



TRAVEL RESOURCES

Passport & Document Renewal Checklist

Everything to sort out before you travel - in order, with timing.

Most travel problems start months before departure, with a document nobody checked. Work through this list in order. If anything raises a question, send it to me - I would much rather answer early than fix it late.

9-12 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ **Check your passport expiration date**
Many countries require six months of validity beyond your return date. If yours expires within a year of travel, renew now.
- ☐ **Count your blank passport pages**
Some destinations require two to four blank pages for entry and exit stamps. Amendments do not add pages - a renewal does.
- ☐ **Confirm the name on your passport matches your ID and bookings**
Marriage, divorce or a legal name change means updating the passport before tickets are issued.
- ☐ **Renew passports for every traveler, including children**
Child passports are valid five years, not ten, and both parents typically must appear for a minor's application.

6 MONTHS OUT

- ☐ **Research visa and entry requirements for each country**
Requirements depend on your citizenship, length of stay and purpose of travel - including countries you only transit through.
- ☐ **Apply for electronic travel authorizations**
ETA, ESTA, eTA and similar approvals are quick but not instant. Apply only through official government sites.
- ☐ **Review vaccination and health entry rules**
Book a travel health clinic appointment - some vaccine series take weeks to complete.
- ☐ **Apply or renew TSA PreCheck or Global Entry**
Interview appointments can be booked out for months. Global Entry includes PreCheck benefits.

How to use this checklist

Print it, or keep it open on your phone, and start at the top the day you begin dreaming about a trip. Timelines assume U.S. travelers - I will adjust them for your destinations when we plan together.

60-90 DAYS OUT

- ☐ **Verify your travel protection is in place**
Some benefits, including pre-existing condition waivers, are only available within days of your first trip deposit.
- ☐ **Renew your driver's license or state ID**
You will need valid ID for domestic flights, hotel check-in and car rentals abroad.
- ☐ **Apply for an International Driving Permit if you plan to drive**
Required or strongly recommended in many countries, and it must be issued before you leave home.
- ☐ **Check that credit and debit cards do not expire during your trip**
Request replacements early and confirm your card has no foreign transaction fees.

30 DAYS OUT

- ☐ **Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)**
Free enrollment gives you destination alerts and lets the nearest embassy reach you in an emergency.
- ☐ **Make copies of every important document**
Keep one printed set in your luggage, one with someone at home, and a secure digital set you can reach from anywhere.
- ☐ **Confirm names on tickets match passports exactly**
Middle names, hyphens and suffixes matter more than travelers expect.
- ☐ **Notify your bank and phone carrier of travel dates**
Ask about international plans so you are not choosing between roaming charges and being unreachable.

CARRY-ON DOCUMENTS

Never pack these in a checked bag: passport, visas and entry approvals, printed itinerary, travel protection policy and 24-hour assistance number, prescription list and medications, vaccination records, copies of your documents, and one emergency contact card in writing.

NOTES

Questions about any line on this list?

No question is too basic. Send it over and I will answer personally.

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