

The 20-Minute Trip Prep

A short, steady order for the day before you leave.



FIND WHAT YOU NEED

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PACKING, NIGHT AND DAY

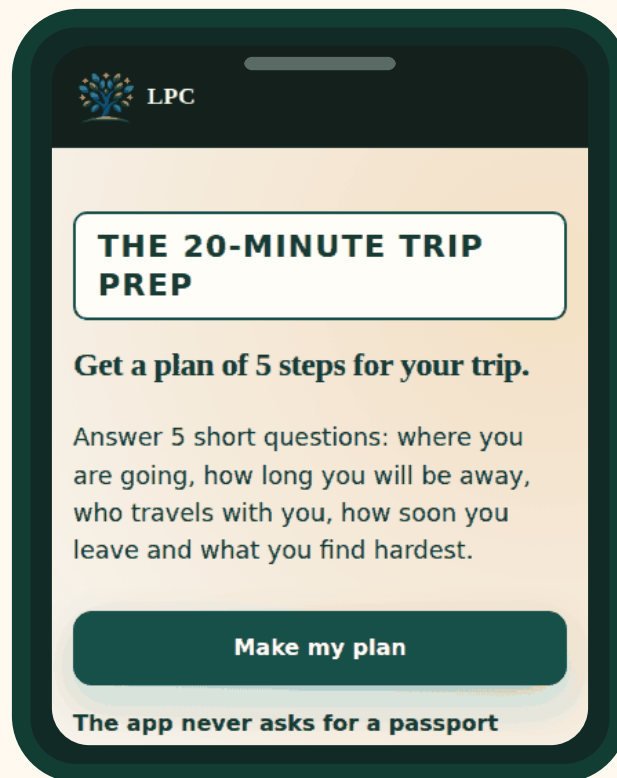
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Quick Route: Start with the Trip Prep Companion App



If your trip is close and the list in your head keeps growing, the Trip Prep Companion App can help you start now.

You answer 5 questions about your trip, and the app gives you a plan with 5 steps. The steps follow

CONTINUED

the same order as this guide: documents, money and phone, bag, home and the day you leave.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free.

Read the Important Note About Trip Rules and Safety first. Then use the app for a plan, or keep reading and learn the method at your own pace.

Open the Trip Prep Companion App

<https://tripprep.lifeperksclub.com>

A GENTLE NOTE

Important Note About Trip Rules and Safety



This guide gives everyday advice about getting ready for a trip in a calm order. It is general information. It does not replace the official pages listed at the end.

CONTINUED

It does not promise that your trip will go smoothly. It gives no rules for visas, customs, carry-on bags or airlines. It gives no advice about health, vaccines, medicine or insurance. It gives no prices and no deadlines.

The 20-minute frame is this guide's own idea. It is a way to make a small start. It does not come from an official source.

This guide leans on two pages from the U.S. Department of State, about international travel. They list what to do before a trip abroad.

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Whenever the guide says what those pages say, it says "according to the State Department". Everything else is the guide's own suggestion, and it says so.

The Transportation Security Administration has a page about what you can bring through airport security. This guide could not open that page, so it gives no airport rules. Please check that page yourself before you pack.

This guide and the companion app never ask you for a passport number, a card number, a Social Security number or a password. Please do not type those into either one.

You never have to do a step that feels confusing. If a step does not fit your trip, skip it and go on to another one.

START HERE

Why the Day Before a Trip Feels Rushed



The day before a trip is rarely calm. The bag is half packed, the charger is somewhere, and you cannot remember if you locked the back door last time.

Each task is small. The trouble is that all of them arrive at once, and nobody tells you which one

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comes first. So your mind keeps all of them open, and that is what makes the evening feel rushed.

This guide does not make the tasks smaller. It does something simpler. It gets them out of your head and onto one page, and then it puts them in an order.

You do not need to be an organized person to do it. You need a pen, a piece of paper and about 20 minutes.

Here is what you can expect from the guide. First, a quick way to write every task down. Second, a way

CONTINUED

to sort the tasks into 5 groups. Third, a short order of steps.

After that, there are sections for documents, money and phone, the bag, the home, a trip abroad, the night before, the day you leave and the first minutes after you come back.

The 20 minutes is a starting frame, not a promise that the whole trip is ready in 20 minutes. It means that one short sitting is enough to know what comes next.

THE 5 GROUPS OF TRIP PREP

The 5 Groups of Trip Prep



Almost every trip task fits into one of 5 groups. This grouping is the guide's own idea. It is not an official list.

1. Documents. The papers and cards you need to carry, and the copies you keep.

CONTINUED

2. Money, phone and chargers. How you pay, how you stay in touch and how you keep your devices running.

3. The bag. What you pack, what you leave out and how you carry it.

4. The home. What you do before you leave, so that you do not worry about it on the road.

5. The day. The time you leave, how you get there and what you keep in reach.

CONTINUED

When you have a task and you do not know where it goes, ask one question: what does this task need?

If it needs a paper, it is documents. If it needs a card or a charger, it is money, phone and chargers. If it needs a bag, it is the bag. If it needs a door or a window, it is the home. If it needs a clock, it is the day.

You can use other names for the groups. A group is only a place to put a task so that you can see it later.

If a task fits in 2 groups, put it in the one that feels more natural, and move on.

THE METHOD

Your 20-Minute Trip Prep Task Dump



A task dump means writing down every trip task you can think of, without sorting them. Set a timer for 20 minutes. This frame is the guide's own.

Take a piece of paper, or open the notes on your phone. Write one task per line. Do not put them in

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order. Do not worry about whether a task is big or small.

If you get stuck, walk through your trip in your mind. Think about the way there. Think about where you will sleep. Think about the way back.

You can also look at the 5 groups. Ask: what is still open in documents? In money, phone and chargers? In the bag? In the home? In the day?

When the timer rings, stop. You have a list. It will not be complete, and that is fine. You can add to it later.

CONTINUED

Now take a pen and mark each task with a letter for its group: D for documents, M for money and phone, B for the bag, H for the home, and Y for the day.

You have just done the hardest part. The tasks are out of your head. Now you can see them.

If you want, the companion app can do the sorting for you. You answer 5 questions, and it gives you a plan. You can still keep your paper list next to it.

THE METHOD

The 20-Minute Trip Prep: Order of Steps



ONE LIST - ONE BAG - ONE NIGHT BEFORE - 20 MINUTES

Here is the order this guide suggests. It is the guide's own order. It is not from an official source, and you can change it to fit your trip.

CONTINUED

1. **Documents first.** They take the least time, and they cost the most if you forget them.

2. **Money, phone and chargers second.** Write down how you will pay and how you will stay in touch.

3. **The bag third.** Start with the things you will not need before you leave.

4. **The home fourth.** Make a short list for the door, the windows and anything that needs care while you are away.

CONTINUED

5. **The day fifth.** Make a one-page plan for the day you leave.

You do not need to finish a step before you start the next one. They overlap. But if you are not sure where to start, start at the top.

Take your task dump and look at it again. Next to each task, write the number of the step it belongs to. Then pick 3 tasks from step 1 or step 2, and do one of them today.

The next sections go through the steps one by one.

TRIP DOCUMENTS

Trip Documents: What to Gather and Copy



Start with the papers. The State Department page about international travel says to organize your travel documents and to keep copies. This guide uses the same idea for any trip.

CONTINUED

According to the State Department, the documents on its checklist are your passport, any visas or electronic travel authorizations, medicine with its prescriptions and labeled bottles, custody papers if you travel with children, and an international driving permit if you will drive abroad.

Not every item applies to you. Read the list and cross out the ones that do not fit your trip. This guide does not say which ones you need. It also does not say how long your passport must be valid. Check the official page for your trip.

For a trip at home, the list is shorter. This part is the guide's own suggestion. Think about your ID, your

CONTINUED

tickets, your booking numbers and the address of the place where you will stay.

Here is a small action for 20 minutes. Put your documents in one folder or one pouch. Write what is in it on a card. Take a photo of each page, and keep the photos where you can find them.

Do not type your passport number or your card numbers into a note. This guide and the companion app never ask for them.

TRIP MONEY, PHONE AND

Trip Money, Phone and Chargers: A Short List



This part is the guide's own list. Your list may be shorter or longer.

Money. Write down how you will pay for things on the trip. Keep one card in a different place from the

CONTINUED

others. This guide does not give advice about banks, fees or exchange.

Phone. Check that your phone has room for photos and maps. Write down the phone numbers of 2 people you may need to call. Save them on paper too, in case the phone is lost.

Chargers. Gather the chargers, the cables and the small power bank, if you have one. Put them in one pouch.

Plugs. If you travel abroad, look at the plug shape for the place you are going. This guide does not say which one you need.

CONTINUED

For each one, ask 2 questions. What do I need on the trip? Where will it be when I need it?

Write each item on a line with a short note: "in the bag", "in my pocket" or "at home".

Then look at the date you leave. Think about which items you will need on the first day. Mark those first.

Do not put a card number or a password on the list. The list is only a reminder, and anyone who finds it should learn nothing from it.

THE METHOD

Trip Bag: A 20-Minute Packing Start



Packing is a big task, so this guide gives it a small start. The 20-minute frame is the guide's own. It is not an official rule.

CONTINUED

Set a timer for 20 minutes. Take an empty bag and put it where you can see it. Open the notes on your phone, or take a piece of paper.

First, write the days you will be away. Then write the 3 places you will be most of the time. Then think about what you wear in each place.

Now put the things you will not need before you leave into the bag. A spare charger. A book. A small bag for dirty clothes. Leave the things you use every day for the morning of the trip.

CONTINUED

Here are a few simple ideas for the bag. They are the guide's own suggestions.

- Pack by place, not by item. One small pouch for the bathroom things, one for the chargers.
- Keep the things you may need on the way in a bag that is easy to reach.
- Leave a little room, for the way home.
- Do not lift what feels too heavy for you. Ask for help.

For carry-on rules, check the Transportation Security Administration page yourself. This guide could not open it, so it gives no rules.

TRIP HOME CHECK

Trip Home Check: What to Do Before You Lock the Door



A home check is a short list for the door and the rooms, so you do not think about the house while you are away. This list is the guide's own.

Set a timer for 10 minutes and walk through the home with your note.

CONTINUED

Doors and windows. Look at each one. Close and lock what you normally lock.

Lights and devices. Turn off what you do not need. Look at the kitchen once more.

The fridge. Use up food that will not keep, or put it where you can find it.

The trash. Take it out before you leave.

CONTINUED

The mail. Ask someone you trust to look at it, or think about what you will do with it.

Plants and pets. If someone will look after them, write down what they need to know. Put the note where they will see it.

A spare key. If someone has one, write down who.

Take one photo of each room before you leave. That is the guide's own idea. It helps you remember how things were.

This guide does not give advice about security systems, insurance or alarms. If you are not sure about a safety question, ask a professional.

TRIP PREP FOR AN

Trip Prep for an International Trip: What the Official Page Lists



If your trip goes abroad, the U.S. Department of State has a travel checklist with 5 steps. This section tells you what that page lists. It does not add to it, and it does not replace it.

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According to the State Department, the 5 steps are these.

1. **Learn about your destination.** Look at the travel advisories and the local requirements for the place you are going.
2. **Join the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program.** The State Department says it sends messages from the U.S. embassy or consulate.
3. **Organize your travel documents.** Gather originals and make copies, as listed in the section on documents.

CONTINUED

4. **Review your travel needs and safety tips.** The page points to resources on lodging, health, insurance and laws.

5. **Consider travel insurance.** The page says that the U.S. government does not provide insurance or pay for any costs for U.S. citizens abroad.

This guide does not give advice about health, vaccines, medicine or insurance. It only tells you that the official page has these points. Read the official page for details.

The page also says where to get help abroad, for example if a passport is lost or stolen. The link is in the sources at the end.

Rules change. Check the official page before you travel.

TRIP PREP WITH KIDS, PETS OR

Trip Prep With Kids, Pets or a Travel Partner



A trip is easier when everyone knows what is happening. This section is the guide's own set of ideas, and it only covers small, practical things.

With kids. Let each child choose one small thing to carry. Tell them in simple words where you are

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going and what happens first. Keep a few favorite things within reach.

With pets. If a pet stays home, write down what the person who looks after it needs to know. If a pet comes along, keep its usual things together in one bag. This guide gives no advice about health or travel with animals. Ask your vet if you have questions.

With a travel partner. Share the task list. Write each person's name next to the tasks they take. Choose a time to look at the list together for 10 minutes.

CONTINUED

If you travel alone, you can still ask one person to be your helper. Give them one clear task, such as checking the door with you.

If someone does not want to help, that is all right. Pick the small tasks they can do, and do the rest yourself.

The State Department checklist mentions custody papers if you travel abroad with children. This guide only tells you that the point is on the official page.

The guide does not give advice about family matters or legal matters.

STEP BY STEP

The Night Before Your Trip



The night before is easier when most of the bag is packed and the list is short. This section is the guide's own plan.

CONTINUED

Check the list. Look at your task dump. Cross out what is done. Circle the 5 tasks that are left and that matter most.

Check the documents. Are they in the folder or the pouch? Is the folder in the bag you will carry?

Check the phone and chargers. Charge what you need. Put the chargers in the bag.

Pack the last things. The things you use every day, such as your toothbrush, go in last.

CONTINUED

Set out the clothes you will wear on the day.

Look at the home. Walk through it once with your note.

Set an alarm. Write the time you leave on a card, and put it where you will see it in the morning.

None of this is an official rule. It is a way to keep the night calm. If you cannot do it all, do the first 2 and leave the rest.

If a task is too much, ask someone to help with it. You are allowed to ask.

Then stop. The list is ready, and a rested morning is worth more than one more check.

STEP BY STEP

Trip Day: A One-Page Plan



A trip day is easier with a one-page plan. The plan is the guide's own. Write it on a single sheet and keep it where you can reach it.

At the top, write the date and the place you are going.

CONTINUED

Next, write the times. When do you leave the home? When do you need to be there? How will you get there?

Then, write 3 lists.

1. **Before you leave:** check the door and the windows, turn off the lights, take out the trash, and look at the bag once more.

2. **In your pocket or bag:** your documents, your phone, your charger, your payment card, your keys and a bottle of water.

CONTINUED

3. **When you arrive:** put the documents back in the pouch, and charge the phone.

At the bottom, write the names and phone numbers of 2 people you can call if something goes wrong.

The guide does not say what to do about airline or train rules, check-in times or security. Look at the website of the company you travel with.

If something goes wrong on the day, take a breath. Choose the next small step on the plan, and do it.

THE METHOD

Back Home: Your First 15 Minutes After a Trip



When you come home, you do not have to unpack everything. This section gives you a short start. The 15-minute frame is the guide's own.

Set a timer for 15 minutes and do these 4 things in this order.

CONTINUED

1. **Put the documents away.** Put the folder or pouch where it belongs.
2. **Plug in the phone and the chargers.** Take them out of the bag now, so they do not get lost.
3. **Look at the home.** Check the mail, the fridge and the plants. Write what needs to be done.
4. **Look at your list.** Write 3 tasks for tomorrow, and put the rest away.

CONTINUED

That is enough for the first evening. You do not have to unpack the bag tonight.

In the next days, you can go back to the list. Wash what needs washing. Look at the photos. Write down one thing you would do differently next time.

Here is a small idea that is the guide's own. Keep your task dump. Next time, you start with a list that is already half done.

The companion app can turn this list into a plan for your next trip.

TRIP ITEMS THAT GET

Trip Items That Get Forgotten



Some things are easy to forget on a trip. This list is the guide's own set of reminders. It is not official, and some may not apply to you.

- **Chargers and cables.** Check the pouch before you leave.

CONTINUED

- **Keys.** Decide who has a spare and where yours will be.
- **Glasses and everyday items.** Put them where you will see them on the morning of the trip.
- **The address.** Write down where you will stay, on paper.
- **Phone numbers.** Write down 2, on paper.
- **Payment cards.** Check that the one you want is in your wallet.

CONTINUED

- **A small bag for dirty clothes.** It is easy to forget on the way home.

- **A bottle and a snack.** Put them where you can reach them.

Pick the 3 that apply to you and write them at the top of your list.

If you think of something at the last minute, write it down right away. Do not try to remember it.

The guide does not say what to do with each item, because it depends on you. It only helps you remember.

If you remember something later, that is normal. Add it to the list and do it when you can.

WHERE TO START

When Your Trip Prep Falls Apart



Plans change. A time moves. A ride is late. A bag is not ready. This section is for those days. The ideas are the guide's own.

CONTINUED

When you run out of time. Look at your list and pick the 3 tasks that matter most. Documents, the phone and the home come first. Leave the rest.

When someone cancels. Ask someone else, or cut the task into smaller parts.

When the time moves. Change the times on your page. Look again at the one-page plan. Check that each step still fits.

When you cannot find something. Look at the pouch first. Check the list of what you packed. Look

CONTINUED

again in the places where you are most likely to have put it.

When you feel overwhelmed. Stop. Take 15 minutes. Do one small thing from the list, and then rest.

The guide does not give legal advice. If a booking, a ticket or a rule changes, ask the company or the official page.

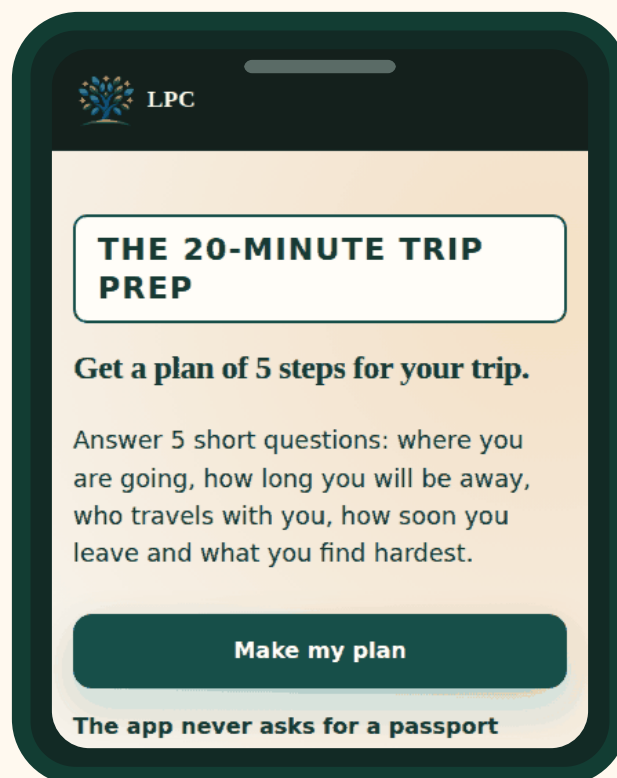
A trip plan that bends is still a plan. You do not have to start over.

OPTIONAL COMPANION APP

The Trip Prep Companion App

This guide explains the method. The Trip Prep Companion App turns it into a plan for your trip.

You answer 5 questions about your trip, and the app gives you a plan with 5 steps. The steps follow the same method as this guide: documents, money and phone, bag, home and the day you leave.



CONTINUED

The app does not give rules for visas, customs or carry-on bags, and it does not promise that your trip will go smoothly.

Save favorites and add personal notes, so your app is tailored to your preferences.

You can create 2 complete personalized plans free. After that, a one-time unlock of \$9 keeps it yours. There is no subscription and no renewal.

The app never asks for a passport number, a card number or a password.

Open the Trip Prep Companion App

<https://tripprep.lifeperksclub.com>

FINAL CHECKLIST

Final Checklist: The 20-Minute Trip Prep



- ☐ I wrote down my trip tasks in a 20-minute task dump.
- ☐ I sorted them into the 5 groups: documents, money and phone, the bag, the home and the day.
- ☐ I picked the first 3 tasks and did one of them.

CONTINUED

- ☐ I put my documents in one place and made copies.
- ☐ I wrote down 2 phone numbers on paper.
- ☐ I packed the first things into the bag in 20 minutes.
- ☐ I walked through the home with my note.
- ☐ I made a one-page plan for the day I leave.
- ☐ I checked the official pages for any rule I was not sure about.
- ☐ I know that this guide does not promise a smooth trip, and gives no rules for visas, customs or airports.

The phrase 20-minute trip prep means one short sitting in which you write down, sort and order the tasks before a trip, so the next step is always clear.

SOURCES

Sources Used for Trip Prep Guidance

The statements about what the State Department lists come from two U.S. government pages. They were opened on October 7, 2026. Check the official pages for the latest wording.

The Transportation Security Administration page about what you can bring through security could not be opened for this guide, so the guide gives no airport rules. Please check that page yourself.

The 5 groups, the order of steps, the 20-minute task dump, the packing start, the lists for money

CONTINUED

and phone, the home check, the night before, the day and the first minutes after a trip are our own suggestions. They are not official guidance.

This guide gives no rules for visas, customs or carry-on bags, no health or insurance advice and no deadlines, because the pages we saw do not give them.

- U.S. Department of State, International Travel Checklist: 5 steps for a trip abroad.
<https://travel.state.gov/en/international-travel/planning/checklist.html>

CONTINUED

- The same checklist, the 5 steps: learn about your destination, join the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, organize your travel documents, review travel needs and safety tips, consider travel insurance.

- U.S. Department of State, International Travel: planning your travel, travel advisories and help abroad.
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

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