



PACKING LIST

When Let's Go researchers hit the road to find the best bets and hidden deals for the Let's Go guides, they don't want a forgotten item to slow them down. Here's a typical researcher's packing list, which will also prepare you for your journey. Visit www.letsgo.com for more travel tips and advice.

MUST PACK

IN YOUR WALLET

- Small foreign bills and change
- Supply of passport photos

DEEP IN YOUR PACK

- Cash reserves (about US \$50)
- Photocopies of passport and tickets
- Lists of traveler's check numbers

IN YOUR MONEY BELT

- American money
- Large foreign bills
- Traveler's checks
- Airline tickets
- Passports/visas
- Travel insurance
- ISIC card from STA Travel
- Telephone calling card
- Health insurance card
- Credit cards
- Emergency contact numbers

IN YOUR PACK

- Let's Go travel guide
- One pair of pants/skirt (khaki or linen best)
- One pair of shorts
- A week's worth of underwear
- A week's worth of socks
- One pair of hiking boots or walking shoes
- One pair of sandals
- One raincoat/umbrella
- One sweater or fleece
- One button-down shirt
- A week's worth of T-shirts
- Toiletries
- Laundry Detergent (Woolite or Dr. Brommer's)
- Basic medical kit
- Towel (or chamois)
- Daypack (*essential!*)
- Water bottle
- Camera or disposable camera
- Film and lead-lined pouch for film
- Kleenex

IN THE OUTER POCKETS OF YOUR PACK

- Sleepsack
- Plastic bags (for dirty laundry, towels, etc.)
- Swiss Army knife
- Small padlock
- Travel alarm clock (get a loud one!)

MAYBE PACK

- Frequent flyer cards
- Address list
- Pictures of friends and family

- Driver's license
- ATM card (if you can use it abroad)
- Bus/rail passes
- International driver's license
- Important prescriptions

- Hat/sunglasses
- Swimsuit and flip-flops
- Glasses/contact lens equipment
- Electric Converters
- Sunscreen/lip balm
- Mosquito repellent
- Maps
- Foreign dictionary
- Portable MP3 player or CD player with favorite CDs
- Good book or magazines to read
- Playing cards
- Travel journal and pens
- Sink stopper
- Earplugs
- Extra batteries

- Sewing kit
- Flashlight
- Nail clippers
- Matches
- Backpack raincover (or big plastic bag)



PACKING ESSENTIALS FOR THE TRAVELER IN EUROPE

**Pack light: lay out only what you absolutely need.
Then take half as many clothes and twice as much money.**

LUGGAGE

If you plan to cover most of your itinerary by foot, a sturdy frame backpack is unbeatable. Toting a suitcase or trunk is fine if you plan to live in one or two cities and explore from there, but a very bad idea if you're going to be moving around a lot. In addition to your main piece of luggage, a daypack (a small backpack or courier bag) is a must.

CLOTHING

No matter when you're traveling, it's always a good idea to bring a warm jacket or wool sweater, a rain jacket (Gore-Tex® is both waterproof and breathable), sturdy shoes or hiking boots, and thick socks. Flip-flops or waterproof sandals are must-haves for grubby hostel showers. You may also want to add one outfit beyond the jeans and t-shirt uniform, and maybe a nicer pair of shoes if you have the room. If you plan to visit any religious or cultural sites, remember that you'll need something besides tank tops and shorts to be respectful.

SLEEPSACK

Some hostels require that you either provide your own linen or rent sheets from them. Save cash by making your own sleepsack: Fold a full-size sheet in half the long way, then sew it closed along the long side and one short side.

CONVERTERS AND ADAPTERS

In Europe, electricity is 220V AC, enough to fry any 110V North American appliance. Americans and Canadians should buy an adapter (which changes the shape of the plug) and a converter (which changes the voltage; US \$20). Don't make the mistake of using only an adapter (unless appliance instructions state otherwise). New Zealanders, South Africans, and Australians won't need a converter, but will require an adapter. The website www.kropla.com/electric.htm has comprehensive info on what you'll need.

FIRST-AID KIT

For a basic first-aid kit, pack: bandages, pain reliever, antibiotic cream, a thermometer, a Swiss Army knife, tweezers, moleskin, decongestant, motion-sickness remedy, upset-stomach or diarrhea medication (Pepto Bismol or Imodium), an antihistamine, sunscreen, insect repellent, and burn ointment.

FILM

In touristy areas film and developing can be expensive, so consider bringing along enough film for your entire trip and developing it at home. Less serious photographers may want to bring a disposable camera or two rather than an expensive permanent one. Despite disclaimers, airport security X-rays *can* fog film, so buy a lead-lined pouch at a camera store or ask security to hand-inspect it. Always pack film in your carry-on luggage, since higher-intensity X-rays are used on checked luggage.

OTHER USEFUL ITEMS

For safety purposes, you should bring a money belt and small padlock. Basic outdoors equipment (plastic water bottle, compass, waterproof matches, pocketknife, sunglasses, sunscreen, hat) may also prove useful. Quick repairs of torn garments can be done on the road with a needle and thread; also consider bringing electrical tape for patching tears. Other things you're liable to forget: an umbrella, resealable plastic bags (for damp clothes, soap, food, shampoo, etc.), an alarm clock, safety pins, rubber bands, a flashlight, earplugs, and garbage bags.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Don't forget your passport, traveler's checks, ATM and/or credit cards, and adequate ID. Also check that you have any of the following that might apply to you: a hosting membership; driver's license; travel insurance forms; and/or rail or bus pass.



For more useful tips on what to do before you go and once you get there, grab a copy of *Let's Go: Europe 2004* or visit www.letsgo.com



CAMPING AND HIKING EQUIPMENT

WHAT TO BUY...

Good camping equipment is both sturdy and light. It is generally more expensive in Australia, New Zealand, and the UK than in North America.

Sleeping Bag

Most sleeping bags are rated by season ("summer" means 30-40°F at night; "four-season" or "winter" often means below 0°F). They are made either of down (warmer and lighter, but more expensive and miserable when wet) or of synthetic material (heavier, more durable, and warmer when wet). Prices range US\$80-210 for a summer synthetic to US\$250-300 for a good down winter bag. Sleeping bag pads include foam pads (US\$10-20), air mattresses (US\$15-50), and Therm-A-Rest self-inflating pads (US\$45-80). Bring a stuff sack to store your bag and keep it dry.

Tent

The best tents are free-standing (with their own frames and suspension systems), set up quickly, and require staking only in high winds. Low-profile dome tents are the best all-around. Good 2-person tents start at US\$90, 4-person at US\$300. Seal the seams of your tent with waterproofer and make sure it has a rain fly. Other tent accessories include a battery-operated lantern, a plastic ground cloth, and a nylon tarp.

Backpack

Internal-frame packs mold better to your back, keep a lower center of gravity, and flex adequately to allow you to hike difficult trails. External-frame packs are more comfortable for long hikes over even terrain, as they keep weight higher and distribute it more evenly. Make sure your pack has a strong, padded hip-belt to transfer weight to your legs. Any serious backpacking requires a pack of at least 4,000 cubic inches, plus 500 cubic inches for sleeping bags in internal-frame packs. Sturdy backpacks cost anywhere from US\$125-420. This is one area in which it doesn't pay to economize. Fill up any pack with something heavy and walk around the store with it to get a sense of how it distributes weight before buying it. Either buy a waterproof backpack cover or store all of your belongings in plastic bags inside your pack.

Boots

Be sure to wear hiking boots with good ankle support. They should fit snugly and comfortably over one or two pairs of wool socks and thin liner socks. Break in boots over several weeks first in order to spare yourself painful and debilitating blisters.

Other Necessities

Synthetic layers, like those made of polypropylene, and a pile jacket will keep you warm even when wet. A "space blanket" will help you to retain your body heat and doubles as a ground cloth (US\$5-15). Plastic water bottles are virtually shatter- and leak-proof. Bring water-purification tablets for when you can't boil water. For those places that forbid fires or the gathering of firewood (virtually every organized campground in Europe), you'll need a camp stove (the classic Coleman starts at US\$40) and a propane-filled fuel bottle to operate it. (Although the fuel won't be allowed on the plane.) Also don't forget a first-aid kit, pocketknife, insect repellent, calamine lotion, and waterproof matches or a lighter.

...AND WHERE TO BUY IT

The mail-order/online companies listed below offer lower prices than many retail stores, but a visit to a local camping or outdoors store will give you a good sense of the look and weight of certain items.

Campmor:

888-226-7667 or www.campmor.com

Discount Camping:

08 8262 3399 or www.discountcamping.com.au

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS):

888-463-6367 or www.shopems.com

L.L. Bean:

800-441-5713 or www.llbean.com

Mountain Designs:

07 3856 2344 or www.mountaindesigns.com

Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI):

800-426-4840 or 253-891-2500 or www.rei.com

YHA Adventure Shop:

020 7025 1900 or www.yhaadventure.com

To find out more,
pick up a copy of
Let's Go or visit us
on the web at
www.letsgo.com

