



At the start of [planning any trip](#), AAA reminds travelers not to forget the essentials – working with a travel agent and investigating travel insurance. A travel agent is an industry expert with many resources at their disposal to help plan and organize a trip that fits your individual needs and budget. They can easily look at a variety of options and scenarios to find savings not always available to the public. Plus if something goes wrong, your travel agent becomes your advocate – they will handle the logistics of changing or re-booking reservations. Travel agents can also:

- Plan a trip that is still packed with fun but meets your budget.
- Guide you on the right travel insurance that meets your specific needs.
- Assist with unexpected delays, cancellations or other changes that may occur during your trip.
- Advocate on your behalf when there is a need to cancel or reschedule travel due to circumstances beyond your control.

AAA's travel experts offer the following travel tips and things to know before you go.

General Tips

- Consider the additional expenses associated with flight delays or cancellations that could extend your time in a particular location.
- For road trips, pack food, water, an emergency kit and a blanket in case you become stranded.
- Purchase travel insurance to protect your investment, choosing one that provides coverage for travel interruption and additional expenses including those associated with COVID-19.
- Notify credit card providers of your travel details (specify location and duration) to reduce the risk of cards being frozen due to unusual activity.
- Pack masks, hand sanitizer and disinfecting wipes (sanitizing hand wipes are a good alternative) in your carry-on bag.
- Bring proof of vaccination. It's also a good idea to use your phone to take a photo of your vaccination card and other important documents (like your passport) as a backup.

Cruising

(Note: the requirements and protocols listed below are generalizations and vary by cruise line. AAA strongly recommends travelers consult with their travel agent regarding the specific requirements and protocols for the cruise you intend to take.)

- Cruise lines generally require all passengers to provide a negative COVID-19 test taken within 48 hours of embarkation regardless of vaccination status. The type of test required (PCR or Antigen)

depends on the cruise line, and the age of the passenger and is at the passenger's expense.

Testing for children varies by cruise line and embarkation port.

- Proof of a negative COVID-19 test is not required to disembark a cruise ship upon completion of a cruise in a U.S. homeport. Testing may be required if you are flying home to a country outside of the U.S. and may be at the passenger's expense.
- Mask protocols vary by cruise line so travelers are encouraged to check ahead of time to understand if or when they will need to wear a mask.
- Onboard buffets are open but staffed by the crew who will serve you (versus being self-service).
- Cruises are offering entertainment such as production shows, singers, comedians, musicians, lecturers, arts and crafts, bingo, classes and art auctions.
- Freedom to explore a port independently may be impacted by local authorities and passenger vaccination status. In some cases, passengers may be required to take a ship-organized shore excursion if they want to go ashore.
- Passengers should carry a mask and their vaccination card ashore as they may be required to show it to enter shops, restaurants or attractions.

Touring

- Work closely with your [AAA Travel Agent](#) in the week and/or days before your departure for the most current information on entry requirements (which may vary depending on your destination).
- If you are taking a guided tour, be sure to check if guided tours require travelers to be fully vaccinated.
- Be aware that adjustments could be made to the itinerary during your tour based on current conditions in the destination. The Tour Guide will keep everyone informed if changes occur.
- At least one month before departure, make an appointment for a PCR test that will meet the timeline set by your destination. We suggest that a QR code be requested from the PCR tester you select since more destinations are requiring this.
- Confirm that a return test is being arranged by your tour operator, or inquire where at your destination you can obtain one conveniently.
- Bring extra masks to wear throughout your trip if needed or required.
- In preparation for your trip, be aware that some restaurants/activities may be closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Based on your destination, there may be reduced hours and/or masks may be required to enter some establishments (i.e. museums, public buildings).
- Tour providers also will provide current travel information on their websites. Check this before departure.

Lodging

- Confirm your hotel's cancellation/change policies before booking so you are not surprised by unexpected penalties.

- Research what the hotel is doing to keep you safe. Most hotel websites publish their safety and cleaning protocols. Larger hotel brands have likely partnered with a third-party organization to authenticate and accredit their efforts to reduce the risk of transmission.
 - Are EPA-registered disinfectants used in common areas and how frequently?
 - Are alcohol-based hand sanitizers available throughout the hotel?
 - Are signs regarding physical distancing and COVID-19-related policies posted in visible areas?
- All AAA Diamond-designated hotels must meet established standards of cleanliness and physical condition. AAA has enhanced its Diamond hotel evaluation to include objective, scientific validation of the cleanliness of common surfaces throughout hotels. With this new addition of surface cleanliness testing, these properties are now recognized as Inspected Clean. Look for this designation when booking your next stay.
- Ask about contactless services. Many hotels offer check-in/check-out and mobile keys (room key on your phone). You will need to download the hotel's app to access your keys and use contactless services.
- Inquire about housekeeping when you arrive. Most hotels now clean rooms based on a guest's personal preference.
- Check with the hotel regarding hours, availability and protocol for amenities like dining, workout facilities and the spa.