

What do you often do before you go on a trip?



- First of all, you have to plan **where** your trip will be. You can pick up some holiday/travel brochures from the travel agency. Then you can look through the brochures and choose a destination.
- Then you have to plan **when** your trip will be. When you decide when, you should find information about the weather and the season (will it be winter or summer?). You need this information before packing your suitcase.
- **How long** are you going to stay? When do you **leave** and when do you **come back**?
- You also have to plan **how** to go (by plane, by ship, by train...). You can try to find the tickets on the Internet or at a travel agency.
- Before booking a holiday, you should **try to get information about your destination**. To do this, you can read holiday brochures, surf the Internet, buy a guide book, or call/write the hotel, hostel... where you want to stay. Later, when you arrive at the place, you can get more information from the **tourist information centre**. Try to get information about the following:
 - **Where** is the hotel (or apartment, etc.)? Is it in the centre of the city, in the mountains or near the beach?
 - What are the **rooms** like? Big or small? Are there double rooms (a bed for two people), single rooms (for one person), twin rooms (two beds)? Do the rooms have en-suite showers/bathrooms?
 - **How much** is a room per night? Is breakfast included?
 - What **facilities** are there (in the hotel, hostel, etc.)? Is there full board (breakfast, lunch and dinner) or half board (breakfast and dinner)? Is there a cafeteria, a bar, a bistro, a restaurant for meals? Is there a kitchen where you can prepare your own food? Is there room service? Is there a mini bar? Is there a safe? Is there air conditioning/central heating? Is there cable/satellite TV? Are there laundry facilities? Are there sports facilities (e.g. a gym, a swimming-pool, tennis courts...)? Is there wheelchair access? Is there a library, Internet access/connection, free Wi-Fi access, free parking/free car park, a TV room, a sauna, a spa...?
 - What is the **food** like?
 - What are the **booking procedures**? Do you need to pay a deposit? Can you pay by credit card? Can you pay (in) cash?
 - **Transport**: What's the cheapest way to get from the airport to the hotel? Is there good transport or should I hire a car?
 - What **interesting things** can I do and see?
- Then you have to **book** a holiday: book a (flight, train, bus) ticket and a room. You probably have to pay a deposit. You can book the hotel or flight ticket online.
- Possibly you may also need to **get vaccinations**, **get a tourist visa**, or **go shopping** to buy, for example, a backpack/rucksack, a battery for your camera, some strong boots, a hat, a phrase book, a sleeping bag, sunscreen/ suntan cream, a swimming costume...
 - Before leaving, you will have to **pick your ticket up from the travel agency**, except if it's an e-ticket, **pack your suitcase**, and include your travel documents (driving license, (plane) ticket, insurance, passport, (work/tourist) visa...).

Describing your holidays:

When you are talking about your (last) holidays you can follow the following scheme:

1. Start by describing **where you went on holiday, when and who with**:

[When I was a teenager I went on holiday with my parents to Brittany in France.](#)

[Last year my husband and I decided to go to Sweden.](#)

[Three years ago I decided to go on holiday on my own to the Seychelles.](#)

Verb expressions:

- Go **abroad** /ə'brɔ:ɪd/ (= go to a foreign country) vs. go on holiday in your country.
- Go **away for the weekend** (e.g. to London for shopping, to the mountains for long walks).
- Go **on holiday** to a place: [I went on holiday to Thailand.](#)
- Go **camping**/ go **skiing**.

Expressions of time: last year, last summer, last Christmas, two years ago, when I was 20, etc.

Expressions of place: go to (a place). It's in the north/west/ southeast/ centre of... Spain. It's on the coast.

▪ **Continents, oceans, countries and cities:**

Names of continents: Africa, America, Antarctica, Asia, Australia, Europe.

Names of oceans: the Atlantic/Pacific/Indian/Arctic/Antarctic Ocean.

Africa: Morocco (Marrakech), Egypt (Cairo), South Africa (Cape Town).

Indian ocean: the Seychelles, the Maldives, Mauritius.

America: Canada (Vancouver, Toronto), the United States (San Francisco, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Washington DC, Orlando, Miami), the Dominican Republic (Punta Cana, Puerto Plata), Jamaica (Kingston), Mexico (Cancun, Mexico City), Brazil (Rio de Janeiro), Peru (Lima), Chile (Santiago), Argentina (Buenos Aires)...

Asia: China (Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong), India (Delhi), Thailand (Bangkok), Japan (Tokyo).

Australia: Australia (Sydney, Melbourne), New Zealand (Auckland, Christchurch).

Europe: Ireland (Dublin), Scotland (Edinburgh, Glasgow), England (London, Oxford, Cambridge, the Lake District), Denmark (Copenhagen), Norway (Oslo), Sweden (Stockholm), Finland (Helsinki), the Netherlands (Amsterdam, the Hague), Germany (Berlin, Munich), Belgium (Brussels, Bruges), France (Paris), Switzerland (Zurich, Geneva), Austria (Vienna), the Czech Republic (Prague), Italy (Milan, Venice, Florence, Rome), Portugal (Lisbon, Madeira), Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands).

▪ **Describing the place/s where you stayed:**

Adjectives to describe the hotel: It was comfortable/uncomfortable; clean/ dirty; luxurious/basic.

Adjectives to describe the town/city: beautiful/ugly, boring/interesting and exciting, big/small, noisy/peaceful; crowded, friendly, lovely, historical, safe, polluted...

It was a ... place/city/town: **It was a beautiful city. It was quite small, very safe and friendly.**

The nightlife was fantastic. The food was delicious and quite cheap.

Things the place had:

It had a population of ...: **It had a population of 300,000 people.**

There was a festival/carnival/ a theme park... : **There was a festival in June called Sao Joao.**

There were... **lots of narrow streets, lots of historical monuments, outdoor bars and restaurants.**

It was full of ... **churches, museums, and (street) markets.**

The biggest tourist attraction was ...: **The biggest tourist attraction in Porto was the river - we went on a boat trip.**

The best thing was/things were...: **I think the best things about Porto were the people and the atmosphere.**

More about the place:

It's famous for...: **Porto is famous for port wine, so we drank this wine every evening.**

It's great for...: **It's great for walking around, so we went walking every day.**

2. Type of holiday: what kind of holiday was it?

an adventure holiday (in the Himalayas, a safari in/through Africa)

a backpacking holiday (around Europe)

a camping holiday (in Australia)

a cultural holiday/ a sightseeing holiday (in Europe, in North America)

a cruise (in the Pacific Ocean)

a package holiday (to a holiday resort like the Canaries) vs. travel independently

a skiing holiday/ a climbing holiday/ a walking holiday (in Switzerland)

a beach/sea holiday (in the Greek islands, in the Caribbean, in the Mediterranean)

Trips:

A business trip, a work trip, a school trip, a research trip, a shopping trip...



- **Travel nouns:**

- **journey:** when you travel from one place to another in a vehicle (it's related to the movement): *It's a two-hour train journey from York to London.*
- **trip:** when you go on a journey (e.g. for a holiday, on business...), and come back again (it's related to the movement and the stay): *Do you want to go on the school trip to France this year?*
- **travel:** uncountable, it implies the activity of moving from place to place; it's used more often as a verb: *The new job involves a fair amount of travel.*

3. Transport. How did you get there?

Public transport: travel by airplane/plane, boat, bus/coach, taxi, ferry, ship, train, tram, underground.

Private transport: travel by bike/ bicycle, car, motorbike/ motorcycle...

Verbs:

Get in/ into a taxi, a car; get out of a taxi, a car.

Get on/get off an airplane, a bus, a boat/ ferry/ ship, a train/tram/underground, a bicycle, a motorcycle.



- At an airport:

terminal (building): a large building at an airport where passengers wait to get on planes.

check-in (desk): a place where you report your arrival at an airport, hotel, hospital etc.

passport control: the place where your passport is checked when you leave or enter a country.

security: the department of a company or organization that deals with the protection of its buildings and equipment.

departures

departure lounge: the place at an airport where people wait until their plane is ready to leave.

gates: *Air France flight 76 leaves from gate 6A.*

runway: a long specially prepared hard surface like a road on which aircraft land and take off.

baggage reclaim: the place at an airport where you collect your cases and bags after a flight.

customs: the place where your bags are checked for illegal goods when you go into a country.

arrivals

baggage drop-off: where you deliver your baggage.

lifts

trolley: a large container with wheels that you push and use for carrying things in a supermarket or at an airport.

toilets

- What do you do at the airport? When you arrive at the airport, you go into the **terminal** building. You check in for your flight at the **check-in desk**. You show your passport at **passport control** and then go through **security**, where they check that you are not carrying any weapons. If you have time, you can wait for your flight in the **departure lounge**. When your flight is called, you go through the departure **gate** in order to get onto the plane. The plane then takes off from the **runway**. After your plane has landed, you go to the **baggage reclaim** to collect your bags, then go through **customs** and **immigration**, where they check your passport and your bags. You then go out into the **arrivals** area.

4. Types of accommodation: Where did you stay?

To stay in a flat/an apartment (AmE), in a bed and breakfast (B&B), at a campsite, in a country house, in a hotel, in a (beach, ski) resort, in a hostel, in a youth hostel, with friends ...

To rent an apartment, rent a house (on the beach/in the mountains).

5. How long were you there? For seven nights/ For two weeks.

6. What was the weather like? Did you have good weather?

▪ The weather can be:

- **sunny/ good/ lovely/ great** ≠ **bad/terrible**: [The weather was great. It was always sunny.](#)

- **bright** - when the sun shines strongly ≠ **cloudy** - when there are a lot of clouds in the sky

- **dry** - when it does not rain ≠ **wet/ rainy** - when there is a lot of rain.

▪ Weather nouns: **heatwave /heat wave, cold spell, cloud, fog, snow, sun, wind, rain, storm, thunder.**

[There was a heatwave.](#) / [There was a terrible storm.](#)

[There was a lot of rain last summer.](#)

▪ Weather adjectives: **cloudy, foggy, snowy, sunny, windy, rainy, stormy** (=there is strong wind, heavy rain and dark clouds), **thundery** (=the kind of weather that comes before a thunderstorm) ...

[The weather was terrible. It was cloudy and very windy.](#)

[It was thundery one day, but the other days it was sunny and dry.](#)

▪ Temperature words:



-freezing
-below zero
-below freezing

cold

cool

warm

hot

-boiling
-boiling hot



[It was freezing/hot every day.](#)

[It was boiling in the hotel, because there was no air-conditioning.](#)

Expressions:

[It was 25 degrees \(Celsius\) every day.](#)

[There was an average \(daytime\) temperature of 30°C.](#)

7. Holiday activities: What did you do during the day? And at night?

▪ **Travelling**: to go by car/bus/plane/train to a place, hire/rent a car/ a motorcycle/ a bicycle/ a boat... Take a gondola ride = go on a gondola.

Notice: **Rent** = for a long period of time (rent a flat). **Hire** = for a short time (hire skis, a bike).

▪ **Sightseeing**: to cruise (along a river), go on a coach/helicopter tour of (a place), go on a cruise (on a river), go on a tour of (a castle/cathedral...), go on an excursion to (a place), go sightseeing, tour (a place), visit (a place, a town), watch (something).

[We cruised along the River Seine.](#) / [We went on a cruise on the River Seine.](#)

[We went on a helicopter tour of the Statue of Liberty.](#)

[We went on an excursion to the Pyramids.](#)

[We visited Covent Garden, St Paul's Cathedral and the Crown Jewels.](#)

[We toured a new factory.](#)

[We watched the Changing of the Guard.](#)

▪ **Art and culture**: to go to an art gallery, go to the theatre, go to a museum, go to an exhibition of paintings/photographs/sculptures..., visit a castle/ a cathedral/ a church/ a monastery/ a palace/ a square/ a tower...

[We visited the Vatican Museums.](#)

▪ **Sports**:

- **GO ... (+ing, with activities we can do alone)**: go cycling, fishing, hiking/trekking in the mountains, horse riding, jogging, kayaking, mountain biking, mountain climbing, rafting, rock climbing, running, sailing, scuba diving, skiing, snorkelling, snowboarding, surfing, swimming, walking, water skiing, windsurfing...

- **Go to ... (+ a place)**: go to a gym.

- **Go for a ... run/ walk.**

- **PLAY ... (+ ball sports)**: play basketball, football, golf, handball, table tennis, tennis, volleyball...

- **DO ... (+ gym sports and sports finished with -s)**: do aerobics, athletics, exercise, gymnastics, sport, yoga, martial arts, weights...

- **Shopping:** buy souvenirs/ a guidebook/ a map, change money, do a bit of shopping, go shopping, go to a market/shopping centre, spend a lot of money...
- **Culinary:** eat out, go to restaurants, have a barbecue buffet, have a picnic, taste (food or drink), try the local specialities...: [We tasted a range of quality wines in Florence.](#)
- **Nightlife:** go clubbing, go to a bar/pub, go to a concert, go to a (beach) party, go to the cinema, go to a club/disco, go out at night, dance, sing karaoke...
- **Other activities:** go camping, go to the beach, go to a Spa, go to a zoo, spend time (doing something), sunbathe (on the beach), meet friends, relax, take photographs, walk around the town, walk in the mountains...

[We spent the evening cruising the River Seine.](#)

[We went to the beach every day and sunbathed.](#)



8. Provide your personal opinion: Did you have a good time? Did you have any problems? Why did you choose this type of holiday?

- **Adjectives to describe the holiday or aspects related to it:**

- **Adjectives to describe the holiday in general:**

Positive: It was a lovely/ great/ fantastic/ wonderful holiday.

Negative: It was an awful/ terrible/ horrible holiday.

- **Adjectives to describe the hotel:** It was comfortable/uncomfortable; clean/ dirty; luxurious/basic, wonderful/awful. It was a 5-star luxury hotel.

[It was awful because there was no air-conditioning anywhere.](#)

- **Adjectives to describe the people:** They were friendly/unfriendly, helpful/ unhelpful.

- **Adjectives to describe the food:** It was delicious, fantastic. It was nothing special/ disgusting.

[We went to a fantastic seafood restaurant for my birthday.](#)

[The food was delicious and quite cheap.](#)

- **Adjectives to describe the town/city:** beautiful/ugly, boring/interesting and exciting, big/small, noisy/peaceful; crowded, friendly, lovely, historical, safe, polluted...

[My travel agent told me that it was a wonderful place.](#)

It was a ... place/city/town: [It was a beautiful city. It was quite small, very safe and friendly.](#)

[The nightlife was fantastic.](#)

- **Holiday problems:**

- The flight: The flight was delayed (the plane was one hour late on the way out, and two on the way back). The flight was cancelled. You had to pay for extra luggage. You missed the connecting flight or you missed your flight.

- Nasty experiences: You were robbed, you forgot your passport, you got lost, you lost your credit card...

- The hotel: The hotel was uncomfortable and expensive./There was a problem with the shower (e.g. There wasn't any hot water)/ with the Wi-Fi (e.g. You couldn't get a signal)/ with the air-conditioning (e.g. It didn't work and it was very hot). /The TV didn't work. / There was no towel.

- The hotel staff: The receptionist, the maid and the waiters were very unfriendly./ The staff only spoke English.

- The crowds: There were lots of people everywhere.

- The noise: The hotel was above a disco that didn't close until 5 am.

- The sights: There was nothing special to see. It was a polluted place.

- The nightlife: There was only one pub to go to in the evenings.

- The weather: It rained every day.

▪ **If you want to talk about your future holidays, you could talk about the same things, but don't forget to use the appropriate future expressions:**

[I'm going to travel by plane.](#) (planned holidays: be going to + infinitive).

[I'll take photographs every day.](#) (non-planned holidays: will + infinitive).

[I want to go/ I would like to go to Italy on holiday.](#) (to express your wishes, what you want to do or would like to do on holiday).