

**REVIEWED**

Flight cancellations and delays

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10 things to keep in your carry-on in case of flight cancellation or delay

[Felicity Warner](#), [Kaleb A. Brown](#) and [Rachel Moskowitz Levin](#)

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Summer is far from over, meaning there's still time to enjoy a summer getaway. Unfortunately, if you plan on flying, you'll have to contend with potential delays and cancellations. This summer has already seen hundreds of delayed and canceled flights so far. While some were due to bad weather, others saw complications due to a lack of staff, implying that this problem may continue throughout the season ahead.

Despite your efforts to mitigate them, delays, like taxes, come for us all. In hoping for the best and preparing for the worst, you should get into the habit of keeping essentials in your carry-on so you'll have access to them if the worst should come to pass. Here are 10 items you should always have on hand in the event of a delay, cancellation or a misplaced bag. They might not stop the delay, but they'll sure make that delay a tad less stressful.

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1. A toothbrush

Whether you beat your luggage to your final destination or you're unexpectedly sleeping at a hotel (or airport), you'll be thankful to have a toothbrush handy, especially if you've been snacking on airport meals and plane food all day. While most toothbrushes will be easy to pack away, this set of folding toothbrushes sold at Amazon is especially portable and on-the-go-friendly.

Learn more: Best travel insurance

\$8 from Amazon

2. An extra change of clothes

Sitting in the same clothes (and, ahem, undergarments) for more than 12 hours doesn't feel too comfortable. Don't be stuck without any fresh clothes to change into because they're all stowed in your checked bag. Make sure to bring a full change of clothes in your carry-on or personal item, including a clean shirt, pants, socks and underwear. It may seem silly, but if you're stuck at the airport due to delays, you'll be happy to have a change of clothes to feel refreshed.

If you're looking for underwear that'll be comfortable all day long, the best women's underwear we've tested is anything from the Aerie brand—they're the most comfortable to wear with a soft material and waistband that never digs in (which is key for long days at the airport).

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3. A portable charger

It may be safe to assume that all airports have outlets, however, whether you'll be able to *actually use* one is a gamble. When there are many other passengers waiting around, these outlets become hot real estate. It's best to travel with a fully charged portable battery pack—whether your flight is on time, delayed or canceled until further notice, a portable charger is a must. You can keep your phone, tablet and other electronics charged, allowing you to stay connected with others, modify your travel schedule and stay entertained. Just make sure you actually charge it before you begin your travels.

Of all the portable battery packs we've tested, we found the Mophie PowerStation PD to be the best choice overall—it's ultra-compact, making it easy to keep in a backpack or purse and charges extra fast thanks to Power Delivery technology.

\$35 from Amazon

4. All of your medication

A number one rule when traveling is to keep any medication you'll need for the trip in your personal bag or carry-on. You never know when a sudden delay or cancellation could happen, leaving you separated from your checked bag for undetermined amounts of time. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) says medication can be stored in both carry-on and checked bags, but the agency highly recommends keeping it in your carry-on to err on the safe side.

Consider bringing a portable pill organizer to make traveling with vitamins and other medicine easier. This one is highly rated for its compact size and moisture-proof case.

\$10 from Amazon

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5. A reusable water bottle

It's important to stay hydrated throughout the day, whether you're at 30,000 feet in the sky or you're just sitting around in the airport. While you can buy an overpriced plastic bottle in your terminal, you can also bring in an empty reusable water bottle and fill it up for free once you've passed through security.

We've tested plenty of water bottles on the market and found the Brita Stainless Steel Water Filter Bottle to be the best option out there. It keeps water extra cold and features a filtering straw that helps to reduce the taste and odor of tap water.

\$31 from Amazon

For kids, we tested and love the Yeti Rambler Jr. 12 oz Kids Bottle. It's sturdy, double-insulated and has a wide mouth.

\$44 from Amazon

6. Portable cleansing products

If your flight is delayed for the entire day or you end up spending the night at the airport, you'll want nothing more than a hot shower. In those situations, showering is probably not in

the cards. But thankfully, there are options for staying clean and refreshed without one.

Make sure to pack dry shampoo to keep your hair grease-free—this powder dry shampoo from Bumble and Bumble is TSA-friendly and has rave reviews for being effective and better for the environment than an aerosol can.

\$32 from Sephora

While you can rely on regular-sized cleansing wipes, the Epic Wipe is a must-have that Amazon reviewers swear by—and just might be the next best thing to an actual shower. It's 16 times larger than other wipes, lightweight and biodegradable. Not to mention, it's gentle on your skin and minimizes sweat and odor like a charm.

\$27 from Amazon

7. Extra face masks

While the COVID-19 emergency has been declared over, the coronavirus and other nasty diseases and viruses are still out there and can easily be caught in a place as busy as an airport. If it makes you feel more comfortable, consider packing face masks to ward off germs. You'll want to pack multiple masks in case you get delayed, as your mask is bound to become dirty or sweaty if you wear it for an extended period of time. We recommend packing a high-quality N95 or KN95 mask as they filter 95% of air particles and are the golden standard when it comes to protection.

Consider bringing some travel-friendly disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer while you're at it to keep your area free of germs.

\$11 from Bona Fide Masks

8. AirTags

Got an iPhone? Consider purchasing Apple AirTags ahead of your travels. While this might not be something to keep in your carry-on necessarily, you'll be happy you did this. These electronic trackers can be attached to keys, wallets and more to help you keep track of your items in the event that they get lost or left behind somewhere. You can do so through the *Find My* app or by playing a chime through your tag to help you locate an item.

\$29 from Amazon

If you're not an iPhone user, don't worry—you can still use a tracker like this one from Tile.

\$25 from Tile

In this case, consider attaching one to your suitcase before you check it at the airport. During busy travel times with delays and cancellations, it can give you peace of mind in case your luggage gets misplaced along your journey. Make sure to properly tag your luggage with identification, too.

9. A cozy blanket or pillow

You'll appreciate having cozy accessories on you when you're waiting around for your flight. If you have room for it, a cozy blanket or pillow can make a world of a difference in the event of disrupted travel plans.

This lightweight fleece blanket has over 78,000 5-star reviewers for its plush feel at an affordable price that'll keep you warm in the car, on the plane or in the terminal.

\$21 from Amazon

If you don't want to carry around a full-sized pillow, a travel pillow is your best bet for providing neck support and comfort while resting sitting up. Our favorite travel pillow we've tested, the Cabeau Evolution Classic Travel Pillow, is incredibly supportive and features an adjustable clasp for maximum comfort.

\$30 from Amazon

10. A good pair of headphones or earbuds

A good pair of headphones or earbuds is key for any travel day. But when it comes to waiting around due to delays or cancellations, they become crucial for tuning out airport noise and providing entertainment while you're waiting around for your flight.

The best pair of wireless earbuds we've tested, Apple AirPods Pro (2nd gen), feature outstanding noise canceling capabilities, a comfortable design and excellent audio quality.

\$199 from Amazon

For over-ear headphones, we love the Sony WH-1000XM4 wireless headphones—they provide top-notch audio quality, feature a high-quality noise-canceling effect and are comfortable to wear all day long.

\$348 from Amazon

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