



Ways to (Hopefully) Speed through Security

You can't completely avoid the possibility of extra security screening. But you can take measure to improve your odds of zipping through security. Here are a few:

1. **Get There on Time.** Check-in time is at least 90 minutes prior to departure. Some airports require at least 2 hours prior to departure for check-in. Check-in time is 3 hours prior to departure for international flights. Confirm the time recommended for your airport.

Arrive 3 hours prior to departure of your international flights. You will not be allowed to skip to the front of the security line for any reason if you are delayed (even if it is not your fault—traffic, problem with airline check-in, security issues with travelers in front of you, etc.).

2. **Check on Your Choice of Checkpoints.** If the airport has multiple security checkpoints for your gate, you could save 10 or 15 minutes if you know which one to pick. Some checkpoints get less traffic because they are off the beaten path. Some are better choices during certain times of day or certain days of the week. You can check online at the official airport website for checkpoint locations before you head to the airport. Some airport websites even give you wait times for checkpoints or a security information phone number you can call to ask about them.

3. **Boarding Pass and Identification.** Whether you print your boarding passes before you get to the airport or print them at the airport, make sure to have them out along with your identification (valid driver's license or passport/visa if traveling internationally) when you arrive at the security area. Be ready to hand both your boarding pass and identification to the security officer when you reach the security area. If you are traveling internationally with a minor under 18 and both parents are not traveling with their child, you will need a notarized letter from the unaccompanying parent(s) allowing you to travel with the child. Keep this with your passports/visas in the event you are asked to produce this authorization.

4. **Remove Items From Your Pockets.** Before passing through the metal detector or advanced imaging technology, TSA strongly recommends removing ALL items from pockets, as well as certain accessories including wallet, belt, bulky jewelry, money, keys, and cell phone. Removing all of these items will reduce the chance of needing additional screening after exiting the machine.

5. **Consider Your Shoes.** When you're picking out your shoes, you might typically be thinking "comfort" or "style." On a day you are boarding a plane, you might also want to think "on and off at security."

Your shoes have to go on the conveyer belt for X-ray (not in a bin), leaving you barefoot or in socks through the metal detector. It's probably not the best day to wear lace-up boots or shoes you have to triple tie. Consider slippers.

6. **Consider Your Clothing.** For security, that means not wearing metal you forgot about through the walk-through metal detectors, risking extra screening.

Think when you are getting dressed. The trendy metal studs on those jeans might make them your favorites, but they also might set off the alarm. Underwire in a bra can set off the metal detector. Do you have a different choice?

When you get to the X-ray belt, do your own pat down to find items like your cell phone, keys, watch, belt with heavy buckle, large earrings, coins, hair clips, etc., and toss them in an X-ray container.

7. **Children.** Please take infants and children out of baby carriers and strollers and take them through the metal detector. Strollers and baby carriers go through the X-ray machine with your bags. If possible, collapse the stroller before arriving at the metal detector. For more information on traveling with children
8. **Pets.** Please remove all animals from their carrying cases and send the case through the X-ray machine. Hold your pet in your arms and proceed through the metal detector.
9. **Pack Your Coat in Checked Luggage if you don't need it immediately upon arrival.** This is one less item to hassle with at security.
10. **Pack Your Carry-on Bag Neatly.** Your music player, phone charger, computer mouse—innocent electronics. But if they are jumbled up in your bag, they might not appear so innocent to the security officer viewing the X-ray.

It's best to separate electronics and lay them out on a layer of clothes. Place another layer of clothes on top. Have your zip-lock bag of liquids, lotions and gels on the top for easy access when you get to security.
11. **Electronics.** When possible, do not pack oversized electronics (laptops, full-size video game consoles, DVD players and video cameras that use cassettes) in checked baggage. These items must be removed from carry-on bags and submitted separately for X-ray screening. Small electronics such as iPods can remain in carry-on baggage.
12. **Liquids, Lotions and Gels.** You can carry on only small containers of liquids, lotions and gels (3.4 ounce or less). All of those bottles have to go in one clear, quart-sized zip-lock bag per passenger.

But double-check your carry-ons. Gel shoe insert? Regular-sized toothpaste tube with most of the toothpaste gone? Both are no-no's. Every container must be 3.4 ounces or less. Check your jeans pocket, purse, and briefcase for any other items that need to be in this zip-lock bag.

Once you go through security, you can take those items out of the zip-lock bag.

Keep this rule in mind when you are packing food as well. Crackers and trail mix are examples of food items that are allowed. Apple sauce and pudding packs are not allowed. Remember, anything sticky must be in a 3.4 oz or smaller container. Exceptions are allowed for medicine and baby bottles. For complete information go to www.tsa.gov/311
13. **Medications.** You can either keep your medication in the original containers or use a daily dosage container. It is recommended to travel with your prescriptions in the event of any questions by security. ALWAYS travel with your medical in your carry-on bag in the event your checked bag is lost.
14. **Medical Conditions/Disabilities.** Advise security personal if you have a pacemaker so you do not go through a metal detector. For information on medical conditions and disabilities and security questions, go to www.tsa.gov
15. **Film.** Undeveloped film should go in carry-on bags. Passengers will be able to declare film that is faster than 800 speed to a TSA agent for physical inspection to avoid being X-rayed.
16. **Leave Gifts Unwrapped.** Security officers might have to unwrap gifts to inspect them, holding up not only you but also those people in line behind you.
17. **Prohibited items.** For a list of prohibited items in your carry-on, go to www.tsa.gov
18. **Think Before You Speak.** Inappropriate jokes, belligerent behavior, and threats will not be tolerated. They will result in delays and possibly missing flight departures. Local law enforcement may be called as necessary.