



**MINDWARE**  
EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS

## **TRAVELING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN FAQs**

### **1. What essentials should I bring along on the trip?**

- Pediatrician's name, regular and emergency phone numbers and medications and prescriptions (be sure to carry the generic names of medicines with you as they vary by country) should be brought on board in your carry-on bag
- An address book with your child's friends' names and addresses so they can send out postcards
- A nightlight to help light up an unfamiliar room
- Items to childproof a room, such as outlet plugs and pipe cleaners. Use pipe cleaners to hold up curtain cords or close cabinets
- If you are traveling with an infant, don't forget to bring a bottlebrush and some dish soap
- Baby wipes are good to bring in the car, as well as little bottles of water
- If it's small enough, bring along your child's favorite toy
- Their blanket, if they are still of the age where a blanket is a close personal friend
- Updated pictures of your children in case they wander off - you'll need recent pictures so others can help you look for them

### **2. How should I pack for my children?**

- Consider packing each complete outfit in a separate clear storage bag which will allow them to pick out one complete outfit per day with no fuss while also saving prep time - at the end of the day, the bags can be used to collect dirty clothes
- Use large zippered bags for all small items so they can find them easily
- Put some of your items in their luggage and put some of their items in your luggage - this will give you both something to fall back on in case either of your bags goes missing
- Make sure to completely label the inside and outside of their luggage with complete contact and itinerary information
- Always bring an extra pair of shoes and an extra swimsuit

### **3. How can I pick the best airline for my children?**

- Check for special rates for children: generally children under two fly free, but that often means they sit on a parent's lap
- Check to see if the airline has a child's menu available if meals are served on board, but know that airlines generally do not provide baby food or formula, though they will often be able to heat formula if needed
- Don't expect the airline stewards to help you change diapers - because they handle food, they are restricted in what they can handle to keep everyone on board safe

### **4. What are the airline's baggage policy for children's tickets?**

- For infants under the age of two, policies vary from one bag to no allowance, so check with your carrier
- For those with a child's ticket (ie: age 2+), the baggage allowance is often determined by the amount paid for the ticket, but a good rule of thumb is that if they have paid 50% or higher of an adult's full fare ticket they are usually allowed the same baggage allowance - check with your airline as rules vary
- Diaper bags, strollers and child restraint seats do not usually count against the accompanying adult's carry-on allowance, but always check with your individual airline

### **5. What should I pack in my child's carry-on luggage?**

- Consider bringing some of your child's favorite munchies along on the trip since the airline's may not have exactly what your child wants. Remember that with international travel, you may be limited on items such as fresh fruit that won't be able to pass through customs
- Pack an extra shirt for your child and yourself, accidents do happen

**5. Cont'd.**

- Check to see if the airline has any packets or gifts for your child - airline wings have become standard, but some provide entertainment packets with games, puzzles or coloring books - if they don't make sure to bring some of these items from home
- You might also include a swimsuit and one or two other appropriate clothing items to give your children something to do in case their checked luggage goes missing or is delayed

**6. Can I enroll my child in a frequent flyer program?**

Yes, most programs accept children as well as adults. Enrolling your child in a frequent flyer program will earn them points for every paid ticket. There is often no cost to join so you may as well get them started early earning those free points.

**7. Where should we sit?**

- If you have small children, see if you can reserve a bulkhead seat - those seats have more legroom and provide more of an area for your child to move around; the only real negative of the bulkhead seating is you won't have under seat storage in front of you.
- If you have a baby, check to see if the Airline can provide a bassinet for you to place in the bulkhead area
- Only one child is allowed to sit on an adult's lap for every three-seat row because of the limited number of oxygen masks available - if two adults are flying together and both are planning on having a child on their lap, you'll need to book seats in different rows of the plane
- If you are planning on using a baby seat for your child, it must have a Federal Aviation Administration approval sticker - please see the [FAA's site](http://www.faa.gov/passengers/fly_children/crs/) ([http://www.faa.gov/passengers/fly\\_children/crs/](http://www.faa.gov/passengers/fly_children/crs/)) for guidelines on safety seats and know that many booster seats are not FAA approved for use; Please also note that you will be required to purchase a seat to guarantee use of the baby seat, otherwise it may only be used if the flight has empty seats available
- Booking a seat in the middle of the plane near the wings will provide the smoothest ride
- With all the activities in the aisle, and potential for items to fall from the overhead storage, it might be best to place yourself between your child and the aisle
- Children are NOT allowed to sit in the plane's exit row seats since passengers in those seats are called upon to provide assistance in the case of an emergency - this ban includes children sitting on the lap of an adult passenger

**8. How can I reduce the negative effects of flying on my child's ears?**

- Children and adults both find relief from sucking on candy or chewing gum, the act of chewing and swallowing relieves the pressure on the ears at take off and landing; be careful when choosing treats for small children to avoid the possibility of choking during turbulence
- Children and some adults are particularly good at inadvertently smuggling pool or ocean water home from their vacation: buy some drops and get it out before you fly
- Nursing a baby can be used to help the baby's ears
- Yawning is also a good way to relieve the pressure on your ears
- If your child is sleeping, consider waking them up before the plane begins its descent - the landing is usually harder on the ears and since you swallow less when you sleep, a child may wake up on the ground in pain
- If your child has an ear infection, discuss the trip with your pediatrician - ear infections can be extremely painful for those traveling on an airplane

*\*Whatever method you use, it is best to do so during take off and landing so your child's ears can adjust little by little.*

**9. What type of documentation will I need if I'm taking my child out of the country?**

- They usually need the same identification that is required of an adult - if the travel requires an adult to have a passport, the child will also need a passport
- If a child is traveling out of country with only one of the child's parents, you may have to provide written permission (in some cases notarized) from the other parent that the child may leave the country, but you should check with your airline on their particular policy - without the proper paperwork, the airline may refuse to board your child
- All travel documents are the responsibility of the passenger