

How to Pack Like a Pro

By Tara Trask

“If you can pack a suitcase well, it means you have balanced your life.”

Diane von Furstenberg

I’m not sure if Ms. von Furstenberg’s observation is true, but to me there is something incredibly satisfying about traveling light and yet always feeling that I have what I need to look good, and, more importantly for business travel, to look appropriate for the situation. After 17 years and over a million and a half miles in the air, I’ve come up with some tried and true tips for packing that incorporate speed, efficiency and style to maximize preparedness and minimize headaches and back strain.

After 9-11, when TSA instituted the 3-1-1 rule (3 oz. bottles of liquid or gels, to fit in 1 quart size clear plastic zipper bag, 1 per traveler), I started checking my suitcase because my toiletry bag was certainly larger than a flimsy quart size Ziploc. For several months I endured the grind of checking and retrieving my bag. Because I was checking anyway, I took a larger bag and more stuff. At the end of the day, I came to a few revelations about this new process.

First, I started to do the math. I fly roughly 5 trips a month, sometimes more, sometimes less, and I often skip from city to city. Figuring conservatively, let’s say that’s 45 round trips per year. That is 45 luggage check-ins, and 45 luggage retrievals per year. Even with elite status on my airline of choice and thus quicker lines, I was spending at least 10 minutes checking and 30 minutes retrieving my bag on each trip. The results of this were frightening. I was spending over 30 hours per year dealing with luggage. Life is too short to spend it waiting on luggage!

Also, more “stuff” did not equate to better preparation once I arrived at my destination. My packing was inefficient, and I often arrived with more than I needed. Also, more stuff just meant more to pack on both ends of the trip – more wasted time. And, there was always the risk of the worst nightmare - the airline losing my luggage. I decided to make a change.

3-1-1

Initially, my biggest challenge was how to pare down my toiletries. What can I say? I’m a girl. I need my potions. Once I started looking hard at the contents of my bag, I realized that (of course) not everything in my toiletry bag is a liquid or gel. I found that there are some things that come in liquid or gel form that also come in solid form (deodorant, sunscreen, perfume, etc.). If you aren’t picky about brands, you can order small versions of almost anything at: <http://www.alltravelsizes.com/00-z-00-z.html>.

I came to realize that I didn’t need large quantities of my toiletries (eye cream for example) because they could be squeezed into tiny little bottles and tubs. I found a great bag at my local drugstore. It’s a tougher plastic than a Ziploc with a real zipper that won’t pop open when stuffed. It comes with a slew of little bottles (even spray bottles) in different sizes. I don’t mind filling the little bottles, because it doesn’t take long and then I have exactly what I need. I have a drawer in my bathroom containing travel sizes of items

that I can't easily refill like hairspray and toothpaste. Speaking of toothpaste, those tiny tubes for travel are only about an ounce and a half and last maybe three days. Luckily, Colgate is now making a full 3 oz. version and it lasts almost a week. My second bag is also clear plastic and contains all my toiletries that aren't liquids and gels, things like makeup brushes, Q-tips, hair bands, eye shadow, etc.



Now this is the part that is going to sound a little bit crazy, but I swear by it. I've found over the years that I spend a huge amount of time trying to make sure I have all the toiletries I need. You know the drill, you stand in the bathroom, basically walking through your morning routine to make sure you have everything . . . ok, shampoo, conditioner, comb, hairdryer . . . no, oops, I need my volumizing spray," that kind of thing. I started to realize that it was taking me an extra 10 minutes to pack my two small toiletry bags just because I was trying to keep a rather large list in my head. So, I made two small lists, one for each bag, put them in a small font, printed them off on the computer and laminated them. They live in my bags and I can easily cruise down the lists when I'm refilling bottles and packing my toiletry bags, easy and much faster.

Less stuff

I now travel almost exclusively with a carry-on roll aboard suitcase. I also carry a large satchel that operates as a briefcase. I keep a small handbag in the satchel so as not to violate the airlines' two carry-on limit. On lots of trips, only one of everything is necessary. This is not the case if you plan to be at one destination for many days. However, if you are jumping from city to city over many days, the one-per rule works, meaning one suit, one (or two) blouses, one sweater, one set of workout clothes, one pair of each kind of the following shoes: heels, flats, athletic. I've done many nine day trips with this system. Lots of things can be hand washed in the sink, or sent to the cleaners at the hotel.

What stuff

It's imperative to think in separates, rather than complete outfits. I never take anything that doesn't go with everything else. When you are trying to pack light, always pick one base color. I can base color with grey, black or navy. I supplement these base pieces (suit, slacks, jeans, heels and flats) with more colorful pieces, patterned blouses and a colorful sweater or jacket, but it's still important that everything go with everything else. If you want to have boots or a large coat with you, wear them.

Architecture of the pack

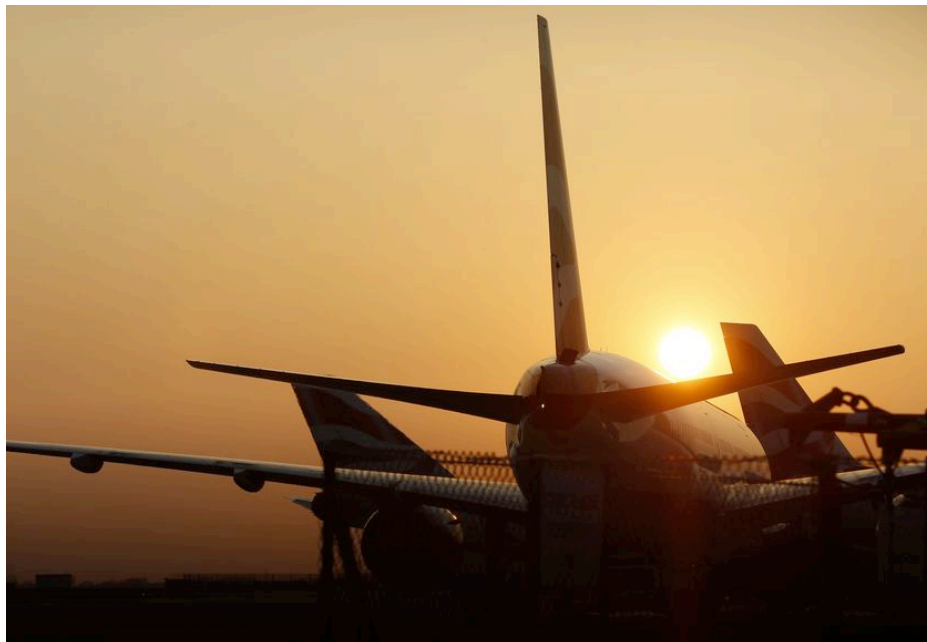
My system for how objects are packed never changes. All shoes go in the bottom, but I also take into consideration that the bag will spend a lot of time upright (handle up, being rolled), so I put my athletic shoes on the bottom (or to the right if the bag is open and I'm packing it), and I load shoes heavy to light from there. I usually travel in boots or flats depending on the season, so I normally only carry two other pairs of shoes: one pair of heels and one pair of athletic shoes. I almost always carry a pair of flip-flops regardless of season. They are great in the summer and perfect in the hotel when you need to run down to the vending machine or the front desk.

From here I start to stuff in everything that doesn't need to stay unwrinkled. I stuff socks, underwear, workout gear and hosiery around the nooks and crannies created by the shoes. Casual t-shirts, workout gear and a ball cap usually round out this layer. This is my base layer. On top of that goes jeans or slacks,

tops and sweaters. Toiletries and a hairdryer round out the main compartment. I know what you are thinking . . . “A hairdryer? Every hotel has a hairdryer.” Right, but not one that is ionic. My hair dries twice as fast with that thing . . . it is worth its weight in gold.

The suiting compartment in the lid of the case houses my suits, one or two at most, blouses and maybe an extra skirt or slacks. I pack everything individually in dry cleaning bags. This works. No wrinkles. None.

I can pack a suitcase well. Does it mean I have a balanced life, as Diane von Furstenberg notes? I’m not sure you can have a balanced life when you fly over a hundred thousand miles a year, but there is something about being prepared, feeling appropriately dressed for any occasion, and not wasting time that at least makes me feel like I’m moving in the right direction.



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Editor's Note

2011. That happened fast! But we're ready (more or less). We're doing new things here at *The Jury Expert* in 2011. And we are excited about them. In our next issue, we'll have professional layout so you won't have to put up with my amateurish efforts any longer. (You are no more relieved than I!) And. Also in our next issue, we expect to have a new web design that will just amaze you. It will be beautiful. Trust me.

Also in 2011--we are introducing a new sort of respondent to the articles we publish from academics. So far, we have always had trial consultants respond to those pieces with thoughts on how they would (or would not) use the research findings in court. Now--we are adding in trial lawyers. Have you wished you could have your [tactful] say? Now you can. Just send me an email (rhandrich@keenetrial.com) and let me know you would like to respond to a *Jury Expert* article. You can see a how-to from Mark Bennett (a Houston criminal defense lawyer) in this issue. We thought it would be interesting to see how the thoughts of trial lawyers diverged and/or converged with the thoughts of trial consultants. So line up, oh gentle readers. Show us what you've got.

So in this issue of *The Jury Expert* you will find ways to do what you do better, smarter, and more efficiently. You will find ways to keep up with what's new, pack your bag (lightly), craft a SJQ for white collar crime cases, do better voir dire, consider how bifurcation interacts with hindsight bias, and get practical and useful tips for cheap DIY trial graphics. Just our effort to help you maintain your resolutions to do what you do better, smarter, and more efficiently.

Welcome to 2011. Welcome to another year of terrific content and thought-provoking commentary from *TJE*.

[Rita R. Handrich, Ph.D., Editor](#)

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