



## A Guide to Help You Go Wisely

Announcing a new regular department in *The Language Educator*: **THE SAVVY TRAVELER—Advice for Smart Travel and Study Abroad**. Each issue, we will present ideas and advice for how to make overseas travel and study a great success for you and your students! We begin in this issue with an article about how little things can make a big difference when traveling. In the future, we will not only offer tips and strategies, but we will also focus on successful programs and stories of student and educator experiences abroad.

Submit your travel-related ideas and articles for THE SAVVY TRAVELER to us via e-mail at [scutshall@actfl.org](mailto:scutshall@actfl.org).

## THE SMALL STUFF COUNTS By Susanna Zaraysky

When we travel, we first think of buying plane tickets, booking accommodations, purchasing travel insurance, and other major tasks. But sometimes the smallest items can make a huge difference in our travel experience and save us money, time, and mental and physical strain along the way.

As a language educator, you may often find yourself the leader of a group of students traveling abroad for the first time—and they will look to you for guidance on how to make their travel experience safer and more enjoyable. Here are 12 small things to pack to save money and improve your trip:

### 1. EARPLUGS/IPOD

Loud planes, trains, buses, ferries, and hotels can make traveling and sleeping difficult. Your economic accommodations may happen to be near a busy street or bus stop. Earplugs are cheap and can help you sleep by tuning out noise. They are almost indispensable when sitting on a plane, train, or bus next to crying babies or loud passengers whose conversations or music you don't want to hear. A pack of earplugs costs a few dollars and can be found in most drugstores.

Listening to music or language-related podcasts can be a great way to pass the time when traveling and we all know some students today who can't go anywhere without their favorite tunes providing a background soundtrack. On the other hand, you may want to warn your students about "tuning out" too much during the trip by listening to their iPod or MP3 player all the time. It is important that they hear the language being spoken around them on the bus and in the marketplace. So, the best advice might be: Try earplugs when you need to relax or sleep and iPods sparingly when appropriate, but also make sure to listen to the sounds around you at other times to get significant exposure to the language and local culture.

### 2. IMMERSION HEATER

Do you need your tea or coffee in the morning? Would you like a hot drink before going to bed? A simple immersion heater is an

appliance that will save you money daily. An immersion heater is an electric coil with which you can boil water. People on a limited budget who are avoiding restaurant meals find it invaluable. Place it in a cup of water, plug it in, and you will quickly have boiling water. It not only kills disease organisms, it also lets you make a hot cup of tea, coffee, cocoa, or soup. You can even cook an egg by bringing the water to a boil, removing the heater, dropping in the egg, and waiting a few minutes.

Small, lightweight immersion heaters are inexpensive and available in dual voltages, though you may still need a plug adapter. You can buy a new immersion heater locally in most developed countries. Better-quality versions of these have thermostatic shut-offs. If you purchase a cheaper one, be sure that the coil is immersed in liquid whenever the unit is plugged in.

#### Where to buy:

[www.letravelstore.com](http://www.letravelstore.com)

(Check here for immersion heaters and other travel products.)

### 3. EXTRA MEMORY CARD

Camera memory cards can be very expensive abroad, especially in tourist areas. If you want to download your photos to your computer and have a backup in case your computer gets stolen while abroad, bring an extra memory card. Most electronics are more expensive abroad than in the United States, so do your shopping at home.

### 4. FLASHLIGHT

It's wise to have a small battery-powered flashlight. If you stay in a hostel with dormitory style rooms, you and your dorm mates will appreciate your flashlight. When you enter the room late at night and everyone else is sleeping, you can use your flashlight to rummage through your backpack to find your toothbrush instead of turning on the lights and waking everyone up.

## 5. COLORED SUITCASES OR MARKED SUITCASES

You have 20 students getting off a plane and you need to hurry to get on the bus to your hotel. Make your luggage stand out for easy recognition at the luggage carousel. Black suitcases are the most common, so go for a different look. If you do have a common-looking piece of luggage, put a big piece of tape on it with your initials or wrap colored rope around it so that you can easily spot it. Don't tie ribbons or scarves on the suitcase handles as they could get stuck in the carousel.

## 6. CLOTHING AND TOILETRIES FOR ONE DAY

If you will be separating your items between carry-on bags and checked-in luggage, make sure to pack enough clothes and toiletries for at least one day to carry on. Your checked-in suitcase may be delayed and you will want to change your clothes, brush your teeth, and handle other hygiene matters after your flight. Make sure your liquid items don't exceed the maximum allowed quantity of (3 oz or 100 ml) or else they will be confiscated at security.

## 7. VACUUM PACKING BAGS (TRAVEL SPACE BAGS)

My recent discovery of vacuum packing bags has been wonderful. The plastic bags come in different sizes, each of which will carry several pieces of clothing. By simply squeezing and rolling, you can remove the air that creates bulk. Just fill the bag with your clothes, roll it to push out the air, seal it, and pack it in your luggage. You can reduce the volume in your luggage by 50% with these bags. They are great for bulky items like sweaters and pillows. If you have wet garments or dirty laundry, you can pack them in these bags and you won't have to worry about the smell or moisture of the clothes stinking up your entire suitcase or bag.

### Where to buy:

The Container Store, Home Depot, Target, or online at: [www.spacebag.com/travelbag](http://www.spacebag.com/travelbag)

## 8. EXTRA PLASTIC OR CLOTH BAGS

Always pack some extra compact bags that you can use for dirty laundry, packing, or even when shopping. In some countries, you get charged for each plastic bag you use at a grocery store. Save a few cents and create less trash.

## 9. TRAVEL POUCH

This is probably the most important item to bring with you besides your wallet—and one you must tell your students about. Pickpockets love to lurk in your pockets, bags, backpacks, purses, and wallets. You need to hide your passport, money, plane tickets, and credit and bank cards from them. Travel pouches are like cloth envelopes with one or two pockets in which you can store your valuables. You can buy these in most travel and luggage supply stores or online. Some travel pouches hang from your neck. I advise against these as thieves can cut the band around your neck and catch the falling travel pouch. The safest pouch is a cloth travel belt with an elastic band that is worn on the waist. It can be somewhat inconvenient to wear,

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especially when it is hot, however it's worth it. Put only crucial items in there and avoid carrying physically large amounts of cash.

You should keep your passport in a plastic resealable bag. While traveling in Kiev in 1997, I had a travel pouch on my stomach. It was raining outside. The moisture on my skin seeped through the travel pouch and got the gold eagle paint on the outside of my passport wet. The gold paint went through the material of my passport and stained my passport photo, making it look fake. This was a disaster as I was leaving later the same day and had to go through customs with a suspicious-looking passport. Lesson learned. I always keep my passport in a re-sealable (Ziploc) bag inside my travel pouch.

**Where to buy:**

[www.eaglecreek.com](http://www.eaglecreek.com)

[www.worldtraveler.com](http://www.worldtraveler.com)

## 10. HIDDEN MONEY BELT

To really hide your money, you can fold your bills and stuff them into a hidden zippered security pocket within a belt that safely conceals currency. You wear the belt like a normal belt around your pants. It's adjustable and comes in just one size. This is a good option if you are afraid of getting something stolen. You can't put your passport or credit cards into this belt because it's too narrow, but it is a good place to hide money.

**Where to buy:**

[www.eaglecreek.com](http://www.eaglecreek.com)

[www.worldtraveler.com](http://www.worldtraveler.com)

## 11. TRAVEL PILLOWS

Long flights, train rides, and bus rides can make our necks feel horrible. Inflatable neck travel pillows, which wrap around your neck, can save you from neck strain. They provide a comfortable cushion for your neck when you fall asleep. The pillow is easy to carry; it's a foldable pouch that you blow up and then deflate when you are done.

**Where to buy:**


[www.eaglecreek.com/accessories/travel\\_comfort/](http://www.eaglecreek.com/accessories/travel_comfort/)

[www.ezysleep.com](http://www.ezysleep.com)

## 12. WATER BOTTLES


In some countries, tap water is not potable; you will either have to boil or treat tap water or buy bottled water. If you opt to buy water, buy a large container of water for your group to share and refill your smaller water bottles before leaving for the day. You will not only save money, you will use fewer plastic bottles that end up filling landfills if not recycled. Some hotel rooms have teakettles. You can also use an immersion water heater as described above. Boil the water at night, let it cool overnight, and fill your bottles with the clean water in the morning.

*Susanna Zaraysky has written two books on the secrets of budget travel and easy foreign language education. You can learn more about her new books scheduled for May publication at [www.createyourworldbooks.com](http://www.createyourworldbooks.com).*



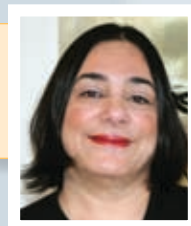
### AT THE ACTFL ONLINE STORE

*Millennials Rising*  
by Neil Howe and William Strauss



**N**early two decades ago, in *Generations*, Howe and Strauss predicted many of the youth trends America is seeing today. In *Millennials Rising*, the authors show how today's teens are recasting the image of youth from downbeat and alienated to upbeat and engaged. The authors also show how Millennials are held to higher standards than adults apply to themselves and how they are a lot less violent, vulgar, and sexually charged than the teen culture older people are producing for them. Howe and Strauss make the compelling case that Millennials are recasting entirely what it means to be young and that, in time, they could emerge as the next great generation.

Neil Howe captivated language educators attending the Opening General Session at the 2008 ACTFL Convention in Orlando with his discussion of generations, and the Millennials in particular, based on this very popular book. Autographed copies of *Millennials Rising* are now available in the ACTFL Online Store. Go to [www.actfl.org](http://www.actfl.org), click on Membership → Online Store.



### TLE SPOTLIGHT ON . . . Laura Franklin

Laura Franklin is truly a citizen of the world. Born in Virginia of a Brazilian mother and an Italian father, she has lived in many places around the globe and currently teaches French at Northern Virginia Community College. She has studied French language and literature all of her life, but credits her greatest inspiration to teach to John Andrew Frey, whom she calls her teacher, mentor, and friend. Franklin has been rewarded for her efforts with honors such as the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award and most recently the ACTFL/FDP-Houghton Mifflin Award for Excellence in Foreign Language Instruction Using Technology with IALTT in 2007. She is also known for her work with MERLOT, the Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching, where she is a founding co-editor for world languages. Franklin is serving as chair of the 2009 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

"Whether I teach face to face, hybrid classes, or completely online, I always try to establish an interactive learning community where language is flowing in all directions—from student to student, teacher to student, and student to the world beyond our class," says Franklin. She sees technology as the bridge that will make language study possible for all students, and notes, "To make instruction real-world, I believe in language exchanges, virtual study abroad, and field trips. Skype, Flickr, Twitter, and wikis all hold great potential as language teaching tools. If any class should be into social networking, it is the world language class."