

Enlist the kids. "My 12-yearold has been packing her suitcase for two years, and my 9-year-old started packing his carry-on at 7," says Jamie Pearson, a blogger at travelsavvymom.com. Make it fun by downloading the Packing Pro app (\$2.99) to your tablet or smartphone and letting the kids borrow it. Input a packing list for them, and they can check off items as they go.

Don't waste time folding.

Instead, lay your clothes flat in a pile, says Doug Dyment, the expert behind onebag.com. Anything silk, linen, or wrinkle-prone goes on the bottom. When you're done, place a small flat bag filled with underwear and socks on top of your duds. Then wrap each piece of clothing around the bag to form one compact, amazingly wrinkle-resistant bundle.

Prep for security. Set out comfy clothes and shoes for the plane so the next morning runs smoother. And don't stress if your kids want to wear their lace-ups: Children 12 and under can now leave shoes on, thanks to new TSA rules. Also, go ahead and stash iPods, Game Boys, and cameras in your carryons; only laptops need to come out at security. —ASHLEY NIEDRINGHAUS