment and for freeway traffic. If more people carpooled the entire planet would benefit from reduced emissions of greenhouse gasses. Freeways would also be a lot less crowded and people could get where they needed to go a lot faster. Cars usually seat between two and six depending on the model; why not fill up all the seats and use your vehicle to its fullest?

The Bad

Now that I've told you how great cars can be, let me tell you why they're a bad choice, at least some of the time. For one, cars are pollution machines that destroy the environment, reduce air quality and exacerbate lung diseases. The price of operating a car is also largely dependent on gasoline prices and since cars are personal possessions the cost of maintenance falls on the owner. Probably the biggest thing to worry about when driving is safety; cars happen to be one of the least safe forms of transportation available.

Cars work by burning gasoline to produce pressure in cylinders that push rods in an engine. This turns a massive rod that controls the rest of the car (That's the severely abridged version by the way, for an actual explanation, ask your mechanic). Gasoline is pretty nasty stuff. It's made from brown/black sludge that's pumped out of the ground by the ton and refined for its flammable properties. When gasoline burns it creates a myriad of unhealthy gasses and fumes; whatever doesn't invade your lungs and attack your body floats up into the air and assaults

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the ozone layer in a maniacal attempt to deplete it and let in deadly, ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Have I demonized gasoline enough for you? If you haven't put your car up for auction and immediately purchased a bicycle then I may not have said enough.

If protecting the planet or your lungs isn't a pressing issue, the money almost definitely is. Cars *can* be extremely affordable transportation options. They can also cost more than trains, buses or planes! The cost of running your car depends mostly on the price of gasoline. Gasoline has fluctuating prices but the general trend is for it to go up and up. If you adjust for inflation then gas has stayed fairly constant over the years but recently it has skyrocketed and the oil situation doesn't seem to be headed in a positive direction.

Maintenance is another hassle to deal with when you have a car. If you're riding a bus or taking the train, the company that owns the vehicle worries about maintenance. You buy your ticket, go where you want to go and you're done with it. Cars have a plethora of potential problems from leaky radiators to broken struts and it's up to you to maintain and take care of your car. Depending on how busy you are this may be easier said than done. A car is usually a pretty big investment and it's not something to take lightly like a bus ride or a plane flight.

Despite these social and financial issues there's one constant source of stress that cannot be ignored when talking about cars: safety. On average there are over forty-two thousand car-related deaths in the U.S. every year. That's more than the amount of deaths from the flu, murders, airline crashes, lightning strikes and anthrax poisoning COMBINED.

And it's not remotely surprising. Think of a car from a simplified perspective: It's a small metal box that you ride around at high speeds, inches and feet away from other little metal boxes going at high speeds. And even if you're watching out for other cars you have uncountable other obstacles to be careful of like light poles, walls, buildings, pedestrians and just about anything else at ground level. It's no

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wonder that there are so many car-related deaths every year; cars (and to a lesser extent, buses) just aren't anywhere near as safe as other forms of transportation.

Don't believe me? Look at the news. If a plane crashes it will definitely be on multiple news channels, I guarantee it, because it's such a rare and newsworthy event. If news channels tried to cover every car that crashed they wouldn't have time to talk about anything else. Cars can be made safer by people simply driving safer but there are a lot of variables that can't be controlled by the individual.

Taking the Bus

Don't be surprised if this section is extremely brief. Buses are hardly worth their own section because they're essentially the same as cars. They have many of the same benefits and definitely a lot of the same risks. All the same they're quite different in that they work on a much larger scale so they are worth discussing, if only briefly. They certainly do have a respectable list of benefits.

The Good

Buses are essentially a large-scale form of carpooling. They hold a lot more passengers than cars do and have reasonable emissions. Buses can be very cost effective if you buy the tickets at the right time as well. They're also usually cheaper than car rides for very long distances (over four-hundred miles). Because of the routes that buses take they tend to be very slightly safer than cars.

The environment would be in an even darker place than it is now if it weren't for public and private buses around the world. Buses allow large groups of people to travel on roadways and free up space for other vehicles while massively reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Some public buses are powered by natural gas instead of gasoline; it saves money and has much safer byproducts from being burned.

Depending on what bus company you go with there are quite a few opportunities to get a discounted price based on when you're planning on taking

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your trip. Greyhound, for instance, has discounts for buying two and three weeks in advance as well as a special discount for purchasing tickets online instead of in-person. Sometimes these deals don't stack so you'll have to make sure you get the cheapest combo available.

For long distances you're probably going to want to go with a bus if you're on a budget. Three thousand miles in a bus is substantially cheaper than three thousand miles in a car (though it's around the same as an airplane depending on the time of the year). Taking the bus for a long distance trip is also a great way to save wear and tear on your car. Taking on thousands of miles, road dust and engine run time doesn't do anything particularly good for your car.

The Bad

Buses are convenient, affordable and efficient but they have a host of issues as well. For one they're really only marginally safer than cars. They still suffer all the exact same detriments associated with driving a car. Buses are also crowded, hot and uncomfortable in general. More often than now your bus experience is just as tiring and fatiguing as driving your own car.

Since buses share the same roads as cars they share all of the same problems. The only benefit of being in a bus is that it will generally be one of the largest things on the road so most people will respect it and be careful around it. But, as they say, the bigger they are the harder they fall. Bus crashes are generally catastrophic ordeals because of the shear mass of the vehicle.

One constant complaint about buses is how uncomfortable they are. On most affordable buses the company shoves as many seats as it can legally fit within the bus and anyone who isn't rail-thin is extremely uncomfortable in the seats. Personally I've never ridden in a Greyhound bus that had working air conditioning and I've heard similar reports from many different people. Buses are also generally overcrowded and it's very hard to travel with another person because it's rare to find two seats next to each other.

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Lastly, what really grinds my gears about buses is the fact that their prices are selectively competitive. Sometimes you get an amazing deal with three different discounts and end up going twelve hundred miles on less than eighty dollars. Other times you take the same trip and it costs you three times as much. Bus companies are very inconsistent with their deals and they treat peak periods just like airlines do, even worse. In mid-summer it can actually be cheaper to get a plane flight than to take a bus.

5

Train Travel

Trains are one of the most convenient and cost-effective methods of transportation you can take. They're sort of the middle ground between all other forms of transportation. They have conveniences and luxury like a plane but their prices are a lot more affordable like a bus. They also don't have near the carbon footprint of a car or plane and have a lot of different options available. The biggest downside to trains is that they tend to be few and far between. There really aren't a lot of trains running through the U.S. but if you find yourself in Europe or parts of Asia you might be in luck as the fastest trains in the world are in France and China.

The Good

Where to start? Trains are definitely the preferred method of travel for this travel writer. Traveling by train has so many advantages over cars, buses and planes that it's really a crying shame there aren't a lot more trains in the U.S. They're affordable, they have class options, they're energy efficient and environmentally friendly and (most importantly) they're extremely safe!

Trains have many different class options and some have compartments with beds so you can lay down and relax or sleep while you're reaching your destination. Trains also have a lot more food and drink on board than planes do and since

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you're traveling safely on a track at ground level, you can pretty much move around freely however you like.

Trains are extremely safe as well. Like planes they have the competition advantage. Planes have a slight upper hand (Trains do occasionally interact with other vehicles) but both are still worlds safer than cars, taxis or buses. Trains also run on predetermined tracks so there's no uncertainty or anything left to chance.

My favorite thing about riding on trains is the cost. You can go from New York City to Los Angeles for under two-hundred dollars! Might cost you two or three times that much to go by plane; considerable more if you fly first class. Most trains (Amtrack trains for instance) have normal seats that are as comfortable as or better than business class seats on an airplane. Trains generally aren't as crowded and cramped as buses and airplanes either.

The Bad

Availability is the key negative point in trains. There are far more buses, planes, taxis and other forms of transportation available than passenger trains. Distance can also be an issue. A lot of people also avoid trains simply because they're a lot more public than other modes of transportation; increased contact with people increases chances of negative contact as well as positive.

The United States does have interstate, long distance train systems. That being said, they're extremely limited. Most of these trains leave only once a day (not many times like buses or planes). Trains are also limited in simply where they can go. A large portion of the Midwest (including the entire states of Idaho and Wyoming) has no connection to coast-to-coast trains or even local interstate trains.

The last reason that some people avoid trains is simply because they're mass transit vehicles that move a lot of people. If you have problems with large crowds and commotion then a train station or even the inside of a train can be very

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stressful. This is more common on underground subway trains, which we'll talk about next.

The Subway

The subway is still a system of trains so it doesn't get its own section but it's still quite different from surface train travel. Subways are generally intrastate and local. They're also only found in areas that warrant them; big cities like Los Angeles and New York have underground subway stations. Subways are convenient and affordable, more so than trains. Unfortunately subways tend to be a veritable meeting ground for the less fortunate and even the unsavory.

Most people avoid subways if possible because stations are more crowded than just about any other hub of transportation. Pit pocketing is a major problem in subway stations and even on trains. If you're claustrophobic or don't like crowds, avoid subways at all costs. Subways transport thousands of people every day in very close quarters; because of this they are often a source of contamination.

I don't want to use the phrase "bacteria and virus laden" but it really sums it up the best. If you do decide to travel by subway, avoid touching your face or eyes during your trip; do not eat anything while at the subway station and wash your hands with soap or sanitize them with hand sanitizer after you've arrived at your destinations. Subways are such wonderful hubs for bacterial infection that once or twice in history, terrorist have actually targeted them for biological attacks (Though you shouldn't worry too much about that, in all of history this has happened very few times—I'm just illustrating that germs spread easily on a subway). Wearing a paper mask might make you look a bit strange but it could prevent some diseases like colds and flu. Be sure to cover your coughs and sneeze with the inside of your jacket or upper arm; be considerate of other passengers.

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4. Amazing Air Travel

Overview

Traveling by air is the most ubiquitous and well-loved way of getting around the world these days. It's slightly overkill if you're just trying to get to the next state over or even the next county but it's all but necessary if you have more than a couple hundred miles to go.

The Good

Airplanes are ridiculously convenient. Airplanes are the fastest form of travel available today (aside from Space Shuttles but those aren't exactly "available"). You can travel across the country in only a few hours. It would take you literally days to get from L.A. to New York but you can do it in less than six hours via plane.

For extremely long distances planes also tend to be more cost effective. Driving three-thousand miles can actually cost more than flying three-thousand miles depending on what discounts you got on your tickets and the price of gasoline.

The other great thing about planes is that they are usually more comfortable than other forms of mass transit. It's very rare that you use a major airliner and they have broken air conditioning or non-functioning bathrooms. The ability to upgrade to higher classes and experience even more luxury is also extremely convenient and something you won't see on a bus very often.

Planes are also relatively safe. There are far, far more car accidents than plane crashes every year. Statistically you're much safer in a plane than you are in a car or a bus. Flying through the air at five-hundred miles per hour in a metal box may not sound like the epitome of safety but consider your potential obstacles: Other planes and Mt. Everest.

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Planes fly so high that there's really not much to crash into so when there are crashes they're generally caused by malfunction or by low-flying planes with small numbers of passengers. Cars, on the other hand, travel at fairly high speeds with thousand on other vehicles and obstacles in close proximity and rely on the minds of thousands of individuals controlling their little steel boxes. When you really compare the two you find that the high altitude is a negligible risk.

The Bad

Planes aren't world-renowned for being the cheapest form of transportation available. In their defense, it's mostly just an illusion caused by the fact that you're paying for the entire trip upfront instead of gradually paying for gasoline as you drive. That being said, buses and trains are the same way and the prices are usually much better. Prices are also astronomically high during holidays and peak seasons for traveling. Trying to get a plane ticket in the month of December is probably only slightly less difficult than trying to arrange a private meeting with the President.

If the ticket prices don't discourage you from going by plane then the prices of everything else will. Everything within the terminal is substantially marked up and overpriced beyond all reason. Expect to pay as much as 300% more for a hamburger from your favorite fast-food restaurant. A four-pack of double-A batteries will likely cost you as much as a twenty-pack at your local supermarket. Everything that can be sold within the airport terminal is extremely overpriced. To add insult to injury, security usually doesn't allow outside food or drink. This is why the prices are so high in the first place; you really don't have much of a choice.

If you can get past the prices and the money, you've got one more trial before you make it on the plain: Security. Airport security is such a pain that it has its own subsection in the next category. If I wasn't limited to how much I could write I'd just give it its own book. Anyone who's on the fence about flying by plane can easily choose a side once they've had to suffer through airport security just

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once. Yes, it's essentially for our safety and ultimately a positive thing. But like any good medicine, it's a bitter pill to swallow.

Once you get on the plane you have a host of new problems to deal with. Luckily their more or less the same as any passenger transportation so it's not like most of them are deal breakers. Planes are usually more comfortable than buses or trains but it's very subjective. Larger passengers may have to buy two tickets because the seats are fairly small. Aside from being degrading it's extremely inconvenient.

The primary problem with being on a plane is that if anything bad does happen, it's ten times worse than the same scenario on a bus, or train because you're thousands of miles in the sky. Are you having a panic attack? Too bad for you, calm down and have a seat, there are no quick stops when you're on a plane. Is the engine failing? Instead of being severely inconvenienced for a few hours expect panic to ensue as the engines are making the plane go *and* keeping everyone alive.

Things rarely go wrong on a plane but if they do, they go as wrong as they possibly can go. That being said, you should remember that planes really are a safe way to travel. It's basically like driving a car on a road where there are no other cars for miles and nothing but flat land as far as the eye can see. You're only major potential issue is a break down and if you keep your car maintained, it's not something you should have to worry about.

Airport Security

Security is one of those things I suppose you could put into an *ugly* category. It's not good from many perspectives but at the same time it's definitely not bad; as much as many of us don't like airport security it is essential. A lot of people find it to be more trouble than it's worth; this is especially true for U.S. airports where security is tighter than ever. If you're trying to go somewhere on a business-related trip then you can't afford to miss a flight or be held back by airport security.

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You need to know how to get in and out as quickly as possible without wasting time. Without knowledge, practice and planning you're going to be wasting valuable time going through the bureaucracy of airport security.

The biggest problem of getting through security is not you; it's the other people who did not come prepared for this process. If you get stuck behind someone who is completely stumped by what is expected of them, it can take forever to get through the system. Your best bet is to go through airport security when the lines are low, at a time when not many people are leaving. The easiest way to do this is to take the first flight of the day; the fewest people are flying at this time. If you happen to be at an airport that has flights at all hours; go for a redeye flight between twelve and four in the morning. People try to avoid these flights.

Usually it is only business travelers who are at the airport at those times so they will be the ones that already know how to handle security and the lines will be shorter and a lot faster. Like them, you will have already learned the most recent rules about what will pass through security and what will get you stopped. You will need your driver's license and boarding pass several times as you move through the process. So have that out early on and ready to show it often. Don't put that information away until you are on the other side of security and ready to go to the gate. That one-step alone moves you along quickly through the different checkpoints of airport security.

Usually airport security uses a queuing system to handle the crowds. That means that usually it is one long line moving up to the gates and then that line splits into several gates where various teams work the travelers through the scanning stations. As you are standing in line to go through the gates, keep an eye on the different stations. Some stations will stop more people or their equipment is too sensitive so it is moving slower. You may notice that a new team has arrived and is preparing to open a new station. With a bit of maneuvering in line, you can

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hit that new station as it opens and move through fast before the lines accumulate there.

This is also a place to do a bit of profiling. While it is not ok for police to profile, you can look over the people ahead of you and profile those who will either be detained for scanning or will be a big problem when they are ready to put their stuff on the belts. Certain ethnic groups might get scanned more often. It's sad but true. We all want racial equality but if you can avoid being behind that person, you might get through security faster. Also, avoid "amateur travelers" who have lots of kids, the elderly, people in wheelchairs or anyone who looks like they are confused by this process. You can be a hero and help someone out if you have plenty of time. But as the lines split up to go to the different stations, you can simply avoid being behind people who will slow up the process and go to the fast lines to get through more efficiently.

You can cut down on how much you get scanned before you get to the airport. Wear slip-on shoes that you can get off quickly and back on quickly. Boots and tie shoes just slow you down. Keep the amount of "stuff" you are carrying through security to a minimum. Put your wallet, keys and other pocket material in your briefcase or purse before you even get in line. In that way you are down to shoes and that item to move through security and you can move more quickly.

These tricks of the trade can make the beginning of your business trip much less of a problem and get you to the gate more quickly. The security personnel will appreciate that you know what you are doing and you will reduce your stress and move along to your business goals with less anxiety and a greater focus on your objectives.

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5. The Superior Sea

Honestly sea travel is not the most popular form of transportation; it's essentially irrelevant in the world of business where people rely on very fast methods of travel to get where they're going. Even so, there will be times where water travel is your only options. You might have a meeting with clients on a cruise ship or have to visit an associate who's in a coastal island (Like Catalina Island in California). Travel by sea comes with its own benefits and caveats that are quite different from just about anything else you'll come across. There won't be Good/Bad sections for this chapter because sea travel isn't directly comparable to other forms of travel.

The primary reason most people need to cross the sea (or any body of water) is because they're reaching an offshore island city. You see this a lot in cities like New York, where part of the city is across a bay. You'll probably have to take a ferry.

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6. Cities of Interest

I could write an entirely separate book about all the different cities of interest you'll come across while traveling. In fact, I could probably write a single book about each city. For now I'll just give you a brief synopsis of what to expect in some of the largest, most common business destinations and some tips on how to get around.

Los Angeles, California (USA)

Los Angeles is one of the largest cities in the U.S. With over four million inhabitants it has roughly the population of the entire country of Canada. It's divided into different sections and each one has a different reputation. Your primary methods of transportation here will be Taxi and Subway.

I do not recommend driving your own car to L.A. it's well known for being one of the worst places in the world to find a parking space; finding a place to legally park for less than fifteen dollars is quite an accomplishment.

New York, New York (USA)

New York is one of the original metropolises of the U.S. It's a very diverse and interesting city with thousands of things to see and do. It's rumored that you could eat at a different place every day for the rest of your life and never eat at the same restaurant twice.

Your primary methods of travel in New York City will be train, taxi and simply walking. Most things in New York are so close to each other that you really don't need to pay for transportation; you can just walk. Bear in mind that not all areas are safe and you may want to take a taxi anyway.

Paris, France

Located in the north of the country on the river Seine, Paris has the reputation of being the most beautiful and romantic of all cities, brimming with historic

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associations and remaining vastly influential in the realms of culture, art, fashion, food and design.

Paris is well connected to the rest of Europe by train. There is no central station serving Paris, the six different stations are not connected to each other. You will probably want to know in advance at which station your train is arriving, so as to better choose a hotel and plan for transport within the city.

Eurolines, A transEuropean bus company that offers trips to and from Paris. Generally offers prices significantly cheaper than the train at the cost of much longer journeys. The Parisian office is located at Bagnole, adjacent to the Gallieni metro station.

It is generally a bad idea to rent a car to visit Paris. Traffic is very dense during the day, and parking tends to be difficult. This is especially true in areas surrounding points of touristic interest, since many of these are in areas designed long before automobiles existed. A majority of Parisian households do not own cars. Walking in Paris is one of the great pleasures of visiting the City of Light. It is possible to cross the entire city in only a few hours, but only if you can somehow keep yourself from stopping at numerous cafés and shops.

London, England

Noisy, vibrant and truly multicultural, London is a megalopolis of people, ideas and energy. The capital and largest city of both the United Kingdom and of England, it is also the largest city in Western Europe and the European Union.

The city has one of the most comprehensive public transport systems in the world. Despite residents' constant, and sometimes justified, grumbling about unreliability, public transport is often the best option for getting anywhere for visitors and residents alike and is far more reliable than locals would have you believe. Indeed, nearly a third of households do not feel the need to own a car.

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London is a surprisingly compact city, making it a walker's delight and often being the quickest method of transport.

Because Britain drives on the left hand side of the road, for most foreign visitors it can be all too easy to forget that traffic will come at you from the opposite direction than you are used to when crossing a street - for this reason remember to look right when you cross the road.

Berlin, Germany

Berlin is best known for its historical associations as the German capital, for its internationality and tolerance, for its lively nightlife, for its many cafes, clubs, and bars, for its street art, and for its numerous museums, palaces, and other sites of historic interest.

Berlin is a huge city. You can make use of the excellent bus, tram, train and underground services to get around. Taxi services are also easy to use and a bit less expensive than in many other big Central European cities. You can hail a cab (the yellow light on the top shows the cab is available), or find a taxi rank (Taxistand). Taxi drivers are in general able to speak English. If you ask for a short trip (Kurzstrecke), as long as it's less than 2km (1mi) and before the taxi driver starts the meter running, the trip normally is cheaper, €4. This only applies if you flag the taxi down on the street, not if you get in at a taxi rank.

If you don't know how to get somewhere, or how to get home at night, call +49 30 19449, the Customer Service of the BVG. There are also facilities in most U-Bahn and some S-Bahn stations to contact the Customer Service directly. In 2005 the BVG introduced Metro lines (buses and tram) that run 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All lines are marked with a big orange plate and a white M.

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Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo is the core of the most populated urban area in the world, Greater Tokyo. This huge, wealthy and fascinating metropolis brings high-tech visions of the future side by side with glimpses of old Japan, and has something for everyone.

Tokyo has the most extensive mass transit system in the world. It is clean, safe and efficient - and confusing. The confusion arises from the fact that several distinct railway systems operate within Tokyo - the JR East network, the two subway networks, and various private lines - and different route maps show different systems. Avoid rush hours if possible; trains get overcrowded very easily.

Taxis are very pricey, but may be a value for groups of three or more. Also, if you miss your last train, you may not have another choice. Fares generally start at ¥710 for the first two kilometers and can add up rapidly. It is almost never recommended to rent a car in Tokyo. Their public transit system is one of the most developed in the world but their roadways and cities are almost designed to specifically discourage traveling by car unless it's absolutely necessary.

Beijing, China

As the capital of the most populated country on earth, China, Beijing is the political, educational and cultural center of the country and as such it is rich in historical sites and important government and cultural institutions.

Though some residents of Beijing know conversational English, especially in the areas frequented by tourists or Haidian District's university cluster, one should not count on finding a taxi driver or passer-by who knows English well. Neither should a foreigner with minimal experience with the Chinese language put undue faith in his or her ability to pronounce Chinese place names so that a local can understand clearly.

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Before embarking on a trip around the city, it is best to print out the names of places you want to visit in Chinese characters, or get your hotel front desk staff to write them out for you. When going to specific addresses writing nearby intersections or basic directions can be helpful as well. Show the text to the taxi driver, or just ask for help on the street. In general, you will have a better chance of getting help in English if you address younger people, as many schools in China have expanded their English education in the last few years.

The Beijing Subway is a good way to quickly get around the city and is clearly marked in English for travelers. Long very limited, the network has expanded at a furious pace in recent years, with 9 lines now operational and another 9 to open by 2015. However, be warned that during rush hour trains can be extremely crowded. The subway system shuts down around midnight, and opens again around 5AM.

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7. Traveling Tips & Tricks

21 Basic Travel Tips

1. **Security and Keeping Safe**

Scan your passport, passport photos and paper tickets (if not the e type) in. Store this (in an email for e.g.) in your web based email account.

You can also store the details of your emergency 'lost card' telephone numbers in your web based email account so you know who to contact if your credit card or ATM card is lost or stolen.

This way, even if you lose everything, you have immediate access your all important information. You can even email the details page of your passport to the embassy or consulate when applying for a new one.

2. **Split up your valuables**

Split up your bank cards, cash, travellers' checks and credit cards as much as possible in different pockets, your bags and wallet when packing. In case you do get robbed, at least you won't be strapped for cash. If you have an extra bank card or an emergency credit card, keep it in the sole of your shoe or some other place where a robber would literally have to ask you to disrobe to find it.

3. **Small Bottles**

Use small bottles to pack toiletries and other small items. There are several sturdy and waterproof ones, with clear/see through ones being preferable (For security purposes). You *may* also be able to use small bottles to repack shampoo or lotions; however, many airports will not allow a liquid substance that is unidentifiable no matter how small the container is. Plan on buying travel sized shampoos and lotions.

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4. **Backpack Tips**

When you are packing things into a backpack, place the lighter items at the bottom and the heavier ones on top. Your bag will feel lighter this way as the pack rests on your lower back. It is also smart to place the things you use the most on top. Dirty clothes are perfect to pack at the bottom of a backpack.

5. **Plastic Bags**

It is always handy to have a few plastic bags around certain items, especially toiletries. Not only does it counter any leaking, the bags can also come in useful to keep dirty clothes in, as garbage bags or even as a makeshift umbrella. Ziploc or other airtight plastic bags are the best; grocery bags are very flimsy and actually aren't water or air tight most of the time so they're really not a very good option.

6. **Pack in Plastic**

Pack everything in clear plastic bags (preferably zip lock), divided into items e.g. underwear, t-shirts, shorts etc. before packing in your suitcase or backpack. Pack one plastic bag for each type of clothing. This is extremely useful in various ways. When you unpack your bag you just take out a series of bags and you can see immediately what you want. So an overnight stay somewhere just means taking 1 item out of a bag - no rummaging!! In addition, if you have to unpack at customs etc., instead of having to disgorge your entire clothing etc. out in front of everybody, you can calmly take maybe 5/6 bags out, the contents of which can be clearly seen by the officials. Vacuum sealable bags are also quite useful unless you think you'll have to open them for airport security. Due to the nature of how these bags work it's advisable to use them for one-way trips or trips where you'll have a vacuum available for repacking at your destination.

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7. **Clothes**

Pack only what you know you will use and if you are travelling for more than three weeks, plan to wash on the road. Clothes often take up the most space in anyone's luggage and they're frighteningly inconvenient. As a business traveller you may need to bring a pressed suit which adds more to the confusion. Pack light.

8. **Split up clothes when travelling with others**

When you are flying somewhere and especially if you have a few stopovers, divide the clothes between different suitcases/backpacks/bags etc. If one person's luggage doesn't arrive at the destination, they'll still have clean clothes available. Airlines generally don't compensate lost luggage for the first 24-48 hours so this will save you money if it happens to you. Depending on how big your carry on bag is it might be a good idea to pack one set of clothes in it.

9. **Separate Beach Bag**

When packing to head to the beach consider pre-packing whatever you might need at the beach into a beach bag inside your backpack or suitcase. This may not come up as often if you're traveling for business but it applies to any outside activity. If you might need an extra bag for the event, pre-pack it.

10. **Suitcase lovers**

For those using suitcases without a divider, a piece of cardboard makes an excellent divider and helps keep your clothes organized and neat as you are able to lay them out flat on the cardboard. It also makes airport inspections a lot less of a hassle as you can lift out your divider with clothes on top easily.

11. **Gifts**

Don't bother pre-wrapping gifts unless they'll be in checked baggage. It's highly likely that a wrapped gift may have to be opened to show to airport security, especially if they can't tell what it is from the x-ray machine.

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12. **Flashlights or Torches**

When packing a flashlight or torch (or any other item with batteries for that matter), pack the batteries separately in a plastic bag or compartment of your suitcase. The item might accidentally be turned on and drain the batteries. Some people suggest putting the batteries in backwards; avoid this! If you'll read on many battery-operated devices they state that putting the batteries in incorrectly can result in the batteries leaking; this will usually also void your warranty on the item. If you absolutely must keep the batteries in the device you can just risk it or put a piece of clear tape over the on/off button to try and keep it from turning on.

13. **Diaper Bag**

If you are travelling with babies, then the diaper bag is an excellent place to hide your valuables. This most likely will not be the first thing to be stolen. It's also a great to use as a waste bag.

14. **Shoes**

If you want to make sure everything else in your bags stays clean and odor free, place the shoes inside old socks and then inside airtight, sealable plastic bags.

15. **Carry-On**

Keep any medication and important papers in your carry-on bag. On long flights with multiple stopovers (especially if flying via London, LA or other major airports), packing a fresh change of clothes is a good idea as bags tend to get delayed or lost on long haul, multiple stop flights. You don't want to end up stuck without medication, clothes or your important papers even if it is just for a few days.

16. **Roll Technique**

Somehow it seems that bags will hold more if the clothes are rolled rather than folded. If you roll in tissue paper, the clothes will also get less wrinkled. This works by forcing out all of the air in the trapped fabric and keeping it

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out. This is the same concept behind the vacuum sealable bags that I mentioned before.

17. **Travelling to warm destinations?**

You can use a six-pack cooler as a toiletry bag instead of a regular bag. Then, when you get to your destination you can buy cheap drinks and keep them in your cooler.

18. **Local Tourism Offices**

The best source of information is usually local. Check out Tourism Offices to find unbiased feedback on the best accommodation to suit your needs. Exercise caution in countries where you feel the information might not be so unbiased. If you speak the language, your best bet may be the locals, who aren't trying to sell tourist anything. Pubs and Cafés are great places for information.

19. **Minimize on toiletries**

Take only half a tube of toothpaste rolled up tight, store shampoo in small containers, only take half a roll of toilet paper (for emergencies only) and crush it so the middle is folded. Condense your usual toiletries as much as possible and only take what you absolutely require.

20. **Take solid shampoo bars and tooth powder**

Solid shampoo bars and tooth powder (instead of tooth paste) can be easily located on the internet and make carry-on travel in this age of liquid restriction possible. Places like Beijing now bar all liquids in carry-on bags; go with shampoo bars and tooth powder and you'll still be able to breeze through without checking.

21. **Don't Forget Your Passport or Visa!**

Most countries are very strict on their passport and visa laws. Keep your passport up-to-date and don't let it expire while you're out of your home country. Always keep your passport separate from valuables and money; if

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something happens to your financial assets you can recover but if you're caught in a far off country without a passport you're in muddy waters!

Jet Lag: A Detailed Look

When traveling across a number of time zones, the body clock will be out of synchronization with the destination time, as it experiences daylight and darkness contrary to the rhythms to which it has grown accustomed: the body's natural pattern is upset, as the rhythms that dictate times for eating, sleeping, hormone regulation and body temperature variations no longer correspond to the environment nor to each other in some cases. To the degree that the body cannot immediately realign these rhythms, it is jet lagged.

It's a good idea to have some techniques ready to use to prevent jet lag when you are traveling across several time zones. You can even get jet lag just traveling between two or three time zones like traveling from coast to coast in America. Jet lag comes from the change in time zones and the adjustment your body has to make to deal with the new time cycles in that time zone.

We are not aware of it, but our bodies are finely tuned to work at their best in the time zone of our homes. Our biological clocks are tuned to react to the time of day, the daylight and nighttime cycle, environmental factors and the magnetism of the local environment. We have an internal monitor that tells us when we should sleep or be active based on that internal clock.

When we travel to a new time zone, while our mind finds it peculiar that it is a new time of day that is out of sync with what we know, our bodies go through quite a dramatic adjustment to adjust to the new environment. That is why in a new time zone, you may not be able to sleep when it is 11 p.m. where you are because to your body, it may be the middle of the afternoon or the next morning.

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The symptoms of jet lag are fatigue, lack of appetite, shortness of temper and even a feeling of mild nausea that comes from an internal system that has been thrown for a loop. So the best cure for jet lag is good preparation so you can ease into the change of location without too much anxiety. By reducing the effects of jet lag before they even happen, you make the potential that your business meetings will go well much more likely.

- Start adjusting in advance. If you can put yourself on the time frame of your destination a few days in advance, the jet lag won't be as severe. Start adjusting your sleep times and when you take your meals even before the trip begins so you are already "living in that time zone" before you even make the trip.
- Keep a clean diet. Jet lag experts advise that you simplify your diet significantly for several days before the trip. Begin to reduce the amount of heavy foods, carbohydrates, sugars and fats in your diet and increase the level of fruits, vegetables and juices you consume. This will make your system more nimble and able to adjust to change.
- Give yourself time on the other end. Try to make arrangements to arrive a day before your meetings so you have time in your hotel room to rest and prepare for the business objectives to be achieved.
- Eliminate physical stress sources. During the stressful time, try to cut down on physical stresses such as drinking or extreme physical exercise so your body has more reserves to handle the jet lag symptoms.

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By thinking ahead about jet lag, you are taking the measures you need to take to eliminate a threat to the success of your business goals on this trip. So your work to take jet lag out of your business travel equation is just good business on your part and it will result in more success on the road for you and for your company.

8. Spice Up Your Travels

Bring the Family

Traveling for business is often an essential duty for anyone with a career. Unfortunately it can take its toll on your personal life, separating you from your family and friends, often for long periods of time. Not being around your loved ones is usually more disconcerting than delays, layovers or bad travel conditions.

Some people like to just take their families with them. If the type of trip you're on is long enough and permits you to bring your family, it's not a bad idea. . Having your family with you may bring a little extra stress but being able to see them instead of being alone will outweigh those minor differences and really make your trip a lot less emotionally taxing. This is also fun and adventurous for your family; they'll also be excited to spend time with you.

Before you bring any children along you'll want to decide if your trip will really allow for it. Children need constant supervision so you'll need to make sure another adult is available when you're busy with the business side of things. Location is the biggest factor when deciding whether or not a trip is good for the whole family. If you're traveling to a popular tourist destination with lots of theme parks and other things for the family to do, it's probably a good idea. If you're going somewhere in a business district with very little activities, you might want to rethink your tripe; there's no reason to torture your family with a boring setting.

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Taking only your spouse is usually less of a challenge and more of a benefit. Not only does another adult not require constant supervision, he or she can help you out with important tasks like renting a car or checking into the hotel. There are also many occasions where you're having a nice dinner with a client or supervisor and you may want to bring your spouse along with you. The major cities of the world are filled with exciting and interesting things for couples to do.

Places with guided tours, museums or other educational stimuli are great places to take the family for a trip. In the U.S. there are many historical cities and almost every major city has a museum or tourist station. Europe has a very travel-friendly atmosphere and there are many interesting places to take the entire family. France, Spain, Germany, Italy and England are among the most popular countries to tour.

Obviously, the time of year for your business travel is a determining factor on whether the children can tag along. Summer business trips work well for such plans but if your travel will interrupt the children's school schedule, it usually is not feasible to include them. Now in a case where there is significant educational benefit to the trip, there may be some concessions to be made to the children out of school if they will gain valuable experiences from the trip.

But all of these factors, including just including your spouse on the trip will hinge on one important factor that only you can determine. And that is how much time you will be able to spend with the family when you are working and traveling. It is well known that business travel also frequently means long hours and then business dinners and negotiations that can go into the night. If you are going on a trip that such dedication to the task is necessary, it's best not to bring the family. It does them no good to come along on an exciting business outing only to find themselves never seeing you until the flight home. They will feel frustrated and you will wonder what value there was to the expense and trouble of bringing them if you could not enjoy them except to kiss them good night in their hotel beds and good-bye in the morning.

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But if all of the factors fall into place, taking the family along on an occasional business trip can take a humdrum trip and put some real fun into it. So keep your eye on that business travel agenda you have. There may be a few junkets where the family would fit in nicely.

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