



One word: versatility. Your destination and the duration of time you're traveling generally dictates what—and how much—to bring along. But whether you're living out of your bag for two weeks or four months, pack clothes that can do double duty, ones that are functional enough for the trail but sharp enough not to stand out in a city. Sun hats can become rain hats, backpacks with detachable daypacks free your hands when lugging your gear from bus stop to hotel, and a good pair of travel pants with a concealed zipper pocket could stand in for a money belt.

When it comes to clothing, stay away from cotton (or at least aim for poly/cotton blends; it may be comfortable, but it takes forever to dry), and try for wrinkle-free clothes. Pack one nice outfit for that must-have dinner in a Parisian café, and always have pants or a skirt that's long enough to cover your legs should you be traveling in a country where custom dictates a degree of modesty. In warmer climes, you'll naturally be packing lighter. In cooler locales, layering will stretch your wardrobe. Another piece of advice: darker colors generally blend in anywhere, let you mix and match without becoming a fashion accident, and save the hassle of constant washing. And if you're heading someplace with inexpensive markets and shopping (Southeast Asia, for example), you can always buy a few new items when the need or desire strikes.

In the brave new world of bags, you can get a rolling bag/backpack hybrid that gives you the versatility, and the newer generation of rollers come with wheels that swallow up Central European cobblestone as much as NYC asphalt. But if you're uncertain, let your interest be your guide. Trekking in Annapurna? Go with a traditional backpack. Crawling the pavement of South America's metropolises? A rolling bag will save your back and serve you well.

Otherwise, try to go without. Make two piles—the essentials, and the nice-to-haves, then leave all the nice-to-haves behind. Your bag will be lighter, and you'll also have room for new treasures that you encounter on the road.

THE BASICS

- Convertible backpack with detachable daypack
- Silk sleep sheet or sleeping bag (rated to the lowest low temp of your destination)

- Wedding ring (handy for women traveling solo)
- Mid thigh-length shorts
- Bathing suit
- Gloves*
- Wool or fleece hat*

CLOTHING

- 2 to 3 synthetic/wicking polo shirts or t-shirts or 1 to 2 short-sleeve blouses, gauzy material
- Fleece jacket or vest
- Rainjacket (soft shell or hard, depending on climate)
- Convertible nylon pants or a few skirts
- Synthetic underwear
- "Dress up" outfit (khakis or dark jeans and a wrinkle-free button down or a light dress)
- Lightweight sarong
- Sun/rain hat

FOOTWEAR

- Waterproof sandals (or flip-flops for public showers)
- Trail-running shoes or hiking shoes
- "Dress up" shoes (or buy them in-country)
- Hiking socks

TOILETRY KIT

- Super-absorbent camp towel
- Dramamine, or other motion sickness tablets

*Indicates optional/depending on climate and geography



TOILETRY KIT CONTINUED

- Anti-diarrhea medicine
- Anti-bacterial cream
- Bug repellent/deet
- Sunscreen
- Handi Wipes
- Mentholated lip balm (masks terrible odors you may encounter)
- Ear plugs and eye mask (available at most airport gift shops)
- Feminine products
- Shaving accessories
- Iodine tablets or bleach (for water purification)*



REPAIR KIT

- Safety pins (keep straps together, etc.)
- Clothespins (keep curtains closed and hang clothing to dry)
- Mini sewing kit



MISCELLANEOUS

- Money belt
- Multi-tool or pocket knife
- Nylon cord (10 meters)
- Headlamp
- Camera, film, and extra camera batteries
- \$10 or \$20 bills (U.S. currency)
- Ziploc plastic bags
- Travel clock/calculator
- Trash bags (to line your backpack or luggage)
- Padlock
- Wire cable (to lock up bags or lock doors)
- One-Liter water bottle
- Photocopy of passport
- Cotton handkerchief
- International electric adapters
- Hand sanitizer
- Bic pens (great to hand out to street kids)*
- Mini tape recorder (for audio diary)*

*Indicates optional/depending on climate and geography

