

Important Travel Tips for Seniors



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The world has never been more connected. Today's global economy means that job opportunities, friends, loved ones, and vacation destinations are all within reach. Our seniors are enjoying their later years by getting to visit places they never had the time or opportunity to in the past. Between the mass amounts of people traveling and the modern day security screenings, things can get pretty hectic. There are a few things we can do to make traveling as a senior a little smoother.

Prior research and planning go a long way towards making modern day travel a positive experience. There are many things to consider. If you are leaving the country you will need a [passport](#). These are easy to acquire but it may take a few weeks to a month to receive your passport after you apply. If you take prescribed medicine make sure you have enough for your trip and a few extra days worth if possible. Sometimes this comes with a doctor's approval, depending on the prescription. Travel delays are common. Do not pack your medicine in a checked bag for a flight, since bags sometimes do not make it to their destination immediately. Make sure you keep your medicine with you on your person at all times.

If you are planning to fly to your destination, planning ahead will get you some conveniences. This also gives you the largest amount of options for ticket prices and seating. The closer you

are to the travel date, the more likely you will run into booked tickets, and steeper prices. Try to book [direct](#) flights whenever possible. This reduces the risk of flight delays and means you won't have to change planes in between your destination. Book your ticket early so that aisle or window airplane seating will still be available and you won't have to take the cramped middle seat. If you are disabled or have other special needs take advantage of special services offered by the airport or airline such as wheelchair assistance and early boarding. They can take you from dropoff to jetway in a wheelchair or cart and assist you in getting through security. Even if you don't normally use a wheelchair, the long distances and time spent standing in lines might be difficult. Wheelchair assistance also allows you to pre board the aircraft if you need a bit of extra time to make it down the narrow aisles. Make sure to select these or other special services when booking your ticket.

One of the biggest inconveniences with flying is getting through the long lines of security screening. This provides a unique set of challenges to the elderly. Prior planning can help make this process easier too. If you have trouble standing for long periods of time or balancing while removing shoes and jackets, consider getting the wheelchair assist when you purchase your ticket. Wear shoes that are easy to take off and jackets that are easy for you to remove as well. If you have had medical implants or surgeries such as hip or knee replacement, bring documentation from your doctor as this will help you through the screening process. Pack your medications in a bag that you will keep on your person. Declare your [medications](#), especially if they are liquid or require ice to keep cool when travelling, as these will be screened by security.

Driving offers a lot of flexibility in your travel plans. You can come and go as you please and will have transportation to get around when you get there. You can stop when you get tired and have much more control over your itinerary. You can stop and take advantage of scenic overlooks or other interests along your route. Plan your route and expected stops in advance if you can. [Inspect](#) your vehicle prior to your trip for proper tire inflation, fluid levels, lights, and wiper blades. Cross country road trips are a wonderful way to see the country.

While you are away, make sure you focus on enjoying your trip and not worrying about your home. Some simple steps will [secure your home](#) and reduce the risk of burglary while you are away. If you are not taking your car, park it in the garage and make sure the doors are locked and the alarm is set if so equipped. Make sure all the [doors](#) and windows in your house are locked. Consider getting motion lights for the exterior of your home and leaving a few internal lights on while you are away. Cancel mail and newspaper delivery so you do not advertise that no one is home. Taking these precautions will help keep your belongings secure while you enjoy your travels.

Proper planning and taking advantages of offered services can make traveling a great experience. There are some special considerations for elderly travelers. Wheelchair assistance at airports can mitigate a lot of these challenges. Booking flights that require less connections will help reduce the inconveniences of flying. Keeping medications close, showing paperwork for medical implants that may affect screening, and getting assistance going through security will make your flight plans easier. If you will be taking a road trip, inspect your vehicle before you

head out. Don't forget to secure your home before you leave so you can focus on enjoying your trip and destination.