

# 10 ways to save time and money while traveling for business

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If you want to grow your business, you're going to have to do some traveling. Whether that means meeting a new client, speaking at an event or attending a conference, business travel is critical. But between travel glitches and the cost, travelling can be a stressful experience.

With numerous sites like Expedia, Orbitz, Kayak and Trivago, you'll find it easier than ever to compare airline, hotel and car rental prices to find the best deals. However, keep in mind that some companies don't appear on these types of sites. Southwest, for example, doesn't appear in Expedia results. Also, it's sometimes cheaper to book your flight or lodging directly from the company's website.

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Comparing prices is just the first, obvious step to cutting costs on the road. If you follow these 10 other tips, you will while keeping your sanity in check.

## **1. Fly with just one airline or book one hotel chain.**

Once you've found a preferred airline or hotel, stick with that company.

You'll earn rewards or points toward free hotel stays and frequent flyer miles. Other perks include wi-fi access, entrance to VIP lounges and priority check-in and boarding -- all of which can alleviate a lot of travelstress, while saving you somemoneyin the long-run.

## **2. Travel with only carry-on luggage.**

One of the easiest ways to save time and money is by not checking in luggage. This saves you from the wait to check in a bag and then on the other end, the wait for it to arrive in baggage claim. Also, it frees you up

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from having to pay those expensive fees if your luggage is over the weight limit. The extra time needed to pack is also cut down: No, you don't need those extra shoes. Yes, bring an extra shirt.

Rotate through your clothes on a schedule -- so you don't deliver that speech wearing the same shirt three times. And that suit you have will be fine in a carry-on; or just carry it on the plane. Hang it up first when you get to the hotel.

Just check your airline's carry-on rules before heading to the airport: , for example, allows passengers to bring a carry-on bag of approximately 22 by 14 by 9 inches (56 by 35 by 23 cm.), plus a “ personal item” (briefcase, large purse, laptop). You may even take an “ additional approved item” (jacket, umbrella).

I've found that you can get away with a little more if you have a backpack rather than a hard suitcase or roll-on.

### **3. Use Uber.**

One of the most overlooked costs when it comes to traveling is ground transportation. You can replace renting a car, using public transportation or hailing a taxi by learning to love Uber.

Not only does Uber save you time (I order a ride as soon as I'm walking off a plane), it can also save you some dough since you're paying only for the distance that you travel, as opposed to purchasing an all-day train pass, for example.

I also love as it will tell you the cheapest way to get from one location to another. It compares Uber versus the competition.

#### **4. Find alternatives to hotels.**

Gone are the days of staying only at hotels. With Airbnb, you can find affordable lodging with all of the amenities of home. And, sometimes, the host even leaves you some snacks and drinks like water and coffee. Plus, I have yet to stay at host's home without access to wi-fi. If there's one thing I can't stand, it's paying for internet access at a hotel.

, I still find that sometimes you still need to book a hotel because of its location. If you do so, sign up for coupon sites like . Also, get a . Not only does this come in handy if you need roadside assistance, you can also receive discounts on hotel rooms. With hotels.com you get one in every 10 nights free.

#### **5. Be flexible with your dates.**

Let's say that you have a meeting on May 10. Check out the dates before and after the 10th. If you stay for for an extra day or two, the price of airline tickets and hotel rooms can drop significantly.

For example, traveling on Friday is more expensive than traveling during the middle of the week. Stay a day and see the sights -- and work.

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## **6. Use coupon sites.**

I already mentioned that you can use coupon sites when booking a hotel room, but you can also use sites like to find coupons for Expedia, Uber, Avis, Virgin America and numerous chain restaurants.

Even though I'm not the biggest fan of chain restaurants, sometimes I'm just too beat to explore, and they're the closest options. And, I can always find a coupon for a free appetizer or a percentage off of my entree. Sure, you want to eat at that cool little street vender you always go to and love -- but hey, a Big Mac will always be a Big Mac.

## **7. Don't pay with cash.**

While you don't want to put yourself in credit card debt, the reason that I use credit cards or for all of my business needs is that they offer rewards points programs. This means that I earn points whenever I purchase office supplies; I then trade them in when I travel.

If you do a lot of international travel for work, find a card that doesn't have foreign transaction fees.

Next, use with as many people as you can.

## **8. Ask locals for restaurant suggestions.**

Some of the greatest meals I've had have been recommendations from locals. Not only are these establishments delicious, they're often not tourist traps, which means that they're lighter on the wallet -- especially

during lunch. I have to say, I have met some of the greatest people ever, just talking to the locals.

You can also ask where the nearest grocery store is and purchase prepared salads or entrees. If you have a kitchen, then you might as well purchase some items that you can quickly prepare. Eating at home is always cheaper than going out to eat.

## **9. Know your travel deductions.**

You're allowed to like meals, lodging, airfare, dry cleaning and even rental fees for work equipment or the costs of entertaining prospective clients. Knowing what you can and cannot deduct helps you to decide which travel receipts to keep, which means you can file your taxes more easily.

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## **10. Find alternatives to traveling.**

Thanks to Skype, Hangouts and GoToMeeting, it's possible to have virtual meetings.

While sometimes it's important to have face-to-face meetings, technology has made it possible to at least cut back on some of your traveling.