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Air Trip Reminders - Getting To Your Flight On Time

It shouldn't be a shocking statement to say that arriving on time is important when traveling. Why would this even need to be discussed? Because so many people don't! If you want to make sure you are never stressed out by being late, there are some things you should do.

The tendency is to book flights to get you to the ship, or the tour, or the wedding just exactly when you need to be there. This ultimately leads to a lot of stress. Scheduling an early flight that gets you there ahead of time is the stress-free alternative.

Why get there early? You may have some time to wait around, but at least you know you won't be racing around late if there is an airline delay.

What if your flight is delayed or cancelled? With fewer flights, it'll be harder to get on the next plane out if this happens to you. Winter time can bring obvious delays due to snowy weather, but you also have to consider the likelihood of thunderstorms messing things up even in the middle of summer in many countries. There are summertime delays every year. The past performance records can tell you what to expect from a flight to some extent, but they won't tell you if bad weather is coming on the day you want to fly.

If you're traveling abroad, you have to worry about monsoons, transiting foreign airports, or customs delays (like when they decided my [Plumeria](#) was not ready to enter the states), if you need to exit to connect to another airline for a longer trip.

The first flight of the day is generally your best bet for avoiding delays. Those delays have a domino effect and get worse throughout the day.

When possible, select the city with the sunniest weather to schedule transfers. In some cases you can choose your airports according to their record of delay, but keep in mind that many major hubs will be the only option for a transfer in some places. Hubs always have more delays than other airports. They can't help it; this comes natural to hubs.

Some other reasons for delays include weather (think Chicago-ORD) or alignment of runways (think San Francisco-SFO).

It's time to jump back to the initial idea of this piece and remember the importance of arriving early. Fly at least 24 hours before you need to be there (or back home). If you're connecting, be sure your layover is at least two hours. You may hate the idea of waiting in the airport for the layover, but it will save you from a missed connection if your first flight gets delayed. Now what?

In the event you have no choice but to schedule a close call connection, there should always be a back-up plan. Booking a new connection is always easier if you know your options.

Make sure to start your trip off right by getting the airport on time at the beginning of your trip. On my [All Inclusive Couples Resorts Hawaii](#) trip last month I forgot this fundamental point. Most airlines now cut off check in for domestic flights 30 minutes to flight time. If you show up with less than a half hour to spare and you need to check bags, you are going to be out of luck. Even if you have thirty or forty minutes to spare, you could get caught in security and still not make it. Forget fast security checks; just assume you are going to hit delays there.

Bottom line, book the earliest flight possible, get to the airport with plenty of time to spare, and try to schedule loose connections. You will have a far more enjoyable trip if you get there a day ahead, get some rest, and overcome your jet lag stress free.

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