

## Air Travel Tips for Parents of Young Children

Are you the parent of an infant, toddler, or preschooler? If you are, are you also in the process of planning a trip that requires air travel? If you are, you may be dreading your upcoming flight. After all, complications are all that many parents can think of. With that said, there are a number of ways that you can make flying with your young children not only easy, but fun as well.

For children under two years of age, you will first want to examine the pros and cons of getting them their own seat. Many airlines allow children under two to sit on the lap of an adult. Getting an extra seat for a child under two will cost money, but you may be able to get a small discount when contacting the airline in question. On the other hand, you will be able to have your own seat, which will be nice. Most car seats can fit into airline seats. Speaking of which, if you need to bring a car seat or a stroller, it will need to be scanned by airport security.

As for strollers, they are a good idea, even for children who can walk. Most parents of toddlers are urged to give them a close look. Most airlines will require you to handover your stroller before boarding a plane. Once you arrive at your destination, your stroller should be waiting for you at the gate. Using a stroller makes it easy for you to move around the airport and quickly. This is ideal if you must hurry, like if you have short layovers.

Also, be sure to bring some formula, juice, and snacks for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Although you will find some restrictions, most airport security officers will allow a child's drink to pass through, as long as it is a small quantity only. As for older children, like toddlers and preschoolers, you should be able to buy juice, water, and snacks at an airport store past security checkpoints. Doing so is nice, as there are no security concerns about doing so.

It is also important to bring a bag for your child. This bag should be filled with items that interest them. Depending on the age of your child, great items include books, stickers, coloring books and few crayons, small toys, and flash cards. These items will have to be scanned through airport security, so try to leave anything, namely toys, at home that may cause complications or delays.

Speaking of airport security, it is important to talk about the screening process and prepare your child for it. For many toddlers and preschoolers, the whole ordeal can seem a little bit overwhelming and scary. Your child will likely have to walk through the metal detectors themselves. If you are traveling with another adult, have one go through first, so that your child can walk towards a familiar face. You may even want to arrive at the airport early. This gives your child the opportunity to watch others go through the screening process first.

As for the flight itself, toddlers and preschoolers may love having a window seat. If someone in your traveling party is assigned a window seat, try to let your toddler or preschool sit there instead. As for the bag full of goodies you

brought, refrain from giving everything to your child all at once. This is likely to reduce boredom. For children who may have their own seats, portable DVD players and laptop computers are advised. They are a great way to keep a fussy child occupied. If using a laptop computer, be sure not to choose a movie that will exceed the laptop's battery life, as this may result in a very unhappy child.

The above mentioned tips are just a few of the many that can help you, as a parent, when traveling by air with young children. For addition tips, just use your best judgment. As a parent, you should know what will help to keep your child interested and happy.

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