

Flying This Summer?

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Nonetheless, we want to be cautious and take precautions from the time you enter the airport until you depart the airport at the end of your journey. One easy step is to register for TSA Precheck, which allows passengers to bypass crowded security lines, saving time and reducing the number of contacts.

Secure your boarding passes online before arriving at the airport, which also minimizes the number of contacts you will have with airport employees. You don't have the same level of good air filtration and airflow in the airports as you do in the planes, so you want to minimize the amount of time you spend in the airport.

A carry-on bag minimizes the time spent in crowded baggage areas at both the beginning and end of your flight. Make sure that your carry-on is small enough to fit in the overhead compartment. If it isn't, you may be able to check it at the gate. Although you will still have to deal with the baggage claim area upon your arrival, you can avoid dealing with that issue at the departure airport.

If your flight is long, or if you have a layover, you should consider packing your own lunch and a snack. Many airport restaurants are not operating at capacity and packing your own food will minimize your contact with other passengers and employees as you stand in line to order. Collapsible storage containers are perfect for keeping food fresh, if you are not inclined to use plastic sandwich bags.

Masks are still required on all airlines. You should bring four or five masks and change them out every three to four hours. It's best to double mask or use an N-95 or KN-95 mask to assure maximum protection. Find one that fits comfortably, because you will be using it for multiple hours at a time.

It's also important that you wash your hands a lot when you can't, use sanitizer. And, if you can, find one that contains a moisturizer since skin dries out in airplanes. Look for one that has at least 60% alcohol. Stay in your seat as much as you can to avoid contact with others on the plane.

Although airlines report that they clean the plane between flights, it's a good idea to wipe down the armrest, tray table, seat belt and general seat area when you first board the plane. Alcohol wipes are good for this, so put a few in a zip lock bag, so that you can easily access them and then dispose of the ones that you have already used. Check the labels to find those that kill 99.9% of the viruses.

Public charging states make you more vulnerable to hacking and malware, and also require that you stand or sit close to other passengers, so bring along a portable charging device when you travel to assure that you will not run out of power for your phone, iPad or computer. If you travel frequently, consider investing in a charger that has a capacity of at least 10,000mAh. If

you are taking a short, direct flight, a charger with an under 5,000mAh rating should work.

Because your phone rests all over when you travel, consider investing in a portable UV light sanitizer that help keep it clean. That UV light can kill everything from bacteria and fungi to viruses themselves, although no one is sure that it will kill the Covid-19 virus. UV light can get into the nooks and crannies and is much more effective than wipes. It works like a mini-tanning bed for your phone.

While the airlines often provide earphones, it is not as hygienic as bringing a comfortable pair from home. If you want to watch movies, bring headphones that can plug into the screen.

Finally, consider bringing along a neck pillow. Choose one that provides a removable, washable cover. Once you reach your destination, toss the cover in the wash, so it will be ready for your next trip. Then, try to relax and enjoy your flight.