

Tips for the Road

Compiled at February, 2016 STM

by Gay Pustaver

PACKING:

- I try to pack my bags in a way that allows me to leave certain things in the car. For instance, I don't pack the projector with the marker boxes, cardstock, etc. This minimizes what I have to haul into the hotel.

I always pack:

- An extra day's change of clothing;
- An additional day's worth of any prescription meds; and
- A scarf in case I dribble coffee on myself.

I have extra personal items for travel:

- Shampoo, toothbrush and paste, deodorant, etc. I can just grab and go.
- I will roll items to prevent wrinkling. For air travel, I roll outfits together, pants, shirt, undergarments, and stuff socks or smaller items into the shoes.
- For road trips, I have more cargo space and often will keep things on hangers and carry a garment bag.
- I roll my clothes before packing in suitcase. This saves space so I can pack more clothes. ☺
- Select outfits that will work with a max of 2 pairs of shoes (I only pack at max 2 pairs of shoes)

I always pack ear plugs in case people in the hotel are loud ;0)

Bring a bag of desk drawer supplies for training in case you need stapler, scissors, etc.

Always carry a large trash bag – multiple uses – rain poncho, protect training materials, laundry, etc.

Carry a full-sized snow shovel, not those little plastic ones.

Bring separate “must have travel toiletries” so you don't have to pack and repack toiletry items from home.

TRAVEL:

When it's cold out and I park outside at a hotel, I always park facing out in case someone has to jumpstart my car. Hasn't happened, but you never know.

Try and park car out of wind.

I see that some people put their windshield wipers up when parked at a hotel outside and it's snowing. I think it's because they don't stick to the window. Cool!

Avoid wheeled bags; get all dirty in winter and hard to drag through the snow.

Be careful about what can and cannot stay in the car overnight in summer heat and winter cold and pack tech equip and materials accordingly.

Check for weather and road conditions all along your route for planning reasons.

Keep wet wipes in your car's beverage holder for quick spill fixes on your clothing.

- Wear slip-on shoes with socks when traveling via plane (shoes for easy off and on and socks so you don't have to walk barefoot on the gross carpet in security!)

HOTEL:

Use Rewards points credit cards and sign up for offers as often as possible.

- Pay attention to special offerings from your chosen hotel rewards program, such as stay 2 nights in a certain date range and get a \$25 gift card. You usually have to register for these offers separately.
- I stick to one hotel chain and stay at the same ones in the cities I travel to. This way you are building points quicker.
- I prefer Best Western on Madison's east side. I have stayed at this hotel for over 15 years.
- When traveling in other cities, I have better luck getting the state rate at IHG hotels.
- I always request rooms on the first floor near an entrance for hauling things in and out.

I LOVE the Crowne Plaza in Wauwatosa. When I stay there, the staff (which has been very consistent over the years) recognizes me and is genuinely friendly – restaurant bar especially. They have great walking/running trails behind the hotel also. Very pretty.

I, too, try and stay at the same chain to get points and participate in as many special promos as I can. Sometimes I ask for an upgrade and get it.

Bring Febreze or Lysol spray in case room smells funky. Also, use Lysol to spray remote controls and doorknobs in hotels. Crowne Plazas provide you with a little linen spray bottle.

Carry small flashlight to check mattresses for bed bugs.

Carry a couple of clothespins in case curtains don't stay closed in hotel.

When in hotel rooms with a heater blower, when it gets too dry, I soak a hand towel in water and wring it a little. Then I lay it over the vents, weighted down with shoes or something. It puts moisture in the air. If I am on a high floor, I usually just turn the heat off and it stays warm enough.

When I stay at a hotel with a restaurant (which I always try to do) and I am training the next day, I ask the kitchen to make a salad for me (Cobb Salad, Steak Salad, whatever) the night before. I pay for it with my dinner bill the night before, pick up the salad in the am, take it to the training site and then I don't have to worry about finding a place for lunch. I am sure you could order a cold sandwich also.

TRAINING:

Pack all your training materials in one case.

Put your training materials in a box or container that can also be used as a podium when training.

Bring a wireless "hotspot" in case cannot get into Internet.

Bring glue tacks or poster putty to hold items on the wall.

Carry loose change for meters.