

Your international trip checklist

A step-by-step guide to planning your dream trip

1. Confirm entry requirements for your destination

Before booking anything, make sure you're actually allowed to enter your destination.

- Check passport expiration
 - Most countries require at least 6 months of validity beyond your return date.
- Confirm visa or travel authorization requirements
 - Tourist visa, visa-free entry, or ETA/ETIAS (for some regions).
- Review health requirements
 - Required or recommended vaccines
 - Any multi-dose vaccines that need to be started early
- Check current safety advisories and entry rules
 - Use Travel Off Path's Top Entry Checker
 - Review U.S. Department of State (or your country's) travel advisories
- Save entry documents digitally and physically
 - Passport photo page
 - Visa or approval email
 - Entry requirements confirmation

2. Destination basics (continued)

- Check environment details
 - Sunrise/sunset times
 - Weather by month
 - Seasonal closures or off-season quirks
- Save embassy details
- Address, emergency phone number
- Directions from city center

3. Build your trip blueprint with Google Maps

- Turn ideas into a visual, realistic plan.
- Save must-see attractions and restaurants
- Create a custom Google Maps list for the trip
- Zoom out to identify activity clusters
- Use clusters to determine:
 - How many days per city
 - Logical neighborhoods to stay in
 - Travel time between activities
- Identify:
 - Nearby public transportation stops
 - Walkable areas
 - Less touristy local spots

2. Research destination basics

Build context so you're not learning everything on the ground.

- Identify top attractions & experiences
 - Search: "Things to do in [destination]"
 - Save favorites on TripAdvisor, Viator, GetYourGuide, or Klook
- Learn basic cultural info
 - Customs, tipping norms, clothing expectations
- Learn basic phrases
 - Hello, please, thank you, excuse me, yes/no, bathroom, help
- Food & dining basics
 - Common dishes
 - Typical meal times
 - Reservation norms
- Currency & payments
 - Local currency name
 - Cash vs. card usage
 - Tipping expectations

4. Watch traveler vlogs for insider tips

- Learn from people who've already been there.
- Search YouTube for:
 - "[destination] travel tips"
 - "[destination] vlog"
 - "What I wish I knew before visiting [destination]"
- Watch for:
 - Transportation walkthroughs
 - Neighborhood breakdowns
 - Cultural etiquette tips
 - Common tourist mistakes
- Follow trusted traveler creators for planning inspiration

5. Sketch a simple itinerary

Create structure without locking yourself into exhaustion.

- Outline days by area, not hour-by-hour
- Assign:
 - Travel days
 - Heavy sightseeing days
 - Lighter recovery days
- Add:
 - Day trips
 - Rest blocks
 - Flexible “wander time”
- Family or group tip:
 - Kids choose one daily “power pick”
 - Couples plan one daily shared moment

6. Book flights the smart way

Save money, stress, and confusion.

- Use Google Flights to:
 - Compare flexible dates
 - Set price alerts
 - Use the “anywhere” feature if undecided
- Choose flight times thoughtfully
 - Avoid super-tight international layovers
 - Consider arrival time vs. jet lag
- Save:
 - Booking confirmation
 - Airline apps for boarding passes & alerts

7. Choose accommodations

Comfort matters more than luxury.

- Compare options on:
 - Credit card points website
 - Hotels.com
 - Booking.com
 - VRBO
- Evaluate:
 - Distance to attractions
 - Proximity to public transit
 - Neighborhood safety
- Confirm amenities:
 - Laundry access
 - Breakfast availability
 - Air conditioning (not guaranteed overseas)
 - Elevator

7. Accommodations (continued)

- Double-check:
 - Bed sizes
 - Room size (room for luggage?)
 - Luggage storage policies
- Value tip:
 - A suite in a 3-star hotel often beats a standard 4-star room

8. Reserve tours, tickets, & experiences

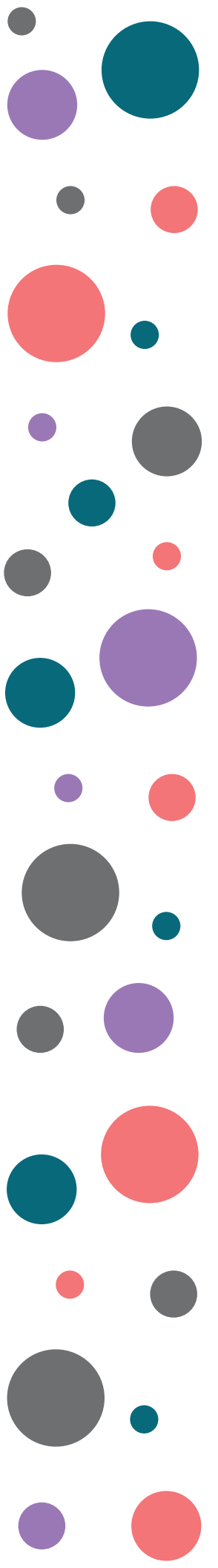
Lock in the experiences that sell out.

- Pre-book:
 - Cultural tours
 - Food or cooking classes
 - Skip-the-line attraction tickets
- Use reputable platforms:
 - Viator
 - GetYourGuide
 - Klook
 - WithLocals
- Budgeting tip: look for:
 - Free cancellation
 - “Book now, pay later” options

9. Plan local transportation in advance

Reduce arrival-day anxiety.

- Research airport-to-city options
 - Taxi vs. train vs. transfers
- Confirm ride-share availability
 - Uber, Lyft, or local alternatives
- Download:
 - City transit apps
 - Google Maps for offline use
- Familiarize yourself with:
 - Subway or metro maps
 - Ticketing systems
- For intercity travel:
 - Compare trains, buses, or private transfers, like Daytrip



10. Plan your food strategy

Eat well without stress.

- Save:
 - “Must-try” local foods
 - Highly rated casual spots
- Identify reservation-only restaurants
- Book high-demand locations 2–3 weeks in advance
- Note:
 - Typical dining hours
 - Whether reservations are required or optional

11. Prepare electronics & travel apps

Stay connected and oriented.

- Choose connectivity:
 - eSIM
 - SIM card
 - Pocket WiFi
- Download before departure:
 - Google Translate + offline language packs
 - Google Maps
 - Airline & hotel apps
 - Local ride-share or delivery apps
- Pack:
 - Charging cables
 - Portable battery
 - Plug adapters (check outlet type)

12. Get foreign currency

Arrive ready to pay.

- Order foreign currency from your bank (about 2 weeks ahead)
- Carry:
 - Small bills for tips
 - Emergency cash backup
- Know where:
 - ATMs are located
 - Credit cards are widely accepted

13. Register for safety & protect valuables

Hope you don’t need it — prepare anyway.

- Enroll in STEP (for U.S. travelers)
- Save emergency contacts
- Use:
 - Crossbody bag
 - Money belt or hidden wallet
- Stay alert in high-traffic tourist areas

14. Final pre-trip prep

Do this 48–72 hours before departure.

- Print key documents (backup matters)
- Save reservations offline
- Review cultural etiquette & local norms
- Confirm weather & adjust packing list
- Share itinerary with a trusted contact
- Save embassy address & emergency numbers offline



Join the CJ Community at thecjway.biz to share tips & learn from fellow beginner travelers.