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[How To Be a Low Maintenance Traveler](#)

By [Heather Huntington](#) on March 5th, 2010 – [Edit](#)

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I have a lot of strong suits, but packing light is not one of them. I don't do the 16-matching-bags-and-hatboxes routine or anything like that, but let's just say I have been perilously close to that 50-lb weight limit before you have to pay extra at the airport more times than I wish to admit.

It's hard. When packing time comes around I fall in love with all my clothes, I imagine the pictures that I am going to be taking. What should I be wearing? What if the weather goes crazy?

That said, I am going to [Guatemala](#) shortly for a little warm weather adventure travel vacation, and I want to try to pack light for once. I solicited some advice from my best friend, a seasoned traveler who did six weeks in Japan, China, Nepal and India two summers ago with **just one bag**. This is the same friend who once had to push me up a hill in Edinburgh when we were backpacking around Europe because, of course, my pack was too heavy.

So I'm going to listen to her, and take a stab at being a low-maintenance traveler. And this is what she says:

- **Underwear:** 5 pairs (to be washed for re-use in hotel sink or by hotel laundry)
- **Socks:** at least 5 pairs (hiking in rainy climates = don't skimp on socks)
- **Bras:** 2 (+ a jogging bra if you might exercise)
- **Pants:** 2
- **Yoga pants:** 1 (can double as hiking pants or pajama pants)
- **Comfy travel skirt (or shorts):** 1 (skirt is helpful if you are going to a country with squat toilets)
- **T-shirts:** 3
- **Long sleeved t-shirt/thermal:** 1
- **Thin cashmere sweater:** 1 (cashmere = most warmth/packing space)
- **PJs:** 1 pair (tank top + cotton pants because you can wear the tank as clothes in a pinch)
- **Hoodie or Fleece:** 1
- **Travel raincoat:** 1 (if it might rain where you are going)
- **Dress:** 1
- **Bathing suit:** 1
- **Towel:** 1, but only a [travel towel](#). Swimming towels can be bought there or provided by hotel.
- **Hiking shoes/sneakers:** 1
- **Flats/sandals:** 1 (something that you can wear with pants, skirt AND dress.)
- **Flip flops:** 1

Other items to bring with: suntan lotion, mini flashlight, Imodium/Tums, Advil, travel first aid kit, Benadryl, insect repellent, contact solution, feminine products, travel toilet paper, hand sanitizer (bring back up bottle), wet naps (single packets), photocopy of your passport (and email yourself a scanned copy), a copy of your glasses prescription (in case you lose your glasses). Although re: these various items, if you can buy them there, you can

also do that.

This is what Tracie got by on for her six weeks in Asia, so this should be more than enough for a 10-day stint to Central America. I will admit that having a list to which I should constrain myself helps greatly, as is the freedom of realizing you can do your laundry in the hotel.

But I am already chafing at the only three tee shirts and one pair of shorts or skirt. I am going to have to pad these requirements at least a little. Will I survive?

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