

TRAVEL

Tips for Adults with ADHD

TRAVELING CAN BE BOTH EXHILARATING AND SCARY at the same time for adults like me. You see, I have ADHD and as a professional coach, I help clients to manage ADHD. Leaving our comfort zone is painfully uncomfortable. Nevertheless, the thought of seeing new places and things inspires us.

So, let's say you're an adult with ADHD with a trip ahead of you. How can you best handle all the traveling challenges?



SHUTTERSTOCK

SAVVY



BY JONATHAN CARROLL



Preplanning is important! I suggest you take the following steps before you leave.



1. Organize all your materials in one place.

I love to use an app called *TripIt*. Whenever I get a confirmation email for a hotel, flight, car rental, or restaurant reservation, I forward it to *TripIt*. The app then organizes it by date and time into a master itinerary I can access anytime on any device, even if I'm offline. Makes my life easy!

2. Learn as much as you can about your destination.

The internet offers a tremendous amount of valuable information. Be careful, however, that what you are looking at is not actually an advertisement for a travel company or service. If something interests you, do your research and ask many questions. I have found many "great suggestions" that turned out to be "sponsored content" or ads. It is so important to know what you are getting into before you leave.

3. Create two to-do lists: one for before and the other for during your trip.

On the "before" list, list the things you must gather before you leave. What will you need in addition to obvious items like identification, toiletries, clothing, and medications? If you are traveling to a foreign country, familiarize yourself with specifics like currency, dining options, and cell service. Recently, I traveled to Italy and used a credit card with no foreign transaction fees. This was helpful, because I could track my finances and receive a fair exchange rate. Dining is important; you need to be aware of any potential dietary issues that might arise. I have a daughter with severe allergies, so I have to be sure our destination has safe options for her. Many cell phone carriers offer special rates when you travel outside the United States, so I recommend that you know your best options. It can get expensive to use your mobile device outside its coverage area.

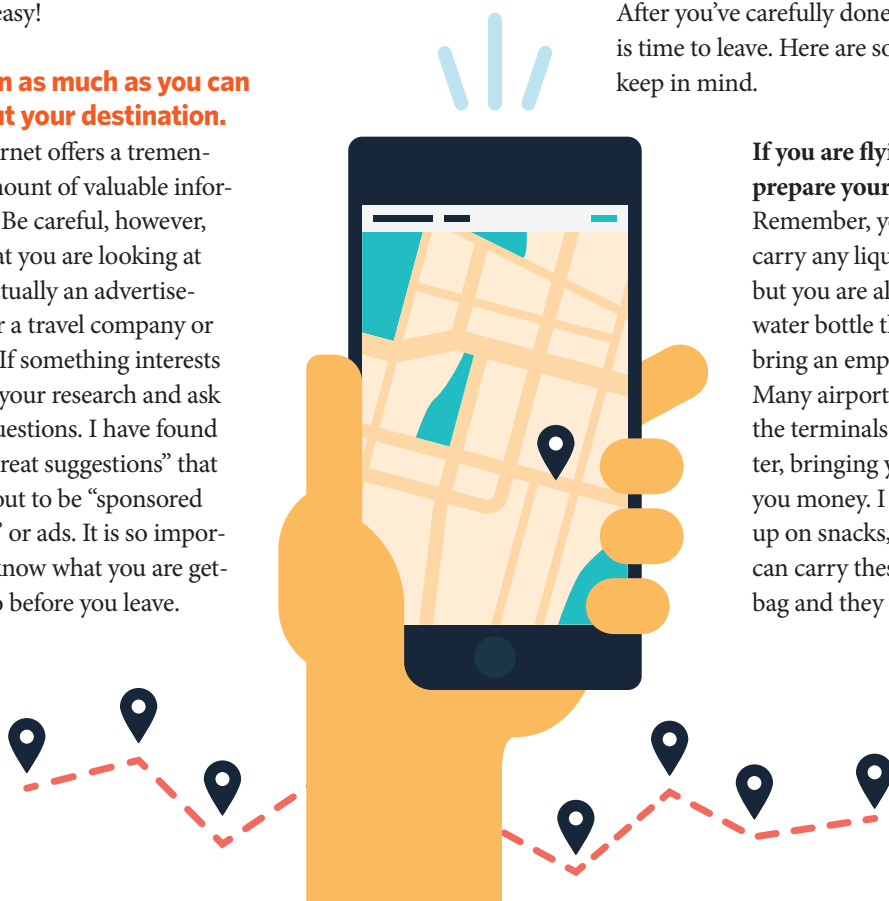
The second, or "during" list, is for things you want to do while on the trip. For example, list the famous attractions or restaurants you want to visit. By listing these items ahead of time, you will have an idea of what you want to do and when to do it. It is critical to have such things written down and researched before you leave. I would also recommend that you identify locations and have all such information mapped out. Trying to do things on the fly creates unneeded stress.

Departure and arrival

After you've carefully done all your preplanning, it is time to leave. Here are some important things to keep in mind.

If you are flying, it is important to prepare yourself as well as possible.

Remember, you are not allowed to carry any liquids over two ounces, but you are allowed to bring an empty water bottle through security. I like to bring an empty filtered water bottle. Many airports now offer fill stations in the terminals. While you can buy water, bringing your own bottle will save you money. I also recommend loading up on snacks, candy and gum. You can carry these items in your carry-on bag and they will save you money and





stress. Many airlines offer onboard entertainment options that are either free or available for a small charge. Be sure you have a backup plan, as there are times when these things aren't working. Keeping yourself entertained and occupied helps to make the time go by smoothly.

Be sure to know your best option for getting to your hotel or lodging (if you aren't renting a car). Transportation from airports can be much less expensive if you book your ride in advance. I've recently taken advantage of Uber and Lyft. Ride share services like these offer the benefit of knowing what to expect, which is huge for us folks with ADHD.

Take pictures on a device that tracks the time, date, and location. One of my friends in law enforcement recommends waiting to post photos on social media until after you return. We all love to take pictures! However, while we all like to share our cool adventures, putting such information on social media leaves you open to people knowing



you're away from home. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Finally, you arrive! You did your research and you're ready to rock and roll. If you preplanned well enough, you have a great list of things to do. However, I caution you against trying

to do too much too early on the trip. You will burn yourself out quickly. Take your time and enjoy the sights and sounds. Build in some rest and relaxation time. As folks with ADHD know all too well, we can overdo it. Creating a solid itinerary allows us time for decompressing.

Bon voyage! 🇫🇷

Jonathan D. Carroll is an ADHD and executive functioning coach in the Chicago area. In addition to his work with clients from all over the world, he's an adult managing his own ADHD.



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