01

DOCUMENTS & IDs



Get ready for smooth sailing.

1 START HERE

Passport book is the best all-around choice. It is needed for international flights home.

2 ELIGIBLE U.S. CLOSED-LOOP CRUISES

Some allow U.S. citizens to travel with an official birth certificate plus government-issued photo ID for ages 16+. Teens 16 and 17 need photo ID too when using this option. A state ID works for non-drivers; school ID is not a substitute.

3 CHECK YOUR SAILING

Requirements vary by citizenship, cruise line and itinerary. Not every round-trip cruise qualifies. Check passport validity, visas and name-change documents.

4 BRING PHYSICAL DOCUMENTS

Phone photos and hospital keepsake certificates are not substitutes. REAL ID alone does not prove citizenship. Passport cards cannot be used for international flights.

5 CHILDREN

Every child needs their own required documents. Check consent and custody paperwork when traveling without both parents.

02

BEFORE YOU LEAVE



Start your vacation feeling prepared.

1 ARRIVE A DAY EARLY

Fly in at least one day before sailing when possible. Allow more time for international trips, winter weather and connections. Long drives need a buffer too.

2 PLAN THE WHOLE JOURNEY

Book your hotel, airport transfer, correct cruise-terminal transfer, parking and return transportation. Confirm shuttle fees and reservations.

3 CHECK IN ONLINE

Download the official cruise app. Complete check-in, choose your arrival window, save boarding passes and print luggage tags.

4 RESERVE & REVIEW

Check dining, shows, activities, prohibited items and beverage rules. Save confirmations offline and set up onboard payment.

5 SMART CARRY-ON

Documents, medication, valuables, charger, swimsuit, change of clothes and child essentials. Keep these with you, not in porter bags.

The ship may sail without delayed travelers.

03

WHAT'S INCLUDED?



Know your fare. Plan your extras.

1 TYPICALLY INCLUDED on many mainstream lines

Your cabin; main dining room and buffet; select casual food; water, regular coffee, tea and select juices at designated venues and times; many shows and activities; pools and basic fitness facilities; many standard-hours kids and teen activities.

2 OFTEN EXTRA

Daily gratuities or service charges; alcohol, soda, specialty coffee and bottled drinks; specialty dining and some room service; internet, excursions, spa, photos and shopping; casino, arcade and select attractions; nursery and some late-night childcare; laundry and medical care; flights, hotels and transfers.

3 READ YOUR FARE

Packages may include extras. Check your booking confirmation for taxes, fees and prepaid items.

4 GRATUITIES

May be prepaid or added onboard. Separate service charges may apply to drinks, dining and spa purchases. Rates and age rules vary.

Inclusions vary by cruise line, ship and fare.

04

BOARDING DAY



From the terminal to vacation mode.

1 START HERE

EMBARKATION means getting ON the ship.

2 ARRIVE

Go to the correct terminal during your arrival window. Final boarding is before sailing time.

3 DROP TAGGED BAGS

Use authorized porters if desired. Keep your carry-on, documents, medication and valuables. Small bills are handy for tips.

4 SECURITY & CHECK-IN

Have boarding passes and physical travel documents ready for every traveler.

5 BOARD & EXPLORE

Your room and checked bags may not be ready. Find lunch, explore and check the app.

6 COMPLETE MUSTER

Follow safety-drill instructions promptly. Every guest, including children, must complete the required steps.

7 SETTLE IN

Confirm dining and reservations. Register for children's programs if needed.

8 CRUISE CARD

Often your room key, onboard charge card and ship entry/exit credential. Keep it secure.

Arrival appointment ≠ final boarding deadline ≠ departure time.

05

LIFE ONBOARD



Eat, explore, relax and repeat.

1 DINING

Main dining room and buffet are typically included. Specialty dining usually costs extra. Check hours, reservations and dress expectations. Tell the dining team about allergies.

2 DRINK PACKAGES

Optional. Compare total cost with what you realistically drink. Check limits, service charges and cabin purchase rules. Packages generally cannot be shared.

3 PHONE SETTINGS

Turn on airplane mode, then Wi-Fi to use the ship's network. Maritime cellular roaming can be expensive. Basic cruise-app features often work without paid internet; messaging varies.

4 SPENDING

Most purchases go to your onboard account. Check it regularly. Debit-card holds can tie up funds. Set children's charging permissions.

5 SEA DAYS

Days sailing instead of visiting a port. Enjoy pools, shows, activities or quiet ocean time. Check reservations and opening hours.

You do not need every upgrade to enjoy a great cruise.

06

PORT DAYS & EXCURSIONS



A little planning opens up a whole port.

1 PORT DAY

The ship visits a destination. You can book a tour, explore independently or stay onboard.

2 SHIP EXCURSIONS

Convenient coordination with the ship. Read the specific return and delay policy; inclusions and accessibility vary.

3 INDEPENDENT TOURS

Check reviews, pickup location, cancellation terms, insurance and return timing. Arrange your own reliable transport.

4 DO IT YOURSELF

Research the exact dock, distance, costs, local conditions and opening hours. Allow a generous return buffer.

5 TENDER PORTS

Small boats may take you ashore. Tickets, waits and weather can affect plans. Ask about mobility access.

6 BRING ASHORE

Cruise card, required ID, charged phone, port-agent contact, payment, sunscreen and water. Follow the ship's document instructions.

You do not have to buy an excursion to leave the ship.

07

DON'T MISS THE SHIP!



A great day ashore ends back onboard.

1 SHIP TIME RULES

Local time and ship time may differ. Confirm which clock the ship uses and set an alarm.

2 ALL-ABOARD IS YOUR DEADLINE

It is earlier than departure. Follow the posted time and aim to return well before it.

3 BUILD A BUFFER

Traffic, ferry delays and long attraction lines happen. Do not plan to arrive at the last minute.

4 SAVE THE PORT AGENT

Take the ship's emergency and local port-agent details ashore. Contact them promptly if you are delayed.

5 BEACH & TOUR BASICS

Confirm round-trip transport, entry fees and payment methods. Check weather and sea conditions. Keep valuables secure.

6 FOOD & SOUVENIRS

Follow local rules and the ship's restrictions on bringing food and other items aboard.

7 START HERE

STAYING ONBOARD? Often a quieter day for pools and lounges. Some venues may have reduced hours.









The ship can leave without independently exploring guests.

08

DISEMBARKATION DAY



Make the journey home feel easy.

1 START HERE

DISEMBARKATION means getting OFF at the end of your cruise.

2 THE NIGHT BEFORE

Read departure instructions, settle account questions and choose the luggage option offered by your ship.

3 CHECKED LUGGAGE

If putting bags outside your cabin, follow the assigned deadline and tags. Keep clothes, shoes, documents, medications, valuables and toiletries with you.

4 SELF-ASSIST

You carry all your bags yourself. Check eligibility and the assigned departure process.

5 THE MORNING

Leave your cabin by the stated time. Keep your cruise card and documents handy. Follow your departure group and crew instructions.

6 ASHORE

Collect luggage if needed, complete border formalities and meet your prearranged transportation at the correct location.

7 FLIGHTS HOME

Allow time for clearance, baggage, road travel and airport security. Follow your cruise line's recommended earliest flight time.

8 FINAL CHECK

Safe, drawers, chargers, documents, medication and children's favorite items.

Departure can be delayed; avoid tight connections.