

The Ultimate Slow Travel Checklist

A practical preparation guide for worldschooling and long-term traveling families!

Phase 1 – Pre-Departure Logistics & Digital Setup

Before you leave home, getting your digital infrastructure and documents in order is the foundation of stress-free slow travel. Here's what every family needs to check off first.

1

Passport Validity Check

Check every family member's passport expiration date. Each passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond your last planned travel date. Renew early as processing times can be 6–10 weeks.

2

eSIM or Local SIM Card

Before you leave, set up an eSIM plan (Airalo or Holafly are great options) so your phone works the moment you land. Make sure your phone is 'unlocked' (contact your carrier to confirm if unsure).

3

VPN on All Devices

Install a VPN app (e.g., NordVPN, ExpressVPN) on every device. This keeps your banking and personal data secure on public Wi-Fi in cafes, airports, and co-working spaces.

4

App-Based Two-Factor Authentication

Update your accounts to use an authenticator app (like Authy or Google Authenticator) instead of SMS codes. SMS can fail when you change countries and this prevents major lockouts.

5

Scan & Store Important Documents

Scan passports, birth certificates, vaccination records, and insurance cards. Store them in a secure cloud folder (Google Drive, 1Password, or iCloud) you can access offline if needed.

Phase 1 Continued – Financial, Legal & Health Prep

Open Fee-Free Bank Accounts

Switch to a bank that charges no foreign transaction fees and refunds ATM fees.

Schwab, Wise, or Revolut are popular choices. Carry cards from two different banks in case one gets blocked.

Virtual Mailbox Service

Sign up for a virtual mailbox (**Earth Class Mail, PostScan Mail, or Traveling Mailbox**) to receive, scan, and forward your physical mail digitally. Essential for tax documents, renewals, and official letters.

International Driving Permit (IDP)

If you plan to rent cars, get an IDP from your local automobile association (**AAA** in the US). It's inexpensive, quick, and required in many countries.

Book Flexible or Onward Tickets

Some countries require proof of onward travel at immigration. Keep a flexible return ticket or use a service like **Onward Ticket** to avoid being denied boarding.

Health Insurance for Long-Term Travel

Standard travel insurance often doesn't cover stays longer than 30–90 days. Look into expat health plans (**SafetyWing, Cigna Global**) that cover your whole family abroad.

Research Visa Requirements

Check how long you're allowed to stay in each country without a visa. Many countries allow 30–90 days; overstaying can result in fines or bans. **Visadb.io** is a helpful resource.



Pro Tip: Book accommodations with a kitchen and reliable Wi-Fi from the start to save money on food and prevent workday disasters.

Phase Notes

Phase 2 – Minimalist Family Packing

1

Each Child Gets Their Own Backpack

Give every child their own age-appropriate backpack and make them responsible for carrying it if possible.

2

One Gallon Bag Rule for Toys

Limit toys and comfort items to a gallon-sized zip bag. Focus on multi-use items: card games, a small notebook, audiobooks, or a favorite stuffy.

3

Learning Setup

Bring an e-reader or small tablet with offline content (**Khan Academy**, downloaded books). A pair of headphones and a splitter prevents conflict.

4

Sink Laundry Kit

Pack a universal drain stopper and a few sheets of concentrated laundry detergent (**Scrubba** or **Tru Earth**). You can wash clothes in a hotel sink overnight.

Connectivity & Clothing

Universal Travel Adapter: One multi-country adapter per person with built-in USB-A and USB-C ports handles most countries.

Portable Power Bank: 10,000–20,000 mAh in your carry-on for long flights and bus rides.

Build a Capsule Wardrobe: Pack clothes that mix and match in neutral colors. Choose quick-dry, wrinkle-resistant fabrics (merino wool or synthetic blends).

Two Pairs of Shoes Per Person: One supportive walking shoe and one lightweight sandal per person is enough.

Packing Cubes with Compression: Use colored compression packing cubes to organize and compress clothes.

Remote Work Setup

Reliable Laptop & Backup: Bring your primary laptop plus a backup option (even a tablet with a keyboard). A portable second monitor and compact ergonomic mouse improve long work sessions.

Dedicated Work Accessories: Pack noise-cancelling headphones, a laptop stand, and a quality webcam if your built-in one is poor. These make a huge difference in co-working spaces or while working from rentals.

Set Up Your Travel Workstation Ahead of Time: Practice packing and unpacking your workstation, and setting it up on the dining room table if you don't have a desk, so you know how much space and connectivity you need to be productive on the



Pro Tip: Before your first trip, do a 'practice pack' a week early!

Phase 3 – Carry-On & Daypack Essentials

Your carry-on is your lifeline. Whether flights are delayed, luggage is lost, or you land without data. What's in your bag on travel day can make or break the experience for your whole family.

1 14-Day Medication Supply in Carry-On

Always carry at least a 14-day supply of any prescription medications in your carry-on (not checked luggage). Keep them in original packaging with the pharmacy label and bring a doctor's note or prescription copy.

2 One Full Change of Clothes Per Person

Pack one complete outfit per family member in your carry-on or daypack. Checked luggage gets lost more often than you'd expect so having a change of clothes eliminates a lot of stress.

3 Cash for Arrival

Carry some local currency if possible, or at least cash in your own currency, for your first day. Taxis, buses, tips, and small shops at your destination may not accept cards, especially right after landing.

4 Healthy Snacks & Water Bottles

Pack a few filling snacks (protein bars, nuts, dried fruit) for travel days when meals are unpredictable. Empty water bottles pass through security and can be filled at the gate.

5 Emergency Contacts (Print/Digital)

Write down key contacts: your accommodation's address and phone, local emergency numbers, your home country's embassy contact, your insurance provider's emergency line, and a trusted contact back home.

6 Kid-Specific Travel Day Essentials

For young children, pack a few new small activities revealed only on travel days (a surprise book, a new coloring set). This keeps kids engaged during long waits and flights.

  **Pro Tip:** Screenshot your accommodation address, directions, and local emergency numbers before landing — you may not have data immediately. Screenshot the translations into the local language too!

Phase Notes

Make sure you follow the **Wander Weekly Newsletter** for all your worldschooling essentials!