

4-6 Weeks Prior to Trip

If you've followed the tips in this guide, the last month before your trip will be smooth sailing. Now's the time to confirm logistics, focus on team building, and deepen cross-cultural exchange. And don't forget to pack!

Stress Less

Take a breather from last-minute details. Follow the five steps below for a personal "time out." Recommend this relaxation technique to girls as well.

- 01** Get comfortable. Lie down on your bed or sink into a warm bath. No phones, cell phones, TV... You get the idea.
- 02** Close your eyes and take long, deep, slow breaths. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
- 03** Try to relax every muscle and joint by first tensing the muscle and then letting it relax—start with your toes and move up to your head. If you notice an area of tightness, spend extra time trying to release the tension.
- 04** Keep taking slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth, imagining the stress disappearing each time you exhale. It's okay to doze off (unless you're in the tub, of course).
- 05** Stay in this relaxed state as long as possible (or until your body shrivels up, if you're in the bath!).

Coach Girls Through:

- Packing appropriately
- Reflecting on who they are "pre-trip"

Your To-Do's:

- Review the Travel Security and Safety Tips in *Volunteer Essentials*.
- Collect:
 - Signed parent/guardian permission slips
 - Copies of passports for all travelers (girls and adults)
 - Girl and adult health forms (must be reviewed by first aider)
 - Special Accommodations, Medical
 - Emergency Statement
 - Photo release forms
 - Girl Health Examination Record
 - Permission to Travel with Minors form
 - All trip monies
- Confirm:
 - All transportation
 - Lodging
 - Payments made/received
 - Trip details, safety procedures, contact information (with family)
 - If applicable, world center reservation
- Additional insurance purchased if required.
- Continue to strengthen group team building.
- Continue preparation of cross-cultural exchange.



Progress

18-24
Months

12-16
Months

8-12
Months

3-8
Months

6-8
Weeks

**4-6
Weeks**

On Your
Trip

Back at
Home

Packing Makes Perfect

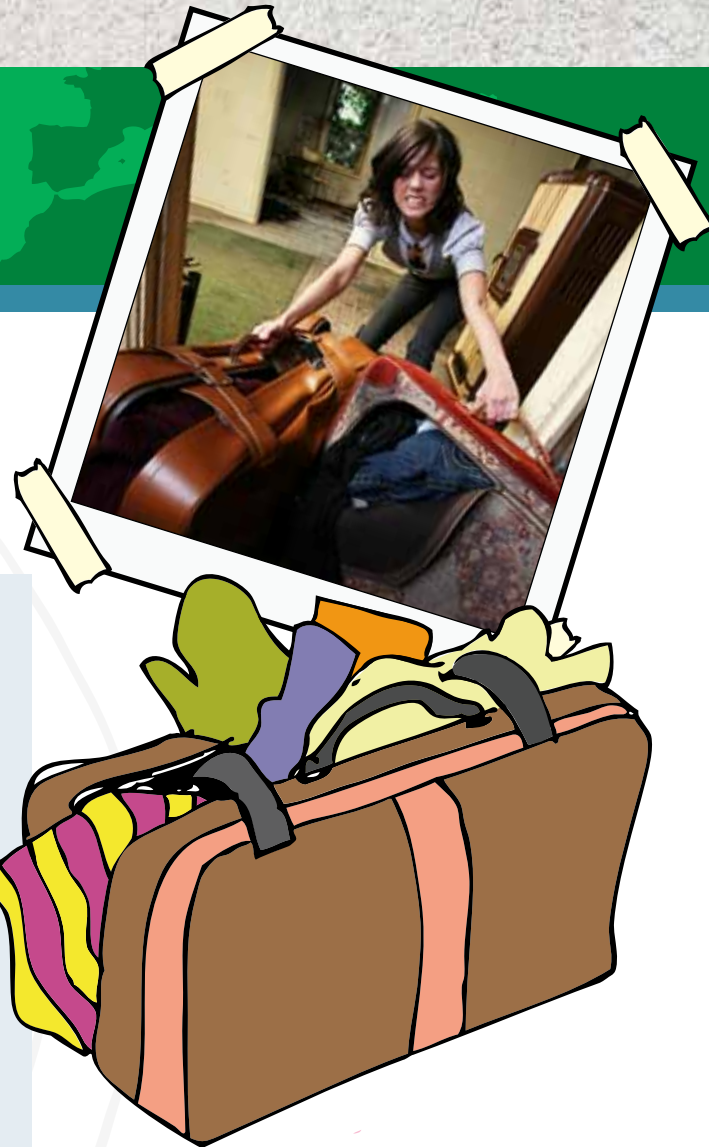
Give everyone in your group the airline luggage restrictions and a list of must-have items for the trip. Then ask them to pack a “sample” suitcase. Have each member bring the suitcase to a group meeting and see how well they’ve packed. What can be left behind? What needs to be added? Review packing tips on pages 31 of *Exploration: The Girl Scout Guide to Global Travel*.

Amy’s* Activity: Shakedown Day

Using the already packed bags, plan a travel experience that incorporates local travel (i.e., subway, bus, ferries, walking, etc.). This gives girls and advisers a chance to lug their packed bags around to see how heavy they really are and make decisions about extra gear. If you are planning to carry on all your luggage, build a crate like the one they use at the airline gates to determine if carry-ons will fit airline requirements. Once you have reached your destination, have girls reflect on what they learned.

You can combine Shakedown Day with your final pre-trip meeting. After the reflection, invite parents and guardians to join you. Review finalized itinerary (give a copy to parents and guardians to keep at home), emergency procedures, and last-minute details (such as when to meet at the airport). This is also a good time to refer to the group agreement.

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8-12 Months

3-8 Months

6-8 Weeks

4-6 Weeks

On Your Trip

Back at Home

Gear Up for Journaling

Encourage girls to bring a journal with them on the trip, preferably *The Girl Scout Travel Log*. A journal will help girls as they reflect on the day's events. *The Girl Scout Travel Log* includes pages for girls to record daily experiences, not just for memory's sake but as a way to think deeply about what they saw, did, or felt. Recording daily insights is a means for girls to observe how they've changed, and can serve as inspiration to take action on something they care about.

Girls could write their first journal entry right before the trip begins. Ask them to answer questions on the "You, the Before Picture" page in *The Girl Scout Travel Log*. While this is a journal entry that girls complete on their own, it's pivotal to the end-of-trip reflection. Be sure to remind girls to fill out this page.

In case girls don't have their own *Girl Scout Travel Logs*, here are the pre-trip reflection questions:

- What three things are you most excited about?
- What three things are you most worried about?
- What three things do you predict you'll miss the most about home?
- What three things do you think you'll miss the least about home?
- My greatest single challenge on this trip will be...
- How do you think your travel experience will change you?
- Record how you're feeling at this very moment.



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