

ALL AGES

8 Surprising Things You Can Get for Free at Your Hotel (and 8 Things You Can't Forget to Bring)



BY JUDY KOUTSKY

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The less you can pack, the better, so knowing ahead of time that a hotel offers free amenities means less pre-trip planning (and more room in your [suitcase](#)). We talked to experts about the most common items hotels will provide at no extra charge (and what items you should always remember to bring).

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Yes, send me expert advice, handpicked recommendations, and tips for my family.

1. Food and Beverages

Aside from complimentary breakfast, many hotels offer complimentary hors d'oeuvres, snacks and beverages. For example, all [Kimpton Hotels and Resorts](#) offer complimentary [wine](#) hours from 5 to 6 p.m. daily, and many offer [family-friendly games](#) and activities during the receptions. At all [Embassy Suites by Hilton](#) properties, guests can enjoy complimentary drinks (including alcoholic beverages) and [snacks](#) at evening receptions. At [Homewood Suites](#) locations, there are complimentary evening socials with free beverages and small-plate offerings that are often so filling, they could be considered a full meal!

2. Baby Gear

Kimpton hotels offers complimentary [baby gear](#) to use in your destination, including [strollers](#), [bouncy seats](#), and even [car seats](#). The [Martinhall Family](#)

[Hotels & Resorts](#) in Portugal and [Beaches Resorts](#) in the Caribbean also offer a plethora of free baby gear to use.

3. Transportation

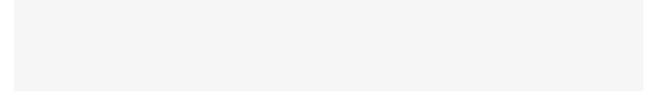
Did you know many hotels provide free shuttle service to and from the local airport and nearby attractions? For example, many hotels in Orlando (not just [Disney World Resort Hotels](#)) provide complimentary transportation to the parks, and the [Origin Red Rocks](#) in Golden, Colorado, provides complimentary shuttle service to and from Red Rocks Amphitheater (via the VIP Concert Package). Going on a cruise? Some hotels near cruise ports offer free or cheap transportation to your cruise ship, too. Other properties (often luxury hotels) provide house car service to locations within a few miles of a hotel.

4. Kids' Entertainment

If you get to the hotel and realize you left the [backpack](#) containing all the [kids' entertainment items](#) at home, call the front desk. Many hotels will let guests borrow [board games](#), [DVDs](#) and even [books](#). They may have these items in the common area or lounge or at the front desk. For example, the [Crawford Hotel in Denver](#) offers kids a choice of free [toys](#) upon check-in, and at the [Chanler in Newport, Rhode Island](#), kids get a free S'mores kit to use at the open fire pits around the property. Kimpton, Ritz-Carlton, and Four Seasons hotels and resorts have fun, free amenities and toys for kids, too.

5. Childcare

Kids' clubs are offered complimentary (or included in the rate) at some all-inclusive (or even non all-inclusive) resorts, such as the [Fairmont Mayakoba](#), one of the [14 Best Resorts With Free Kids' Clubs](#). "Any family with young kids knows how hard and expensive it can be to find help," says Jennifer McDermott, who has spent 10 years in the travel industry and is now the Consumer Advocate for travel comparison website, [finder.com](#). "When staying at a hotel, provided you pick one with childcare facilities, you will have the opportunity to enjoy your vacation without the little ones for a little while as part of the room cost." Check with the hotel prior to booking it to see if childcare services are offered.



6. Tech Devices and Chargers

So many guests travel with electronic devices such as [smartphones](#), [laptops](#), and [tablets](#) that it would be hard for a hotel *not* to offer [chargers](#). Many hotels provide universal charging devices, and more and more hotels have [docking stations](#) and [charging pods](#) in the guestrooms (as long as you have the correct charging [cord](#), you're in luck). Traveling to another country? Many hotels also offer [power adapters](#).

7. Toiletries

Hotels usually offer most bathroom essentials, plus a few surprising extras.

- [Shampoo](#)
- [Conditioner](#)
- [Both lotion](#)
- [Cotton Balls](#) and [Q-Tips](#)
- [Toothbrush](#) and [toothpaste](#)
- [Shaving cream](#) and [razors](#)
- [Tampons](#)
- [Sewing kits](#)
- [Hair ties](#)
- [Shower caps](#)
- [Band-Aids](#)

8. Workout Equipment

Many yogis want to keep fit while they travel and don't want to lug their own [yoga mats](#). Hotels such as [Hyatt](#), [Affinia](#) in New York City and Washington, D.C.,

and the [W Hotels](#) offer [mats](#) in the room for complimentary use. [EVEN Hotels](#) has cork flooring and equipment in-room to make workouts easy and effortless. They also have [fitness videos](#) in rooms to help guide you through a routine. [Westin Hotels](#) have a whole Gear Lending service, including the use of [New Balance shoes](#) and [clothing](#) for you to borrow during your stay for only \$5 or the local currency equivalent. They also give you a new pair of [socks](#) to keep.

8 Things You Should Always Bring to a Hotel

- **Reading Material:** Hotels sometimes keep a library of [books](#) for guests to use in the lobby, but if you're in the middle of your favorite page turner, don't leave it at home on your nightstand.
- **Steam Iron:** Hotels always have an iron on hand, but if you prefer to get those wrinkles out with a steamer, you'll want to pack a [steam iron](#).
- **Wrinkle Release Spray:** Rolling [clothes](#) is the best way to save space when packing, but can easily wrinkle some fabrics. If you don't want to pack the steam iron, make sure to bring a small [bottle of wrinkle release](#) to help smooth out clothing creases so you can save the space, but still look your best.
- **Laundry Bag:** People often overlook this massively useful thing. Depending on the trip, you may not have a chance to do [laundry](#). A [laundry bag](#) helps keep your dirty clothes separate from your clean clothes, which you will truly appreciate on day 9 of a long trip in a humid location.
- **Over-the-Counter Medications:** Travelers may be surprised to find that drugs like [ibuprofen](#) or [cortisone cream](#) that are normally available over the counter in the U.S. are not in other countries. Make sure to bring any drugs you might need in case minor health problems arise.
- **Local Cash:** Always arrive with at least some local cash. You never know what the ATM, bank, exchange or credit card situation might be when you land, and you never know when you you'll have access to local currency.
- **Sleep Mask and Earplugs:** They're good on the plane or if you really need to catch some Zzzs on a bus or train. A [sleep mask](#) and [ear plugs](#) are also good if you're staying in noisier areas like huge cities. You won't think about it until that one time you really need them, and then you'll be glad you packed them.
- **Duct Tape:** [Duct tape](#) is useful for anything and everything when traveling—[child-proofing your room](#), taping the [curtains](#) to the wall if they're letting too much light in at night, removing lint from [clothes](#), and more!

The rule of thumb when deciding what to pack and what to leave at home is, if you rely on it heavily in your daily life, bring your own. Or better yet, call the hotel ahead of time and get their list of freebies so you can plan accordingly.

What to Pack on Your Next Trip

For info on these editor-selected items, click to visit the seller's site. Things you buy may earn us a commission.





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L.L.Bean

Stretch Skinny Jeans
Levi's®

Pom Pom Hat
Page One

ReNew Long Puffer
Everlane

Veronica Combat
Boot
Frye



Shop the look

Ridge Coat
Carhartt

PrimaLoft
Performance Socks
L.L.Bean

ReNew Fleece
Sweatshirt
Everlane

Stretch Country
Corduroy Pants
L.L.Bean

Cooper Boots
Old West Boots

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