

# Vacation Preparation List

Use these prep lists for road trips, vacations, extended hotel stays, holiday getaways and travel away from home.

## 3 Months Before You Go

- Start thinking about where you'd like to go.
- Buy roadside attraction apps and park guides.
- Buy phrase books or language guide apps.
- Define the purpose of your trip (visit, monuments, attractions, roaming) and decide where to go.
- Research the monuments, attractions and parks that you want to see online.
- Use a maps app or the GPS unit to calculate the driving distances.
- Buy a GPS or maps app and practice using it.
- Arrange annual vacation time, or leave of absence from work.
- Arrange for an elderly care giver or live-in assistant if needed.
- Renew the passport if not six months remaining.
- Get a second cash back or rewards credit card, from another vendor, as backup.
- Visit the doctor for travel vaccinations and medications for countries you will be visiting.
- Obtain any visitor visas or special permits required by destination countries.
- Get child consent letter - your right to accompany them - if flying or going through customs.
- Get an eye exam and update prescription eyewear or contact lenses.
- Scan important documents into your computer.
- Take digital photos of important documents, if you don't have a scanner, or scanning app.
- [best selling travel gear](#)
- [most wished for travel gear](#)
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## 1 Month Before You Go

- Join the local auto club AAA or CAA.
- Get an international drivers license if required.
- Arrange pet care or accommodations.
- Go to the dentist for checkup and cleaning.
- Notify the day care, school, etc, of away time.
- Arrange for a house sitter and emergency contact.
- Arrange for pet care if not bringing them along.
- Hire a gardener or lawn care service for long trips.
- Create a budget for the trip, if money is tight.
- If on a budget, calculate your car's gas usage so you can budget accordingly.
- Revisit and revise your road trip plan.
- Create your itinerary if on a time limited trip.
- Map out the route you plan to drive.
- Plan which days will be driving and resting days.
- Research the hotel chains you're considering.
- Use the Google Maps street view feature for virtual tours of towns.
- Decide on which towns you'll be exploring.
- Purchase any special event or festival tickets.
- Buy a camera and practice using it.
- Buy the adapters and cords for AC power, USB, data transfer.
- Download the Vacation Packing Lists from [DrivingRoadTrips.com](http://DrivingRoadTrips.com) .
- [best selling auto accessories](#)
- [most wished for auto accessories](#)
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## 2 - 4 Weeks Before You Go

- Go to bank and set up auto credit card payment.
- Get destination currency if traveling out of country.
- Get traveler's checks if you'll be using them.
- Get a roll of quarters and change for tolls, bridges, meters and parking.



# Vacation Preparation List

- Phone utility companies and switch to credit card billing, so payments get automated.
- Get any special travel & medical insurance from agent, or auto club.
- Get all family prescriptions filled and have enough to last the entire trip.
- Set up a post box at the UPS Store or post office.
- Set up a temporary mail redirect to the post box.
- Shop, compare and buy food coolers.
- Buy collapsible bowls and eating utensils.
- Use the "Apps Packing List" to prep the smartphone.
- Make reservations at your first destinations.
- Print out Google maps if no GPS or data plan.
- [best selling electronics & gadgets](#)
- [most wished for electronics and gadgets](#)
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## 1 Week Before You Go

- Do a visual inspection of car tires and engine.
- Get the routine car maintenance done.
- Get a fresh can of tire puncture sealant to fix flats.
- Get any windshield chips or cracks fixed.
- Prepare the emergency kit (Get the Emergency Kit Checklist from [DrivingRoadTrips.com](http://DrivingRoadTrips.com))
- Prepare the first aid kit (First Aid Kit Checklist)
- Research the attractions that you want to see.
- Plan your final itinerary for time limited vacations.
- Get spare home keys made.
- Put valuables in a safety deposit box.
- Buy automatic light timers and learn to use them.
- Buy security locks for sliding doors and windows.
- Enter important phone numbers into smartphone.
- Enter medical & emergency info into smartphone.
- Create encrypted drive or folder on computer.
- Put all important scans, docs into encrypted drive.
- Put regular deliveries like groceries on hold.

- Put utilities on hold (hydro, internet) for long trips.
- Get a haircut and any personal stuff done.
- Pick up any dry cleaning, tailoring, etc.
- Check memory cards and batteries for electronics.
- Tell a neighbor that you trust about the vacation.
- Remind the house sitter and emergency contact.
- Notify credit card companies of your itinerary.
- [best selling personal care products](#)
- [most wished for personal care items](#)
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## 1 - 2 Days Before You Go

- Take out cash at ATM and have 200 on hand.
- Check bank account balances and transfer funds.
- Pay all monthly bills, if auto payment not used.
- Pay utility bills in advance, if they don't allow credit card billing.
- Clean out the car interior of non essentials.
- Load items from the "Car Essentials List" into car.
- Check for the spare tire, jack and essential tools.
- Get gas and top up the window washing fluid.
- Cut the lawn and do any yard maintenance.
- Buy enough snacks and food to last the whole day and the next morning.
- Prepare music playlists and download audiobooks that you want to listen to.
- Charge up the smartphone and all electronics.
- Give spare home keys to the house sitter.
- Show the house sitter how to use home security system, watering timer, alarms, etc.
- Notify the alarm monitoring company of departure and return dates.
- Give a copy of your itinerary to the emergency contact, so someone knows where you are.
- Give copy of important documents to emergency contact, just in case you need them.
- Start packing by organizing stuff into piles.



# Vacation Preparation List

- Pack the storage clothing bag and cleaning tote.
- [best selling luggage and bags](#)
- [most wished for luggage, totes and bags](#)
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## Departure Day

- Pack the main overnight bag.
- Pack the non perishable storage cooler.
- Pack the toiletries into zippered container.
- Turn off the electronics, PVR, cable box, etc.
- Turn off all electric heaters and appliances.
- Set air conditioning to vacation mode.
- Unplug any chargers, adapters not being used.
- Shut off the breaker to outside power outlets.
- Turn down, or shut off the hot water heater.
- Turn off the furnace, fireplace and pilot lights.
- Turn off the gas mains to the house and to the furnace, stove, gas appliances.
- Turn off water main, or at least the laundry hoses.
- Water and feed all the plants.
- Set all of the automatic light timers.
- Clean perishable items out of the fridge.
- Empty all the garbage and dispose of it.
- Hide remaining valuables around the home.
- [best selling snack foods](#)
- [most wished for snacks](#)
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## Last Minute

- Get changed into your comfy driving clothes.
- Listen for traffic closures and road conditions.
- Do one last visual inspection of the car.
- Set up the GPS on the mount in the car.
- Do quick perimeter check around the yard.
- Fill up water jugs and bottles.
- Empty, clean and put away water filter.

- Pack the main cooler around the ice packs.
- Turn off the lights, stove, fans, heaters, etc.
- Check all doors and windows are locked.
- Take digital photos of your home for insurance.
- Take out any remaining kitchen garbage.
- Everyone goes to the bathroom one last time.
- Set the home security system.
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## While on the Road

- Use a hands free device if talking while driving.
- Take turns driving if one of you feels tired or dizzy.
- Stop every two hours at rest areas, stretch and play. See the sports & outdoor play links below.
- Give pets water when arriving at (not leaving) rest areas, to relieve dehydration.
- Lock GPS in the glove box, when leaving the car.
- Empty trash from the car after each day's drive.
- Do visual inspection around the car before driving.
- Phone the hotel if you're going to be late.
- Arrive, inspect, check in, sanitize the hotel room.
- Ask the hotel staff their favorite restaurant.
- Ask the hotel staff about local events & activities.
- Use the GPS search near me function to explore.
- Write a journal of the trip.
- Update your travel blog daily with photos.
- Transfer photos from camera to computer, or USB drive as backup.
- Tag photos with keywords like name and location.
- If you have no itinerary, just roaming and exploring, pick the next destination.
- Plan driving days and overnight stays to next long term destination.
- Reserve the next few hotels days in advance.
- Plan which attractions to see along the way.
- Take digital photos when checking out of the hotel for security purposes.



# Vacation Preparation List

- Be sure to collect the reward points from the hotel.
- Keep all receipts from purchases and hotels.
- [best sellers in sports, toys and outdoor play](#)
- [most wished for in sports and outdoor play](#)
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## Returning Home

- Unpack bags in the garage, hallway, or mudroom.
- Leave bags outside your main living area for a four day quarantine.
- Sort travel clothes into piles and wash immediately. Use bleach where you can.
- Water all plants if no house sitter came.
- Pick up the pet from the kennel.
- Pick up mail from post box.
- Cancel the temporary mail redirect
- Go shopping for groceries and stock the fridge.
- Wash the water jug and start a new filter.
- Phone the neighbors to tell them you've returned.
- Call the house sitter and set a date to return key.
- Phone the emergency contact to thank them.
- Call the office to let them know you've returned.
- Phone the family, daycare, school, club, etc.
- Turn the hot water heater back on.
- Put the air conditioning back to normal operation.
- Turn on the water mains, or laundry taps.
- Turn on the gas and light the pilot lights.
- Turn off the automatic light timers.
- Switch on the breaker to the outside AC plugs.
- Turn on the appliances, set clocks, PVR, etc.
- Program new codes into home security system
- Wash all dishes and utensils with soap before putting them away.
- Wash the cooler interiors with mild bleach solution, or other sterilizer.
- Vacuum out the luggage exteriors and pockets.
- Cancel the yard maintenance and mail pickup.
- Cancel the elderly care giver, or live-in assistant.
- Restart utilities that were placed on hold.
- Restart the newspaper and grocery deliveries.
- Start watering the lawn and yard if they need it.
- Check the yard and home for any damage.
- Login to online banking and check balances.
- Verify all credit card charges with online banking.
- Stop auto payment of bills, if you really want to.
- Do any outstanding bills and tax matters.
- Vacuum out the car and empty any trash.
- Wash the car and front grill free of bug juice.
- Make list to restock emergency and first aid kits.
- Transfer any remaining photos or video to computer and make a backup.
- Organize digital photos of the trip into albums.
- Back up computer to a backup or USB drive.
- Buy a gift, or take house sitter out for lunch.
- Get the spare house keys from the house sitter.
- Go back to work and school. (Sigh!)
- Start planning your next road trip. (Yay!)
- [best selling casual clothing](#)
- [most wished for clothing for the whole family](#)
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This printable prep list for vacations, travel and road trips came from our Driving Road Trips website. It's a free gift. If you find it useful, please share it with your friends. You can host it, post it, and give it away free, so long as it remains intact. Thank you!

Come visit us at [DrivingRoadTrips.com](http://DrivingRoadTrips.com). There's all sorts of ideas and tips for happy trips. Use our guides to help you plan, prepare, pack, drive, and stay safe in hotels. We hope to see you soon.

