

get ready to **GO** with these **TRAVEL TIPS**

## TRAVELING WITH AUTISM

### GENERAL TIPS

1. Use a calendar prior to the trip to indicate departure date and allow person with autism to check off days. Use of a calendar while on the trip may also be helpful to check off days until the return home.
2. Adjust daily schedule in small increments prior to trip to help cope with changes in routine that may occur when traveling (ie. eating at a specific time of day).
3. Take individual with autism to places with crowds (ie. sporting event or mall) to expose them to environments that may be on scheduled trip.
4. Teach person to follow directions and become familiar with places (ie. restaurants, shows, museums) that may be similar to destination and allow them to be fully immersed in environment.
5. Use social stories to help person become familiar with what will happen on the trip.
6. Create a picture book of specific things the individual will see i.e. picture of the cruise ship or hotel, line that goes into the cruise ship, etc.
7. Provide word or picture schedule of the trip.
8. Short vacations and travel insurance are recommended.
9. Bring items from home that will make person with autism more comfortable including food.
10. Make sure to have earphones for any parts of the trip that may be noisy.
11. Do not wash items as the "home" smell may be more comfortable while traveling.
12. Identification should be carried on person at all times.

### TRAVEL BY AIR

1. Share this [Social Story Regarding Airport Experience](#) with the person traveling.
2. When booking flight, inform airline regarding person traveling with autism.
3. Inform TSA regarding person traveling with autism and use [TSA Cares](#) if assistance is needed with screening process.
4. Take advantage of early boarding.
5. Sit in the back of the plane -- allows for closer access to restroom and getting off plane last.

### TRAVEL BY SEA

1. Share this [Social Story Regarding Cruises](#) with the person traveling.
2. Travel during off season, which will allow for fewer people on the ship.
3. Create a "Fact Sheet" which gives information about autism in general and the person who has autism -- may be helpful to give to staff working with passenger.
4. Introduce self to ship security if person traveling with autism is known to wander.
5. Request pre-boarding and early disembarkation.
6. Arrive early to become familiar with activities and locations once aboard the ship.
7. Participate in onboard activities before or after the hours they are open to the public or while the ship is at port.
8. Request dining table be in a quiet corner and/or near an exit if passenger becomes overwhelmed.
9. If in an exterior room, keep curtain closed in stateroom initially -- slowly begin to expose person with autism the view (endless view of ocean may be overwhelming).

### SOURCES

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/documents/family-services/chantal.pdf>  
<https://www.autismspeaks.org/site-wide/blue-horizons-autism> <https://www.autismsociety-nc.org/tips-traveling/>  
[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/meg-harris/top-ten-tips-for-flying-w\\_b\\_5569604.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/meg-harris/top-ten-tips-for-flying-w_b_5569604.html)  
<https://autisticglobetrotting.com/eight-cruise-line-accommodations-to-request-when-traveling-with-autism.html>  
<https://www.specialneedsatsea.com/blog/autism-awareness-month-cruising-and-travel-with-autism/>  
<https://www.travelingmom.com/travel-tips/16-tips-for-cruising-with-an-autistic-child/> <http://www.cruisingwithautism.org/>