



# ARE WE THERE YET?

## TIPS FOR THE JOURNEYMAN

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You'll hear people say that the world is getting smaller; I say that we are making long-distance journeys more often.

Whichever it is, if they're not planned properly, long-distance journeys can get rather grueling. Here are some tips on how to prep ahead for these lengthy trips. Let's get going!

The cardinal rule of long-distance journeys is to TRAVEL LIGHT. No matter what the duration or the means of transport, you do not want to be lugging around six enormous suitcases, three backpacks and 36 trolleys. Be a minimalist and pack only those things which you will need. One large bag/trolley is also better than several smaller ones, but that doesn't mean you should cram everything into one bag. Having fewer bags not only makes it easier to move around, there's fewer chances that you'll forget one or have it go missing.

When packing, take pictures as you go, so that you remember what's where, when you need them later on. For most bus/train/plane journeys, keep a handbag or backpack on you. This should only contain those necessities you must have close at hand, such as your important travel documents, tickets, ID etc. It's also advisable to carry loose change, spare spectacles/contacts, handkerchiefs and basic medication for fever or gastro-intestinal distress during the journey.

Speaking of gastro-intestinal distress, make sure you're carrying your own food and water as well. Avoid unhygienic and oily foods while travelling to ensure proper tummy health during the journey, and keep yourself sufficiently rehydrated (bottled water only). It's terrible to have the runs during a journey, in the middle of nowhere. Also, what you eat before the journey is just as crucial; avoid stuffing yourself and anything which could cause acidity is a no-no. Limit your water intake; you and your bladder need to work as one during the journey.

When it comes to buying tickets, don't cheap out, at least when it comes to roadtrips. You'll have a comfortable journey, and reliable bus companies generally charge higher. The same goes for our trains, and the new line of Suborna trains released, while expensive, offers pretty neat amenities. If you're travelling by bus, book your tickets early to get seats as close to the center as possible. If you're too far up front, you'll see things you don't need to, like the driver making dangerous hairpin

turns at reckless speeds. You'll also be blinded by the headlights of cars coming from the other side. If you're too far back, you might as well be in a blender than a bus. Statistically, the middle seats are also the safest in case of any accident.

Dress smart, too. This means dress in layers, because you never know when you may feel hot or cold. If you're travelling air-conditioned, then warm clothing is a must; bus/train rides get chilly at night so it's wise to carry something warm. And if it's getting hot, you can always take off a few layers and use them as seat-cushions. Ditch sandals and wear shoes instead. This may be uncomfortable but shoes will protect your feet from insect bites, scratches, cuts and if you need to walk.

If you're journeying during the day, you need to stay upbeat during the whole trip. Prepare a playlist, beforehand, of songs you could listen to without getting bored. When you're part of a group, plan group activities and keep the atmosphere buzzing. Share stories, invent games, and don't be too rigid; if

anyone wants to do their own thing, let them. If you're alone, keep yourself entertained by maybe downloading a movie for the trip. Pro Tip: Powerbank. If motion sickness isn't an issue, read that book you've been meaning to or better yet, read SHOUT.

If your journey is after dark, you should probably think about getting some sleep. Night coaches usually have reclining, comfy seats and also provide extra pillows and blankets. Neck-pillows are a godsend in this case, and also carry eye-masks and ear-plugs – you'll sleep like a baby. Don't sit too close to the TV or speakers if there are any. The window vs. aisle debate comes up a lot when you need to sleep. Window seats while less roomy, do offer you spaces to rest your head. Aisle seats are spacious, but have the added benefit of no distracting lights from the outside.

Finally, choose a suitable travel companion. This is ideally someone you can tolerate for the duration of the journey and who will take care of you if you fall ill by any chance. If you're part of a group, join in with them as nobody likes a wet blanket. If you're alone, pray you get someone nice in the next seat, and that there aren't any annoying kids to bug you. Happy Travels!

*Nibras is a doctor-to-be and a lover of murgi roast. He enjoys blood and gore so DM him gruesome photos @niibzzz.*

