

# *The Art of* **Business Travel**

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*Packing for a business trip –  
whether you're away for one night or many –  
can be a cause of anxiety.  
Your clothes must look great and  
appropriate to every occasion, but you don't want  
the burden of too much luggage.  
Not a problem, say two well-travelled experts  
who have packing down to an art.*

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by Dick Snyder  
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**t**here are many fundamental truths that apply to business travel. Getting your hotel's name right is one. And remembering your passport is another. Don't sass the customs guy is sage advice oft learned the hard way. And bring a change of underwear. Or three.

The first few points are obvious, mere checks on the savvy traveler's list. But that last point, about remembering underwear, speaks to the most fundamental of all fundamentals: a successful business trip is made or broken by the quality of one's packing. And this means efficiency, sleight of hand, and the kind of sixth-sense planning that comes with years logged in transatlantic trajectory.

"There's just one basic principle," says

Larry Rosen, CEO, Harry Rosen Inc., who spends about 100 days a year traveling the world, sourcing products for his customers. "It's imperative to plan." This means not only outlining your wardrobe combinations and your list of essentials like toiletries, medications and workout gear, but being fully attuned to such details as with whom and where you will be conducting business (and, perhaps just a little pleasure). "The important thing is that you're going to go through a cycle of social interaction," says Rosen, "so you want to select items that can be dressed up and down, items to take you through all the encounters."

You must know the important details of your trip. Will you be in all-day board

meetings or visiting clients in various parts of the city? Will you be required to entertain colleagues and clients for dinner? "First impressions are really important," says Jeff Farbstein, who jets to New York and Europe several times a year as Harry Rosen's vice-president and general merchandise manager. "You can always undress a little bit, but you can't re-dress."

For seasoned travellers and first-timers alike, the tips on these pages will help reduce the stress of packing and the burden of schlepping. Rosen's wisdom on this subject is hard earned: "Nothing is less enjoyable than lugging around too much luggage."



*Packing for business travel centres on the ratio of time and space: how long is the trip? How much can you comfortably carry?*



## **The Overnight Trip**

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The ultimate goal for the overnight trip, both Rosen and Farbstein agree, is to avoid checking baggage at all costs. And this is where planning comes in.

Rosen bases everything around his onboard outfit, which will usually be a suit that can be dressed up or down or a navy blazer and dress pants, with a lightweight, all-weather coat over his arm. In a small carry-on bag or garment bag, he'll bring an extra dress shirt, a sport shirt,

socks and underwear. "In the evening, you can put on the sport shirt and you can look very different." An overnight carry-on is the ideal hold-all or use a lightweight, fold-over garment bag in a durable fabric.

**1)** Two bags: laptop/briefcase and a small carry-on bag or fold-over garment bag.

**2)** Wear your main outfit – a suit or jacket and dress pants – on the plane, including your dress shoes (rubber soles are best for traveling, offering versatility and comfort).

**3)** Keep the second shirt folded in its pack from the laundry. In the collar area of the shirt, put an extra tie, socks and a pair of underwear. Remember to insert collar stays.

**4)** Pack a small toiletry bag with toothbrush, toothpaste, travel razor and a mini deodorant and shaving cream. Fit it into your briefcase or carry-on bag.

**5)** Workout clothes, running shoes and any other incidentals go in the carry-on bag. (Swimming is great exercise and requires only trunks and goggles.)



## Three Nights or More

If you're travelling in a suit, pack two additional tailored garments. For these, you'll need to check one piece of luggage, but choose it with care. Tailored clothing needs to be packed correctly to avoid too much creasing, so you may wish to consider a suitcase that permits you to hang your jackets. Otherwise, use a garment bag for the tailored garments and pack everything else in a small suitcase. Luggage with wheels or rollers is much easier to move around.

- 1) If you choose a garment bag, choose one with a gusset that allows the bag to expand.
- 2) On a slightly wider hanger with a non-slip rod, hang two or three

trousers in alternating directions. Cover trousers with clear dry cleaner's plastic to prevent wrinkling, then a jacket. If needed, add another layer of plastic and another jacket.

- 3) The key is a tight pack, which prevents contents from shifting and wrinkling. Folded over, with the hanger hooks clasped through the eyelet at the bottom, the bag is easy to carry and stowable in the airplane's overhead bin.
- 4) Bring dress shirts that can be worn with or without a tie – one for each day of the trip, plus two extras.
- 5) If you'll be staying in one place for a number of days, consider getting some of your shirts laundered. Research your hotel's laundry schedule.

6) If you have to fold a suit into a suitcase, begin by packing tissue into the arms. Place the jacket flat on a table and do up the buttons. Place the arms over the front of the jacket. Fold from the bottom of the jacket up, into a three-fold or accordion fold.

- 7) In your small suitcase or carry-on bag, pack extra shoes and underwear at the bottom, filling any extra space with socks and rolled belts, toiletries and workout clothes. Shirts and sweaters, folded and bagged, go on top. Pack tightly!
- 8) Use plastic sweater bags, available at travel shops and department stores, for shirts and knits. Press down to remove all air so they'll fit tight spaces. If needed, you can put one of these packs in your garment bag.

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## General Packing Tips

- 1) Plan for the weather. Carry a lightweight raincoat if needed and pack a small telescoping umbrella in your hand luggage.
- 2) What colours can take you through every encounter, from dress up to dress down, in every season? Answer: blue, black or grey. Take a suit, a blazer and various dress and sport shirts that will work with all your accessories.

- 3) Tight is better. A loose bag allows items to move around, causing damage and wrinkles. And it means your bag is too big and bulky.
- 4) Roll ties and belts. This protects them and helps them fit into small spaces.
- 5) Pack and wear only sturdy wool fabrics. This is not the time for fragile fabrics like linen.

- 6) Immediately unpack at the hotel and hang tailored clothing on wooden wish-bone hangers, so wrinkles can fall out. Most hotels have pressing services; check ahead about turnaround times.
- 7) Don't plan a meeting right after you land on an overnight flight. You'll need at least a couple of hours at the hotel to freshen up and change. **h**