

Pack Like a Pro!

Packing clothes and accessories seems easy enough but these days there are so many tools to make packing even more efficient by saving space in your bag as well as organizing it so it doesn't become a disaster going in and out of it.

Warnings:

- Shorts are not always the best attire even during the summer season for the UK so check weather before you pack and remember their 50-60 is not the same as a hot state like Florida or country like Jamaica.
- Don't be misled if you believe jeans are great to pack. They aren't the best type of pants to take as they weigh more and are thicker than casual pants such as kaki or chino (cotton) pants. If it is a colder season, taking a pair of long johns/thermal underclothing and layer instead.
- You need lots of shoes to go with all your outfits? Absolutely NOT! You just need a good pair of walking/hiking shoes or boots and a nice pair of casual shoes (optional: formal if you have a formal engagement during your vacation)

Walk-About in UK:

- A lot of the ground for walking in the UK the majority of time will be uneven pavement/sidewalks and grounds. If you have bad ankles, consider taking hiking boots. NOTE: Don't pack them in the check-in bag but wear them on the plane. Once settled in your seat, take them off during the long flight and using slippers or sock booties. Then, pack one pair of nice/casual shoes in your check-in bag. This also saves on weight in your check-in bag.

Packing Cubes: These will make your life so much easier when traveling, whether you have a carry-on or full-size suitcase. If you are tired of your clothes being disorganized and constantly looking for items such as undergarments or socks that were buried in some hard-to-find corner of a suitcase, that's no longer the case once you use packing cubes. Most sets come in 4 different sizes and you can use more than one set with the different sizes in the same bag. The secret is to roll each piece of clothing (do not fold) and then place in the appropriate size packing cube. Rolling clothes will also help to keep creases out of them.

- Large cube for pants and can fit up 6-7 pairs rolled
- Medium for shirts and possibly pajamas rolled
- Smallest for undergarments and socks. (note: for socks, just lay them in the cube, don't put them together as that makes them bulkier)



Example of Packing in Cubes for a 11-12 day trip

- Carry-on size (22" x 14" x 9") luggage but checked-in
 - 4 pair of cotton pants
 - 6-7 cotton shirts, try to match with the pants to get more outfits
 - Enough undergarments, including socks for each day
 - One pair of nightwear
 - Raingear and if applicable, a fall season jacket or fleece pull-over
 - 1 pair of shoes
 - 1 pair of long johns
 - Small backpack – folds small that it fit in the palm of hand
 - Extra pair of glasses
 - Toiletry bag with shampoo, conditioners, soap, etc. and one hand wash cloth (the UK hotels and BnBs do NOT have these, just regular hand towel and full size towels)
 - 2 collapsible hiking poles
 - Travel size clothes soap by Tide (a just in case and no laundry facilities available)
 - Large and small zip ties – bright colors (used to lock suitcase)
- Smaller bag (11" tall by 17" wide by 18-20" long) to be carried on plane
 - Trip Folder
 - Electronics: cell phone, chargers, wireless headset and buds as well with international electrical converter
 - 1 pair of pants, underwear, socks and top (emergency back-up) in a packing cube
 - Travel toothbrush and paste such as Colgate Wisps that has paste in the brush
 - Dental Floss
 - Basic make-up (liner, mascara and eyelash curler)
 - Travel size hand wipes
 - Travel size Clorox wipes
 - Travel size tissues
 - Medications
 - Baggallini purse
 - 1-2 extra zip tie and fingernail clipper (used to lock suitcases and cut zip locks off)
 - Reading material
 - Empty water bottle
 - Munchies

Toiletry Bag: There are great toiletry bags out now that once you open it, you can just hang in the bathroom for using. It is still best try to keep your shampoos, conditioners and other items to a minimal in 3–5 oz. containers. Recommend you buy the travel size soaps, toothpaste and mouthwash as you can always buy more while on vacation and it is saves on weight for more important items.



Ladies Purses: Try to use a small travel purse such as a baggallini that will hold a small flatter wallet, cell phone, gum, lip balm, sunglasses, etc. Make sure all the pockets zip close! Don't take all of your normal size purse items with you. You want to keep in mind that you will be buying souvenirs, etc. and the less weight to carry around the better. That is why under the Extra section below, I will give you an example of a backpack or bags that folds up in your hand!

Men Wallets: Men will usually have their normal tri-fold wallet.

Money Belt: **REMEMBER**, all the real important items after you check in will go into your money belt that you should wear at all times on your trip (except while sleeping but it will be quick accessibility in case you must evacuate quickly from your accommodations. You may be like a friend who had to evacuate a hotel at 11:30 p.m. at night from her hotel in Edinburgh. She was able to grab her small purse that had her money belt inside and was out the hotel room in seconds!



Small baggallini or purse example as well as a money belt worn under your clothes during the day

There are those extra little items that you may need but have really thought about. These items will save the day and yet take up no space in your suitcase or to carry with you when not in use.

RFID Slip Covers/Wallet: Over the past few years, individuals have been able to steal your credit card by just walking pass you on the sidewalk and scanning your cards. If you do not have RFID sleeves or a RFID wallet for your credit cards and passport, this would be a great item to get before your trip.



Zip Lock Ties: This was also mentioned previously but if you don't want to deal with actual locks on your suitcase, buy color zip lock ties (bright ones that TSA would not have) and use these as your lock. If they are missing, you know TSA has inspected the inside of your bag. Once you arrive, you can use a nail clipper to cut them off. TSA will not take nail clippers but they may take scissors. Keep the clippers in your purse or carry-on bag with a few extra zip lock ties.



Suitcase Straps: These straps are great as you can find your suitcase quickly if it is a basic solid color like black, blue or great. Some may also has a place for your contact info if the suite case is lost (example: Mr. J. Smith, 678-770-0135). You can also double lock the strap so it does not come off by taking a long zip lock tie and placing it around the lock once on your suitcase.



Electronic Case: Just like the packing cubes, you don't want to have your electronic cords, charges and i-pad, etc. all over the place when packing neither. There are some great electronic cases to purchase now from the basic minimalist person to those who have lots to take with them.



Blow-up Pillows and Foot Rests: If you want to have less weight and utilize space in your carry-on efficiently, don't buy the regular travel pillows but purchase the blow-up type for your neck and did you know there are footrests too?! You can use the footrest on top of the tray and rest leaning forward if you prefer than on the floor. There are different shapes for the neck so shop around.



Rain Gear: Now when walking outside, you may encounter a wee bit of rain. Ponchos are okay but make it hard to maneuver in but "FroggToggs" are great! Get the Ultralight set which weigh nothing and wick. But best of all, they fold up into a gallon zip lock bag. You can either buy them as separates or as a set. The majority of the time in rain, you may just wear the jacket which has a hood and zips but you can experienced heavy rainfall that might require the pants as well. They also come in different colors. You can purchase directly from FroggTogg or other stores like Wal-Mart, Dicks, Amazon, etc. Average set is usually \$20.00 and worth every penny.



Backpack: What are some other little items you might need? How about a backpack that folds into its own little bag and fits in the palm of your hand or a tote bag?! The tote bag works too but if you prefer to be hands free, go with the backpack. You can put your souvenirs, water bottle, froggtoggs or even a small travel purse in these all at the same time.



Backpack

tote bag

Hiking Poles: Another great small item if you will be walking/hiking more are collapsible hiking poles that fold down into 3 pieces measuring 12" total and fit perfect in a small carry-on size bag. These range from \$12 each each to the much more expensive ones.



Zip Lock Bags: These are great for packing liquids like a miniature clan whisky bottle (especially if you buy a few as gifts). Or, what if you try hard cider such as Thistle Cross cider, you love it but it is only sold in Scotland. Yes, you can actually pack these in your check-in suitcase. You can use your clothes, papertowels or bubble wrap to wrap the glass in and then place in the zip lock bag. Bubble wrap won't take up much room nor weigh anything in your check-in suitcase.

