Neale's Guide to Packing Light

You should be able to fit a week's worth of stuff in a backpack. For trips over a week, you should still take only the backpack, and wash laundry.

# Suitcase

I can't recommend the [Rolo Travel Bag](http://www.rolotravel.com/) enough. You can pack clothing and gadgets pretty tightly, and even cram things into it as you're rolling it up.

A backpack would work too.

Roll your clothes and iron things that need it when you arrive. They're going to get wrinkly no matter what.

# Clothes

Jeans are versatile and don't typically need to be washed. T shirts are lightweight: in colder months, bring two second-layer shirts to put over them. If you need dress shirts, well, that's going to add some bulk, sorry.

3 of things lets you wear one, wash one, dry one.

Ex Officio isn't over-rated: their stuff really does dry faster.

If you are a dude, try to get over yourself and buy a Speedo. They make more modest ones with more coverage, but any spandexy swimsuit is going to pack down to almost nothing. Women are typically used to form-fitting swimsuits and don't get a lecture.

The money belt is your safe. You may even want to wear it to sleep, depending on where you're staying.

* 1 pair of jeans (worn)
* 1 pair chinos or slacks (maybe not necessary)
* 3-7 Ex Officio T-Shirts
* 3 pairs socks
* 3 pairs Ex Officio boxers
* Swimsuit (for vacation trips)
* Flipflops or flexible sandals
* Nicer shoes (worn)
* Sport jacket (for men)
* Money belt

# Toiletries

I like little gadgets: I found a slim electric toothbrush at our Kroger grocery store, and an "eyebrow trimmer" that also works as a beard trimmer and shaver. Both use a single AA battery. If you shave instead of trim, there are tons of "travel shavers" to choose from, or you could bring a disposable "safety" razor.

Most hotels provide shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. If I bring sunscreen I get the solid kind so it doesn't leak.

I like to bring a little bar of soap for washing me and my clothes, mostly so I don't have to throw away a whole bar of soap when I check out of hotels.

Benadryl works great to help you sleep on the plane, Aspirin is a good analgesic that has no bad interactions with alcohol.

* Toothbrush, trial size toothpaste
* Pencil-size electric razor
* Hotel bar soap
* Small medicine container
  + Aspirin (for headache, hangover)
  + Benadryl (sleep aid, allergies, flu)
  + Your meds here (thyroid?)
* Comb or brush
* First aid
  + 4 bandages
  + 3 cleaning pads
  + 3 antibiotic ointment

# Electronics

Your smartphone can do a ton of stuff: camera, maps, books, movies, journal, and more. An extension cord can be a game changer if you're stuck in an airport with only a few power outlets. Similarly, having extra USB charging capacity can make friends. Anker makes the best USB power things, that don't catch fire or overdrive your devices.

Do you really need a laptop? Unless you're on a business trip, the answer is probably no. If the answer isn't no, could you bring a (small, lightweight, inexpensive, 10-hour battery) Chromebook?

Be sure everything you bring says "110-240V 50-60Hz". This means it'll work anywhere in the world without an expensive AC power converter.

Don't bring a US surge protector: it will fry in most other countries. If you're worried about it, buy one there.

* Power plug adapter
* US extension cord with three 2-pronged outlets
* 2-port USB charger
* Smart phone
* Solar USB charger if called for
* Extra phone battery

# Documents

* Wallet
  + Credit card
  + Driver license or ID
* Passport
* Backup credit card
* ATM card
* Photocopies, in money belt
  + Passport page with photo
  + Credit card back
  + Birth certificate
  + Itinerary
  + Travel insurance information
  + Photos of travel companions

# Other junk

A nicely-folding nylon grocery bag can be handy, if for nothing else, then as luggage to bring home souvenirs.

Bring a U2F device, or Google authenticator + list of backup codes, so you can use internet cafés without worrying as much about crooks getting into your accounts.

I like the Leatherman Style PS or Gerber Shard as a pocket tool: I've had no trouble with either in airport security. I make sure to open all the doodads on the Leatherman before putting it through the X-Ray machine, so the screener can identify the parts more easily. I've have had TSA folks thank me for doing this.

Earbuds that seal in your ears take hardly any space and double as earplugs. They also work on the plane's in-seat entertainment thingy. I like the kind with a microphone built in, for phone and video calls. The Bose noise-cancelling earbuds are not over-hyped: they are amazing, if spendy. But you can do well with normal (cheaper) earbuds too. Get the kind with the silicone or "marshmallow" pieces to form a seal in your ear canal: this will help cut down external noise.

* Folded-up nylon bag
* Leatherman PS or Gerber Shard
* Yubikey or one-time password list
* Insulated sealable water bottle
* Plastic or bamboo cutlery
* Business cards
* Noise-blocking earbuds with mic

# For The Flight

A couple items that pack flat can make a huge difference in how you feel when you arrive after an overnight trip.

I love Benadryl as a mild but effective sleep pill. Try it before the trip to make sure it puts you to sleep, though: for some people it works like coffee!

* Sleep mask
* Foam earplugs
* Inflatable neck pillow
* Benadryl
* A movie or two on your phone