

Cruise Packing List

Everything you need to bring, in one checklist

A cruise packing list is your checklist of clothing, toiletries, documents, and gear for a smooth sailing. Pack the core right and boarding day feels easy. Forget something and you cannot just run to a store mid-ocean, where onboard shops charge a premium for the basics.

Travel Documents & Money

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Passport or birth certificate	Required to board and clear customs
Government ID and cruise tickets	Checked at the terminal
Cash and cards	Small bills for port tips and taxis
Document copies	Backup if originals are lost

Clothing & Shoes

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Daywear and swimwear	Pool, sea days, and excursions
Evening smart-casual	Most dinners follow this code
One formal outfit	For chic or gala nights
Comfortable shoes	Walking ports and deck days

Toiletries

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Own shampoo and conditioner	Ships use all-in-one dispensers
Reef-safe sunscreen	Expensive to buy onboard
Wrinkle-release spray	Irons are banned as fire hazards
Toilet spray	Small bathrooms, thin walls

Health & Medication

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Prescriptions, original packaging	Needed for customs clearance
Seasickness tablets or bands	Rough seas happen
First-aid basics	Onboard medical care is costly
Pain relief and antacids	Fix most minor issues

Cabin & Cruise Must-Haves

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Magnetic hooks	Cabin walls are metal
Over-the-door organizer	Frees up tiny counter space
Power bank	Long port days drain phones
Reusable water bottle	Bottled water often costs extra

Day Bag & Excursions

ESSENTIAL	WHY IT MATTERS
Daypack or beach bag	Carries excursion gear
Dry bag	Keeps valuables dry on water trips
Waterproof phone case	Photos without the risk
Collapsible tote	Souvenirs and beach days

Pack by Trip Length

TRIP LENGTH	PACK FOR
3 to 4 days	Carry-on only, one nice outfit
5 to 6 days	A few more outfits, one formal night
7 to 8 days	Two formal or chic nights
Longer sailings	Same clothes, plus a laundry kit

Pack by Destination

DESTINATION	KEY ADDITIONS
Caribbean, Bahamas, Mexico	Light clothes, extra sunscreen
Europe or Mediterranean	Walking shoes, modest layers
Alaska	Waterproof shell, warm layers, gloves
Antarctica or Galapagos	Expedition gear per the cruise line

What NOT to Pack

LEAVE AT HOME	REASON
Irons and steamers	Fire hazards, use wrinkle spray
Surge-protected power strips	Banned on most lines
Candles and incense	Open flames are prohibited
Weapons and most drones	Not allowed onboard

Carry-On & Smart Tips

- Never check your passport, meds, or valuables, since they are hard to replace at sea.
- Pack swimwear and a cover-up so you can swim before your bags arrive.
- Bring a light sweater, since ships blast the air conditioning.
- Use color-coded packing cubes for each family member.
- Print your luggage tags before embarkation day.
- Build your list two weeks early to buy anything missing cheaply.

Quick Facts Summary

TOPIC	QUICK ANSWER
Most important item	Passport or birth certificate, required to board
Carry-on priority	Documents, meds, valuables, swimwear, spare clothes
Toiletries tip	Bring your own, ships use all-in-one dispensers
Banned items	Irons, steamers, surge power strips, candles
By trip length	3 to 4 days carry-on; 7 to 8 days adds formal nights
By destination	Sun gear for Caribbean, layers for Alaska and Europe
Common mistake	Overpacking for a small cabin with limited storage