

How to avoid the turmoil of stolen and lost holiday luggage (and no, a flashy padlock doesn't always help)

- With so many people travelling these days, many cases look the same
- So why not put stickers on your luggage, and make sure it's personalised?
- Set an alarm on your phone in the taxi with 'LUGGAGE' to remind you

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Losing your luggage can make the excitement of going on holiday quickly turn to despair.

Whether the suitcase has made its way on to the wrong flight, or the airport taxi service has transported it to a hotel on the other side of country, the anxiety and stress caused by being parted from your valuables can overshadow a holiday.

Following the admission by Alaska Airlines CEO, Brad Tilden, that his own airline failed to get his luggage to the same airport as him, flight comparison website Skyscanner has revealed their top 10 tips to ensure that luggage follows its owners on each trip.



There's not many worse feelings than arriving in another country to realise your luggage hasn't followed

1. Keep it simple

We understand the allure of designer luggage. The desire to splurge your hard-earned cash on the Cadillac of suitcases.

But remember that the nicer your luggage, the more irresistible it's going to be to a thief. Play it safe, choose a less flashy bag and the chances of it being 'accidentally' picked up by the wrong person are much lower.

2. Avoid an identity crisis

Of course, now that you've gone out of your way to avoid attracting attention with fancy designer luggage, you need to make sure no-one picks up your lookalike bag by mistake.

Here are a few suggestions: tie a bright red scarf around the handle; attach sticky labels everywhere and mark your name on them with highlighters (the brighter the better); buy a colourful luggage strap to wrap around your bags (there are several brands available) or get creative with some neon duct tape. Believe us, thieves will avoid your work of art in favour of something more discreet.

3. Avoid flashy padlocks

A big and bright green flashy padlock attached to your suitcase will not avoid it getting lost. On the contrary, once you have checked it in and it's out of your sight for hours that padlock will draw too much attention to your case.

Some people would even go to the lengths of breaking into your suitcase just to figure out what is it exactly that you are trying to hide.

Don't make it look like you are carrying something valuable and your suitcase will most likely go unnoticed.



It worth marking your luggage up with something that is unique to you, so stickers or a scarf are good ideas

4. Your phone is your best friend

Your flight has been exhausting and you casually snooze off in your taxi ride to your hotel. When you get there jetlag has kicked in and you are so confused that you pay and get off... but forget your suitcase! Be smart.

Before falling asleep, ask the taxi driver how long the ride should take and set up an alarm on your phone to wake you up with the word 'luggage' in capital letters. When it goes off, you may be a bit drowsy but, there is no way you will leave your suitcase behind.

5. Good Karma

You've made it to the final leg of your journey, but you're the last one standing at the conveyor belt and your bag still hasn't shown up.

You trudge your weary way over to the airline desk, frustrated, angry and ready to complain. But remember, the person on duty is just as tired and frustrated as you.

Top tip: breathe in, be positive and friendly. A smile and a 'thank you' will make them much more eager to help reunite you with your luggage.

6. Check your luggage labels

After you've checked in your suitcase, the airline attendant sends it off and you're ready to begin your holiday. But just before you reach for that Pina Colada, ask to quickly check that your luggage label ID matches your flight number and destination – human errors can happen.

Checking now could save lots of pain later. And don't lose it – sticking the label slip to your passport is a good way to keep hold of it.

This tiny piece of sticky label is the only way the airline can help you find your bag should it go astray.

And don't forget to check the label at the other end, as you take your luggage off the conveyor belt. Although the bag may look exactly like yours, you'll be mightily disappointed if you get to your hotel and lift out the wrong swimming cossie. What takes two seconds can save you two hours trekking back to the airport.



It's a good idea to check your luggage has been marked correctly by the airline staff - human error can happen

7. Divide and conquer

If you're not travelling alone, one way to minimise the pain of lost luggage is by dividing your belongings between suitcases.

Having some of your clothes is certainly better than none if you're unlucky enough to have one of the suitcases disappear. Just remember to distribute your clothes evenly between bags – five pairs of trousers is a little pointless if the case with all of your t-shirts has gone missing.

Dividing luggage is especially helpful on long-haul holidays where the airline may only fly there a couple of times a week.

Getting your luggage back to you may take the same time as your holiday duration, so even with the best will in the world, you may not be reunited with your items until you get home again.

8. Be prepared for any lost luggage eventuality

Although it feels a little over the top, researching and printing out the contact numbers for the airline is a good way to minimise the stress when you land at your destination and find your luggage is on holiday somewhere else.

The baggage handlers at the airport are there to help you, but relocating your luggage and getting it back to you is the responsibility of the airline. Having a number ready to hand can save time (and money browsing the internet on your phone) and can hopefully get you one step closer to reuniting with your luggage.

This is particularly helpful when airlines don't have airline desks at the airport and you're feeling a little lost and alone.

9. Listen to your mother

You may not want to admit it, but your mother was right. Never, ever, stash important documents - cash, credit cards etc - in your luggage.

You can live (for a while) without your clothes or toiletries, but being marooned at your hotel with no money for food and drink, or worse, being stranded at the airport without a passport, is easily avoided.

10. Get technology on your case

We admit that even if you follow the above helpful hints, there's no cast iron guarantee your luggage won't go missing. But if the worst should happen, there are some great high-tech ways to find it again.

A simple luggage tracker, like TRACE ME, which integrates with the worldwide airline baggage system to identify your bag even if you lose your luggage tags.



Passengers can now use mobile apps to secure their luggage, giving piece of mind

Smart luggage tags with microchips embedded in them, like the ReboundTag. Or how about the ultimate in luggage protection systems, Bag2Go? This amazing system actually embeds a satellite tracker in your case and communicates with an app in your smartphone so you'll always know exactly where your precious is hiding.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/travel_news/article-3265115/How-avoid-turmoil-stolen-lost-holiday-luggage-no-flashy-padlock-doesn-t-help.html