

THE

*breathe* TRAVEL

# PRE-TRAVEL CHECKLIST



**7 ESSENTIAL STEPS** YOU NEED TO

TAKE TO PREPARE FOR

BACKPACKING



# One.

DECIDE WHERE  
YOU WANT TO GO



Seems obvious, right? Funny thing is, many aspiring travellers put this part off because they don't want to commit to one place.

The good news is...**you don't have to choose the exact countries**, but you do need a general idea. Each region will require its own unique research and planning.

For example, if you want to backpack through Southeast Asia on a teeny, weeny budget, you'll need to research and plan differently to someone who wants to volunteer in hostels around South America.

Even though you make an initial choice, you can still change course along the way and decide to go in a completely different direction. But in order to plan correctly and get going in the first place, you need to have a general idea of where you want to be. This brings us to our next point...

In order to have some kind of a plan, you need to have at least some kind of idea of what your trip will cost you.

You might calculate your budget and realise you only have enough money for half the time you planned. If this happens, you can change your route, change the way you're going to travel (perhaps include some volunteering or working) or postpone your date to allow more time to save.

As much as budgeting and numbers aren't the exciting part of travel planning, working out your figures now is essential. Otherwise, you may have to plan an emergency reroute to a cheaper destination in the middle of your trip, or *worse*, you might have to come home early. Yikes!

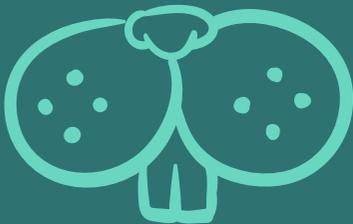
# Two.

WORK OUT HOW  
MUCH MONEY  
YOU NEED



# Three.

RESEARCH THE  
BEST TIME TO BE  
THERE FOR WHAT  
YOU WANT TO DO



Knowing the seasons is so important if you're heading over for a specific trip like for skiing, a beach holiday, diving, photography, summer festivals etc.

Check if there's a shoulder season which would allow you to do what you want to do at a more affordable rate.

There are pros and cons to both: peak season tends to have the best weather, but it also attracts far more people. Shoulder seasons are usually cheaper and have less of a crowd, but may not be suitable if you want to experience a specific event like the Holi Festival in India or Cherry Blossom season in Japan.

Spend some time Googling and asking friends who have been there. Only you know exactly what you want from this trip so only you can make this choice.

Now that you know the season you're going, you can get serious about what you need to take and what extras you need to buy. Unfortunately, some travellers put this off until the very last months since it seems overwhelming getting caught up in it now.

**But**, the reason you *do* need to think about it now is because you may need to buy new clothes or gear for your trip. If you don't work the extras into your budget early, you could fall short coming up to your trip.

Same goes if you're planning to buy stuff when you get there. For example, for a year-long road trip through New Zealand, you'll likely need money for a van, insurance and all your camping gear. Even if you plan to sell it all when you leave, you need the extra money in your account to buy it in the first place when you arrive.

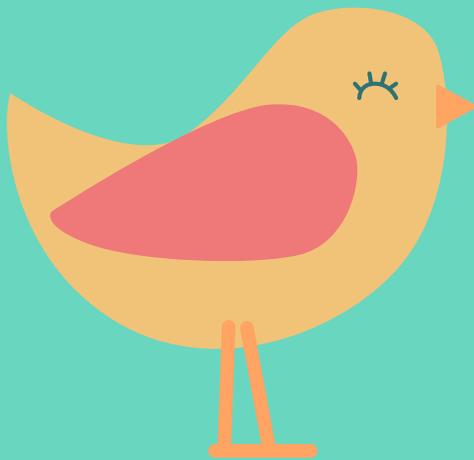
# Four.

START PLANNING  
YOUR PACKING  
AND  
NECESSITIES  
LIST



# Five.

## CHOOSE YOUR LUGGAGE



Backpack or suitcase? Carry-on on check -in?  
Wheels or no wheels?

Your luggage is a very personal choice. Backpacks are the most common for longer trips because they're versatile and easy to carry around, but with a backpack, you do need to carry the weight on your shoulders. So if you have a lot of gear to take, you need to decide if you're happy to carry all that extra weight on your body.

Wheels and a suitcase are fantastic and very easy to use, but they can be cumbersome and difficult to drag on dirt roads and cobblestones.

Both have their benefits so make your decision based on what feels right for you. You can also read up on what other travellers recommend for your destination to get some tips from people who have been there.

Living a life of minimalism is a key step in preparing for travel. Declutter your home and throw away, sell or give away anything you don't need anymore. Get rid of all the junk around you.

You can't be a carefree wanderer if you have a house full of stuff you don't want to let go of.

You won't have it all on the road so you may as well start getting used to that feeling now. And you won't believe how motivating it is when you start clearing out your home, it makes your upcoming trip seem very real.

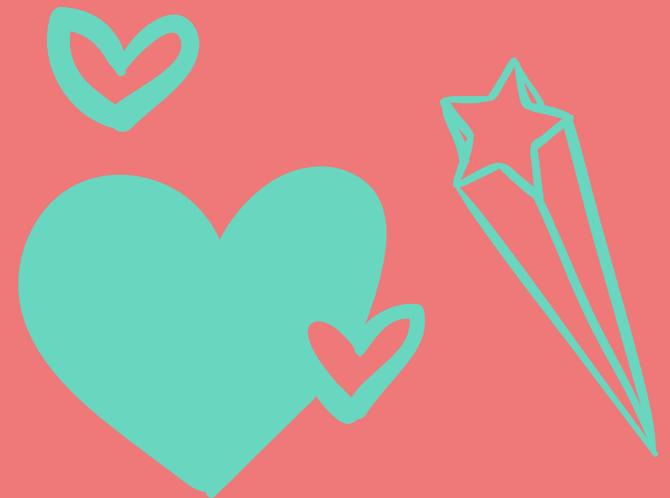
To make it simple, look through all your stuff and ask yourself: Does it serve me? Does it make me feel happy? Does it enrich my life?

No? It's gone.

You ain't got time or space for that sh\*t anymore.

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## SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE AND SURROUNDINGS



# Seven.

SPEND QUALITY  
TIME WITH YOUR  
FRIENDS  
AND  
FAMILY



One big downside of travel is you're so far away from your friends and family. It's likely you'll miss out on some precious moments while being away since, realistically, you can't fly back every time there's an event on.

Spend as much time as you can with them now so you have fond memories to think back on if you start feeling homesick (which can spring up at any time, even for the most excited of us travellers).

Try practicing your backpacker/budget traveller skills and find free or cheap activities to do in your local area. You'll be able to hang out with your family and friends without blowing your budget, and you might even learn something new about your city.

# And there you have it..

Get started on these tips and you'll be well on your way to becoming a backpacker. For more help, head over to [www.breathetravel.com](http://www.breathetravel.com) for loads of extra tips.

If there is anything else you need and it's not listed on the site, be sure to send an email to me, Mirna, at [mirna@breathetravel.com](mailto:mirna@breathetravel.com). We create content based on what *you* need and welcome you to share your struggles so we can help you through them.

