

ALL AGES

9 Packing Mistakes You're Probably Making




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When it comes to family vacations, so many things are out of our control. But if there's one thing we *can* control, it's packing correctly. Here, we've compiled some of the most common packing mistakes parents make, and what you can do to avoid them.

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1. You're not creating a proper packing list.

Create personalized packing lists (one for yourself and one for the kids) that you can use for an upcoming trip and future vacations, too, updating your lists as needed. This way, you won't forget those small, but very important items, such as [goggles](#) for the pool.

2. You're packing for your kids.

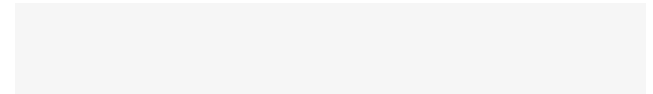
Tell your children how many pairs of [shorts](#), [shirts](#), [undies](#), [socks](#), and [pajamas](#) they need to pack. They are more likely to wear (and rewear) clothing they choose. Plus, it gets them excited for the trip! Have kids who are unsure about packing? Check out [How to Teach Your Child to Pack Their Own Bag for Vacation](#).

3. You're putting everything in your suitcase right away.

Instead of throwing everything in your [suitcase](#) immediately, lay everything out on the bed. It's easier to see how you've packed too much (or too little). Once you've decided what to pack, consider placing everything in [packing cubes](#) to create more space. We recommend the [EZPacking Starter Set](#) and [eBags Ultralight Packing Cubes – Ultimate Packer 7pc Set](#).

4. You're packing uncomfortable clothes.

It sounds simple, but often that cute, but itchy [dress](#) that you love but your daughter hates gets packed, as do those [shoes](#) that look nice on your son, but hurt after an hour. Kids (and you!) won't want to wear uncomfortable clothes more than once (if that). So pack that favorite T-Shirt that your kid wants to wear every day. You may hate seeing it on him for the hundredth time but there won't be a fight when getting dressed that day, which will keep you in vacation mode.



5. You're packing too many clothes.

Pack exactly enough [outfits](#) for the days you'll be on the trip, plus one nice shirt/[top](#)/[pants](#) or dress for each family member. If you're concerned it won't be enough, pack clothing items that can easily be mixed and matched, suggests Angel Tuccy, frequent family traveler and author of [Lists That Saved My Life](#). "Make sure the [kids' skirts](#), pants and tops are interchangeable—two pants and two tops should make four outfits," Tuccy says.

Related Article: [10 Most Versatile Travel Dresses for Stylish Moms](#)

6. You're packing more than two pair of shoes.

Pack a pair of [sneakers](#) you can wear for activities such as hiking and biking, and a pair of [sandals](#) or [slip-on shoes](#) for the pool, a nice dinner, and everything else. Wear your sneakers on the plane to save space in your luggage, and let the kids wear their [no-tie shoes](#) if it's easiest for them.

7. You're packing too many comfort items.

It might seem like a good idea to pack lots of comfort items to get kids to sleep in an unfamiliar place, but these can quickly become bulky and cumbersome. Instead, pack a smaller [stuffed animal](#) or one comfort item for the kids to snuggle.

8. You're packing diapers and pullups.

Contact the hotel pre-trip to see if there's a grocery store nearby, or better yet, use [Amazon Prime](#) to have [diapers](#), [wipes](#), and other essentials quickly delivered to your destination.

9. You're packing toiletries.

If you're staying at a hotel, there's no need for [toiletries](#), as most hotels provide [shampoo](#), [conditioner](#), [soap](#) and/or [shower gel](#), and body lotion. Others provide even more than that, such as [shower caps](#), [cotton balls](#), and [Q-tips](#). If you have a favorite [kids' shampoo](#) or [shaving cream](#) you absolutely need for your trip, consider having it shipped to your destination—again via Amazon Prime—to save space in your [luggage](#). Don't pack [hair straighteners](#) or [curling irons](#), either, suggests frequent traveler, Alexa Amador. “Embrace your natural locks,” she says.

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