



LUGGAGE

OVERLOAD

Save yourself
some hassle
and pack light

FOR MORE information about All Squared Away, call 304-698-AWAY (2929) or visit all squaredaway.com.

FOR MORE information about airline baggage restrictions and carry-on luggage rules, visit the Transportation Security Administration's Web site, tsa.gov.

BY AMANDA DePROSPERO

The Dominion Post

T-shirts? Check. Jeans? Check. The kitchen sink? Check.

With Spring Break right around the corner and the start of a high-travel season, many are pulling out their suitcases and carry-ons and getting ready to fill them with all the necessities.

But with baggage weight restrictions and extra charges for checked luggage popping up more often at airline check-in desks, travelers might want to think long and hard about what they're putting in those bags and whether they're willing to pay extra to get those items to their destinations.

Even if you're not flying anywhere for your vacation, who really wants to haul around an oversized bag stuffed with unneeded items? Or try to fit it all into the back of the car?

Think before you pack, said Julie Mills, a professional organizer and owner of All Squared Away in Morgantown. Mills helps her clients, both business professionals and residents, organize their homes and businesses.

"Nowadays, packing light is a necessity," she said. "Carry-on luggage sizes have gotten smaller and airlines are charging excess weight fees. Packing light is easy to do with some planning, tips and tools."

Start packing at least two days before your trip, Mills said, and make a basic packing list that can be reused each time you pack for a trip. The other important thing to remember is to check the weather at your destination before packing your clothes, she said.

Packing basics

After you've made a list and checked the forecast, it's time to get down to business.

Think about what items in your closet could do double-duty, Mills said. Think about taking a pair of convertible pants that

1. Shirt/jacket

(Remember that jackets, unlike shirts, face downward.)



2. Another shirt or jacket

3. Pants

(If a second pair is added, they extend in the opposite direction.)



4. Add the core

(This could be a small pouch containing socks, underwear, etc.)



5. Wrap pants around core

6. Wrap shirt around bundle

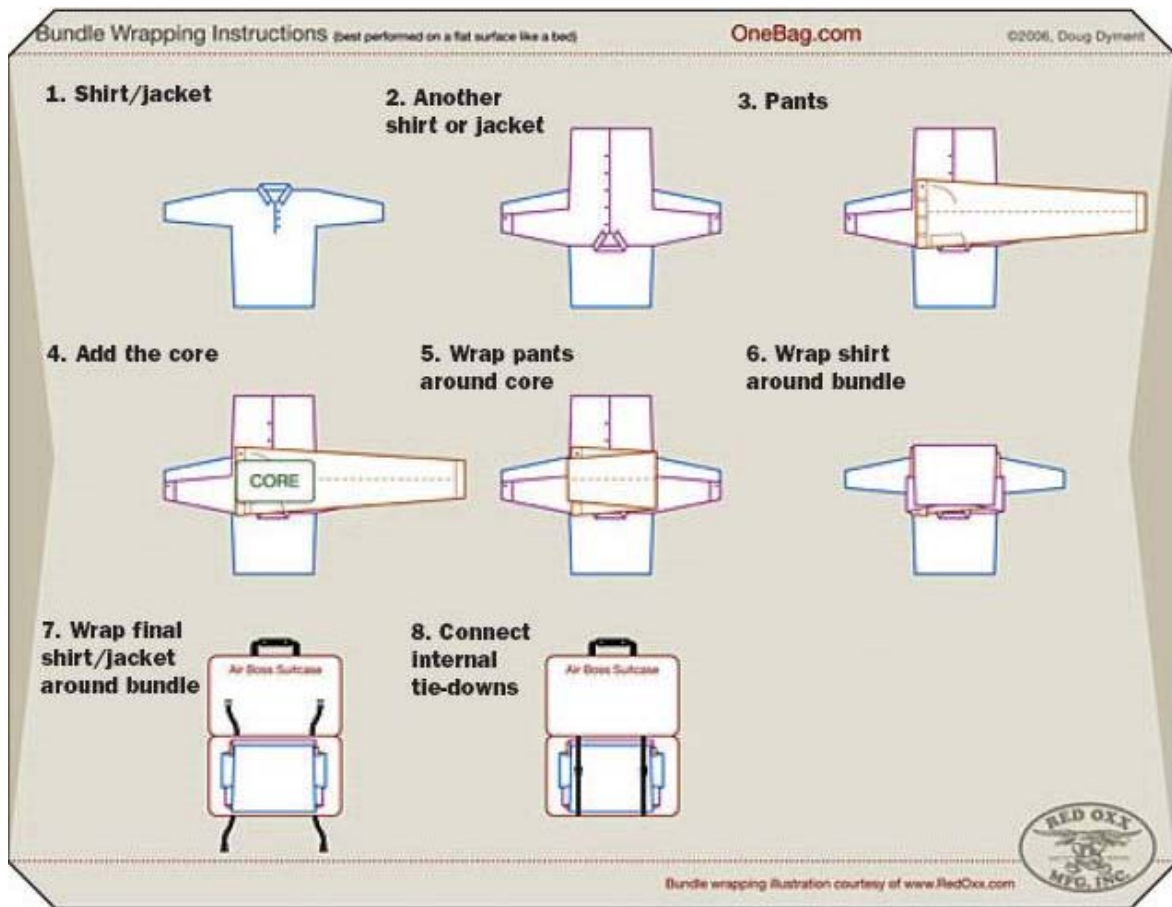
(Wrap the sleeves first, then the body.)



7. Wrap final shirt/jacket around bundle

(Then place inside suitcase with straps free of bundle.)

8. Connect internal tie-downs



PACKING

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can zip off to become a pair of shorts.

"Wear a dress jacket with a solid-print button-down shirt. Two days later, wear the jacket with a tank top, a scarf and a necklace for a new look," she said. "Reversible jackets, vests, hats and scarves make great companions when you have limited space as well."

Find toiletries that can serve more one purpose, such as "a moisturizer with sunscreen."

Let's say you're taking a three-day business trip. Mills said you should pack two suits and simply trade out the shirt underneath.

For a seven-day vacation, "pack one jacket, five interchangeable casual outfits, one 'dressy' outfit and three pairs of shoes."

Another important tip

is to think about taking the smaller suitcase on your trip, Mills said, because if you have less space, you'll only fill it with the necessities.

Of course, remembering everything you need to take with you can sometimes be difficult. Here's a list of items Mills said are often forgotten in the packing process:

- Identification.
- Passport.
- Sunglasses.
- Medications.
- Contact information.
- Cameras.
- Essential cords and chargers.
- Batteries.
- Maps.
- Tickets.
- Swimsuits.

And here's one more tip from Mills if you plan to use a satellite parking facility at an airport or cruise ship terminal.

"Always write down where you parked and tuck it inside your wallet on a piece of paper that you will not throw away," she said. "Consider storing the information in your cell phone."

Traveling with kids

While it may be daunting to even think about traveling with young children, packing just the right items will help make the trip that much smoother, Mills said.

"Always have medications, emergency phone numbers, snacks, sunscreen, wipes, 'new' toys that will hold their interest, a favorite doll or stuffed animal, and lots of patience," she said. "Talk to your children about your expectations. Go to your local toy store to discover magnetic travel toys. An older child might be

able to map out the route or take pictures to create a photo album when they get home."

When packing, take an extra set of clothes in your carry-on or diaper bag, she said, because spills and messes are likely to happen. Fill a plastic bag with everything you need for one day — children's pants, shirts, socks, underwear and anything else you need for that day — and then do the same for every other day.

"This way they are not digging through the suitcase, you can reuse the baggie for the dirty clothes, and there are no battles," Mills said.

Air travel regulations

While you are once again allowed to transport liquids in your carry-on bag onto airplanes, there are several rules you must

follow, according to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

"Air travelers may now carry liquids, gels and aerosols in their carry-on bag when going through security checkpoints," TSA says. "With certain exceptions for prescription and over-the-counter medicines, baby formula, breast milk and juice, and other essential liquids, gels and aerosols, the following rules apply to all liquids, gels and aerosols you want to carry through a security checkpoint."

Called the 3-1-1 rule, TSA says "all liquids, gels and aerosols must be in 3.4-ounce (100ml) or smaller containers."

The containers must be 3.4 ounces or smaller; even half-full but regular-sized toothpaste tubes are not allowed.

The items "must be

placed in a single, quart-size, zip-top, clear plastic bag. Gallon-size bags or bags that are not zip-top, such as fold-over sandwich bags are not allowed," TSA says.

And, travelers are only allowed one bag. When going through the X-ray machines, the bags must be removed from the carry-on bag and placed in a bin to be examined separately.

"The secret to getting through security smoothly is to de-clutter your carry-on bag. This lets our Transportation Security Officers get a clear, uncomplicated X-ray image of your carry-on. When possible, keep packing liquids in checked baggage. You will get through security faster," TSA says. "Limit quantities to what is needed for the duration of the flight."