

**THE**  
**ROAD TRIP**  
**HANDBOOK**

THE ART OF  
MAKING LIFE **EASIER**

**ABIGAIL KING**

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# INSIDE<sup>the</sup>TravelLab

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*Disclaimer – road trips can be risky business.*

*Any advice provided here is intended as a guide and does not replace legal and medical advice.*

*Road trippers drive at their own risk.*

*If you book or buy through some of the links in this document,*

*we may earn a small commission at no extra cost to you.*

**GET READY TO HIT THE ROAD AND EXPLORE!**

Hi there!

Welcome to the Road Trip Handbook.

Few things feel as liberating as hitting the open road and exploring the world at your own pace.

Stopping wherever you want, gazing at the stars, laughing with strangers, and waking up full of anticipation, ready to do it all again.

That's the side of things we all want, right?

Well, oddly, freedom comes from planning in advance. From taking care of the essentials so that you can relax later.

That's what this book is all about. It's about doing all that without losing yourself in spreadsheets, post-it notes, email trails and overwhelm. Or worse... missing your trip altogether because your paperwork isn't quite right or taking wild risks that put you in danger.

There is an art to making travel easier yet more fulfilling.

And that's what you're about to learn.

Ready?

Buckle up and let's enjoy the ride.

Cheers,



# HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

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## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide supplements the other resources in the Road Trip Planner and Toolkit, together with travel articles on Inside the Travel Lab.

Shopping for road trip essentials? To make life easier, [I've gathered together the products on an Amazon Shopping List here.](#)

Enjoy planning your trip!



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HI, I'M ABI

I'm a doctor turned travel writer with decades of experience on the road. Here's the official blurb:

“Abigail King is an award-winning journalist, broadcaster and speaker whose work has appeared in National Geographic Traveller, Lonely Planet, the BBC and more. She's travelled to over 60 countries and Inside the Travel Lab regularly ranks as one of the best travel blogs in the world.”

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**THE**



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**TRAVEL  
PLANNING**

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**FORMULA**

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## HOW TO PLAN YOUR ROAD TRIP

### ROAD TRIP PLANNERS

From pen and paper to fancy schmancy apps, you'll find lots of options for planning your trip. And it doesn't really matter which you use, so long as you use *something!*

But, of course, I am going to mention my own system.

Built through years of trial and error, this process strikes a good balance between planning and actually living, between exploring and avoiding catastrophe.

Growing up, in other words, but in the context of road trip planning.

I've called it the Dr Drake process (so much for the growing up part.)

### THE DR DRAKE PROCESS

- D – Desire
- R – Restrictions
- D – Draft
- R – Road Blocks
- A – Anchor Points
- K – Kit
- E – Enjoy the trip!

One of the key things you learn at medical school is the importance of process. It's not enough to know about things, you must be able to get things done, to the right person, in the right order.

Process avoids paralysis. Or we could be a little less dramatic and say that process avoids procrastination. It also avoids over-planning.

## WHY WE NEED A PROCESS

The freedom of the open road is a wonderful thing - but usually we need to know roughly where we're going and how to get there. When it's part of a short two week break with a flight to catch at the end, it's even more important to make it to the right place at the right time.

With the Dr Drake structure, you start with your desires and restrictions. What activities do you long to do? Which places must you visit? [Check out this video to help you understand this process.](#)

Then, there are the less enjoyable restrictions. How much time do you have available? What is your budget? How many people need to fit into the car? How many of you can drive? How long can the youngest child tolerate being strapped in? Do you have the qualifications to drive across the water rapids in the savannah and can you deal with a lion at night?

## WRITING THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE ITINERARY

If the first part of the structure follows my medical background, the second moves on to my professional writing life.

It's time to write the first draft of our road trip. And to paraphrase Hemingway, the first draft of anything is rubbish. Yes, Hemingway used a stronger word.

You don't need to reinvent the wheel here (boom!)

Instead, it's a good idea to look at other people's itineraries and to check drive times between major cities.

In Europe, I find the best way to do this is [through the AA route planner](#). In the US, on the other hand, I'd recommend [MapQuest Route Planner](#). Both sites make it quick and easy to type in key cities and villages and calculate your route.

Beyond the UK and US, Google Maps can cover a lot. What's more, you can create your own maps on Google Maps with markers, notes and other key information.

## CHECKING FOR ROAD BLOCKS

With your first draft in place, it's time to go looking for road blocks. These are any things out of your control which will make your trip impossible.

Check the weather for access to roads and parks. Check for permits for state parks and national parks. Check the calendar of the local area for festivals and sports events, since these are likely to make accommodation expensive and scarce.

Do you need any special skills? Joking apart, you do need certain skills for driving in snow or off road on safari. Are you happy to drive on the other side of the road? Do you need to ask questions about manual or automatic?

Tackle those road blocks and then you're on to the next stage: anchor points.

## ANCHOR POINTS: BOOK KEY ACCOMMODATION & PARKING

Now we get to the Anchor Points. This is the most exciting part for me and it's the key to making those great travel dreams happen.

It's taking the first irreversible step.

This is the point of no return, or at least not an easy one.

Typically, that's flights for most people or applying for that visa. It's something that is a big gesture to you, often in cash through a deposit or a reservation.

But it's something you *absolutely have to do* or else the trip won't happen. And the result of that influences everything else.

So, there's no point in booking accommodation until you know exactly when you're going to land. There's no point looking too far into airport transfers until you know what time you'll arrive.

You need to work that out and then book a few anchor points.

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## BOOKING ACCOMMODATION

The older I get, the more I book in advance. Booking on your phone is easier than ever, which, unfortunately has meant that it's now harder than ever to book somewhere by just showing up.

Find [a guide to some of the best websites for booking accommodation here.](#)

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## FACTOR IN PARKING

Parking can make or break your trip. It's definitely worth making it a key point of your checklist when you book accommodation to avoid driving around circles or paying more than your whole trip cost for the pleasure of getting out of the car.

## GET THE RIGHT KIT

Having the right kit with you will make or break your road trip. So much so that the rest of the book is dedicated to it!

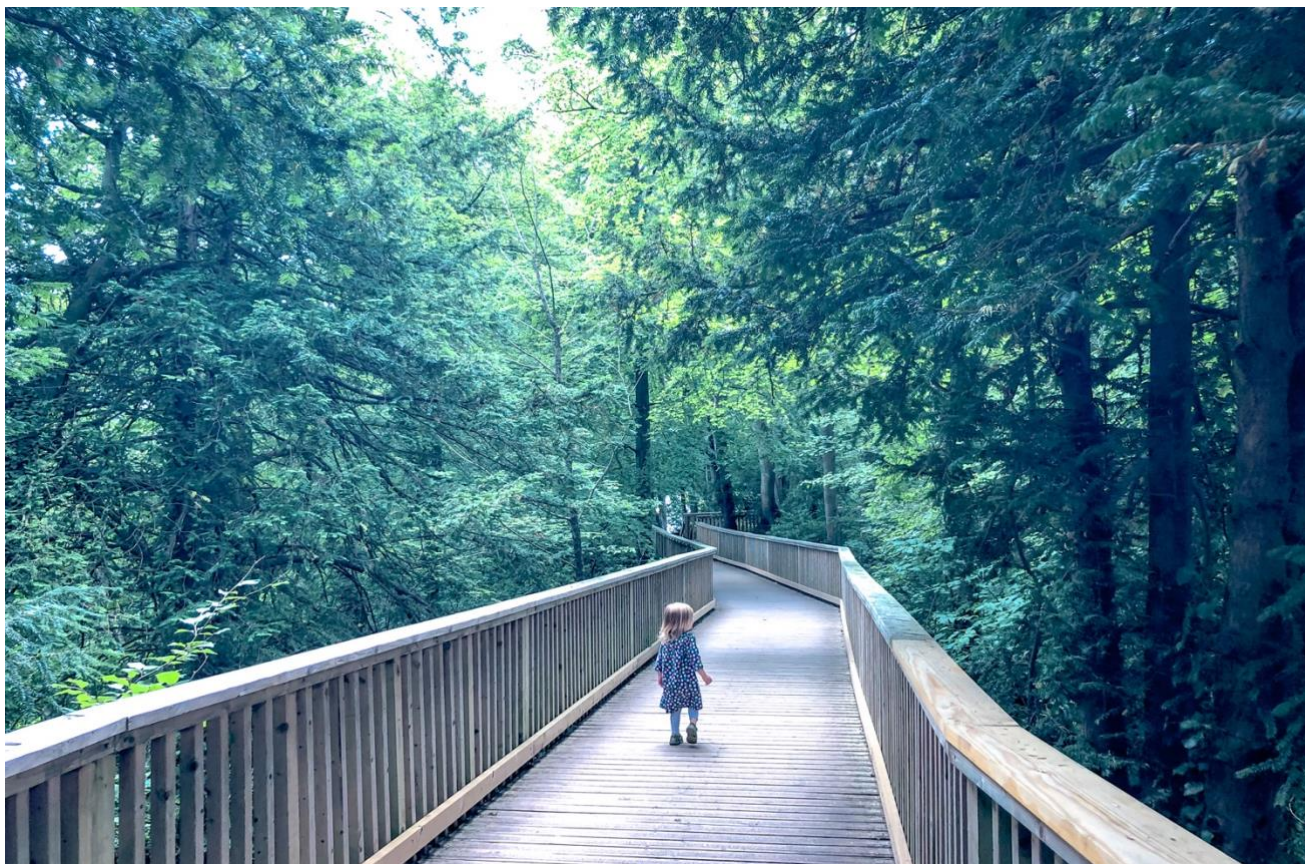
So that's the 'K' in Dr Drake. We'll talk about the kit now, but never forget the final 'E.'

Enjoy.

**WHAT · TO ·**  
**BRING ON**  
**A ROAD TRIP**  
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## WHAT TO BRING ON A ROAD TRIP: IN DETAIL



## FOR YOU: HEALTH & SAFETY

The doctor in me always wants to make sure you're safe and sound first and foremost!

Depending on where you will be, you will need all kinds of gloop like insect repellent and sunscreen, hand sanitizer and soap. It's also a really good idea to have a basic first aid kit in the car at all times. You can buy a pre-prepared first aid kit on Amazon or at many chemists and airport shops. Or, you can simply make one yourself.

Also, don't forget your sunglasses (prescription if required!)

Take particular care to pack things that only you will need. No, that's not selfish. I'm thinking of thing like medication and the paperwork to explain why you need it. Remember to pack spare contact lenses and glasses and any snacks, especially if you have dietary restrictions or are pregnant.



If you're already worried about how you're going to fit this in the car, take a look at the list of [long haul flight essentials](#). Yes, they're for flying but that means there's a focus on both volume and weight - and keeping both under control. I've also made a [handy video for you here](#) to help with packing light.

#### INSIDE TIP: EVEN IN THIS DIGITAL AGE, IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PACK BOTH A PEN AND SOME PAPER FOR YOUR DRIVING HOLIDAY.

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Why? It's handy to be able to leave a note on your dashboard if you need to. (*Just unloading, back soon, for example.*)

#### MONEY, HONEY

Car parks the world over have strange rules and even stranger payment methods. Make sure you can easily manage every situation by bringing a loose collection of change, as well as bank notes, credit cards and debit cards.

In some countries, you'll need to pay some "protection money" so that your car is still OK when you come back. It doesn't feel right but you are unlikely to change the world overnight. Instead, make sure you always have a collection of small notes ready.

Change any large bank notes as soon as you possibly can in shops or at hotel desks. When withdrawing cash at an ATM or cash point, try to enter a total which will give you smaller notes (e.g. \$70 instead of \$100 and so on.)

#### KEY PHRASES

When you're driving somewhere which speaks another language, it's really handy to write down the key phrases you may need. Yes, we have phones and Google Translate these days, but have you ever noticed that your signal disappears and battery runs flat right when you need things the most?

*This only takes a few minutes to set up at the start of your trip:*

- *Dear Officer, I'm sorry.*
- *Please fill the tank with petrol (or diesel)*
- *Where is the gas station?*
- *Can I park here?*
- *Is this the way to Amarillo? etc.*

Also, translate key phrases that you will need to understand:

- *No parking*
- *No access except weekends*
- *Vehicles will be towed etc.*

## REWARD CARDS AND APPS

Who doesn't love a good app? Road trip apps have improved tremendously over the years, allowing you to plan out routes, save details, find food, petrol, places of interest and more.

However, once again, it's best to download everything ahead of time and to bring the details of any reward cards with you. What do I mean by reward cards? In many places, you can pick up points when using your credit card or when buying coffee. You can later cash in these points for other rewards and perks along the way.

Unfortunately, at the moment, most apps and reward cards are heavily country specific. I've entered the most popular ones below and will be updating the list on the blog.

Any to shout about? Let me know!

- *Check out our list of [best travel apps for Europe](#) and look into the [AA app and reward system](#) if you're driving in the UK.*
- *Here's a list of the [best reward cards in the US](#) and the [best apps for road trips in the US](#).*

## ELECTRONICS

Where would we be without our electronics? Lost, in all likelihood!

All the gadgets in the world mean nothing if they're not charged. That's why it's so important to bring an in-car charging adapter and a portable power bank as back up.

I like the power bank [I've bookmarked on the Amazon shopping list](#) because more than one person can charge at the same time, a far more sociable option for a road trip! Plus, those in-car chargers are often on the slow side. So, even if you're driving alone, I wouldn't rely on them as your one and only power source.

Make sure you have a device to help mount your smartphone to the windshield or dashboard.

Alternatively, if you want to be able to angle the phone just the way you want and charge wirelessly, check out one of the more elaborate dashboard mounts on the list.

## SIM CARDS

If you'll be travelling somewhere with a different phone network, then consider buying a new SIM card in advance or at the airport. That way, you can use Google Maps as much as you like and you'll be able to make that breakdown call more easily, should the worst happen.

Finally, don't forget that many countries have **extremely strict laws** about using your phone while in the car and they're getting stricter all the time. Pack your hands-free kit for your phone (or use the car manual to link it up to the car itself) and don't risk breaking the rules.

## COMFORT AND HYGIENE

Always bring some tissues and toilet roll with you, in case you need to stop at ill-equipped restrooms or out in mother nature herself. With that in mind, pack some plastic bags to help manage the same situation, think about bringing soap and wet wipes - and some bin liners to keep in-car rubbish at a minimum.

It's also more comfortable to have a jumper or sweater with you. That's about your lot as the driver, but passengers can enjoy the heights of decadent luxury with blankets, inflatable travel pillows and warm, thick socks to stay warm.

Remember to bring a refillable water bottle and some eco-friendly cutlery to cut down on disposable plastic. Gorgeous bamboo travel kits are enjoyable, but your own metal cutlery works just as well.

## SIGHTSEEING AND CULTURAL TIPS

While you can usually wear what you like in the car, you may need to smarten up when you get out. I always travel with a lightweight scarf, which comes in handy for visiting mosques, churches and museums. Think about whether you'll need long sleeved tops and trousers, for both men and women, all across the world because different places have different dress codes.

The strangest example, for me, was when a museum in Florida asked us to leave because our baby had bare feet. However, whenever we travel, we're guests in someone else's home. So, baby shoes in the heat or skip the museum altogether.

# **FUN ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS**

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## FUN ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS

Now we're talking! Here's the fun part. The part where we get to talk about road trip playlists, boiled sweets, and calling shotgun. I'll leave that up to you (but pass me the mint humbugs.)

## MUSIC & SPEAKERS

A road trip without music is like a birthday without a cake.

Say road trip, think music, at least that's the way it goes for me. But what should you listen to and how should you do it?

Many people swear by portable speakers, but I always feel a little guilty that I'm irritating other people around me. However, if there's no-one else around then you can go for it!

Load up with this [Road Trip Playlist from Spotify](#) and drive on!

## GOPRO AND ROAD TRIP CAMERA TIPS

If you've been wondering whether or not to invest in a GoPro and have an epic road trip or driving holiday coming up, then now's the time to buy.

With accessories that mount the camera to the dashboard and software to magically turn your miles of shaky footage into a neat, clipped vision of wonder, these babies are *made* for road trips.

Or... Failing that, buy something to mount your smartphone to the dashboard instead. Hit time-lapse when the going gets pretty and enjoy the memories for years to come...

## DAY PACK & SUITCASE

Hard-wearing, soft-sided suitcases suit road trips the best: it's easier to squeeze them in and out of the boot or trunk without damaging either them or the car.

I love the Osprey range and would recommend [this bag for a family trip](#) and [this one](#) for a solo trip. Check out our other [travel gear reviews and packing lists here](#).

Make sure to bring a day bag that can also function as a beach bag, museum sightseeing bag or shower and shopping bag as well.

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**ENJOYING THE**  
**→ GREAT ←**  
**OUTDOORS**  
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## MAKING THE MOST OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

One of the best parts about any road trip or driving holiday is the chance to make the most of the great outdoors, far from the crowds and crushed commuters. You'll have a much better chance of enjoying all this with the right outdoor clothes, of course.

### SWIMWEAR

Ah... Life offers few pleasures sweeter than pulling up at a beach and plunging into the sea. Pack your swimwear, obviously, but also a towel and a plastic bag to put your wet clothes in.

Be careful about areas without lifeguards and pack some flip flops to help you walk over hot tarmac or sharp pebbles. Flip flops can also be handy for spas, shared campsites, and for quick access when your bare feet have been curled up on the dashboard...essentials for a road trip.

## HIKING ESSENTIALS

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Likewise, make the most of all those viewpoints, hiking routes and trails with the right hiking gear. We have a separate [hiking gear essentials list over here](#) for those planning to make this the main point of their trip.

For everyone else, I'd just highlight the importance of good hiking boots and a lightweight but effective waterproof jacket. A portable, folding umbrella can also save the day as well.

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**SNACKS FOR**

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 **A ROAD TRIP** 

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## WHAT FOOD SHOULD YOU PACK FOR A ROAD TRIP?

Snacks are to road trips what pine trees are to Christmas. A non-essential essential!

Whether your goal is to stay healthy while on the road or to junk like there's no tomorrow, food should be on your road trip packing list. However, it's important to choose snacks that won't melt, leak or stink out the car.

Here's a shortlist:

- Dried fruit like raisins, apricots and nuts
- Dirty treats that don't melt like Haribo, tins of boiled sweets, mint humbugs and lemon sherbets
- Fruit like apples and satsumas. Bananas tend to go brown *really* fast in the car.

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### PICNIC PERFECT

At the very least, it's a good idea to pack a decent picnic blanket with a waterproof base so that you can relax wherever you find the space instead of huddling in the front seats or boot. I often find the standard sizes too small by the time you've added in all the food and people, so I love the idea of the larger picnic blankets on the [Road Trip Shopping List](#).

Another solution is to throw in a couple of folding camp chairs for adults (you can also get them for kids) and to really make the most of those outdoor moments.

**ESSENTIALS**  
**FOR** 

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**CAR**

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## FOR THE CAR: CAR ESSENTIALS FOR A ROAD TRIP

Never neglect your trusty steed! Here's what your car needs you to remember when putting together your road trip packing list.

### CAR BREAKDOWN KIT

It's really not enough to hope for the best - and you know it. Make sure you have safety essentials like a spare tyre, jack, water, high-vis jacket, jump leads, hazard sign, fire blanket and torch. These are mandatory in some countries. A decent car rental company should make sure they're provided if you need them but check in advance. ***Never neglect this essential road trip gear.***

Also, it's good sense to pack spare bulbs and fuses. You can buy roadside emergency kits or put one together yourself with this road trip essentials list:

- A torch
- A high visibility jacket
- A hazard triangle
- Jump leads
- Spare fuse
- Spare light bulbs
- Spare tyre, jack and lug wrench
- Bottled water
- Fire blanket
- Tow rope
- Gloves
- De-icer and ice scraper



- Compass
- Possibly flares
- Toolbox

## AN AIR FRESHENER THAT'S GOOD FOR YOU

Swap synthetic swinging Christmas trees for air fresheners made of activated charcoal and bamboo. And if those ones that swing from the car mirror annoy you, choose one that hangs on the back of a seat instead. Find some great examples on the [Road Trip Shopping List](#).

## CAR ORGANISERS

For family travel with older children or road trips with passengers in the back, consider a car organiser that hangs over the front seats into the back. Stock with snacks, toys, games, wet wipes and rubbish bags and you have most of your family road trip essentials covered.

## WINDSHIELD SUN SHADE AND SHEETS

For privacy and for temperature control a windshield sun shade is a great investment. We couldn't live without them when driving in Spain as the inside of the car reached burning temperatures without them. When travelling with a young child, it helps to have some dark sheets to use in the back if you are trying to get them to nap while you drive.

## PAPER MAPS

I lost at least half a day, and luckily not more, in Morocco without a map to my name, just hoping to hit my hotel on the coast by nightfall amid goats, police checks and an awful lot of sand. The SatNav had failed and my phone had no signal. Without a paper map, I was, quite literally lost.

The solution is to buy and pack a paper map as a backup plan. You can always use it as a souvenir afterwards if you didn't need it.

Where do you find these maps?

In many cases, the car rental company can provide you with a simple one or you can buy one at a gas station or service station. But this isn't reliable - and this is where I went wrong in Morocco. See if you can buy a map online before you even hit the road.



**THE PAPERWORK**

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**YOU NEED FOR A ROAD TRIP**  
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## WHAT PAPERWORK DO YOU NEED TO BRING ON A ROAD TRIP?

Having the right paperwork with you is crucial.

**Top tip:** start early to make sure you have your paperwork ready. Don't forget, you may need special permits for certain landscapes, parks or camp grounds and this may take time to organize.

### DRIVING LICENSE

Let's get the obvious one out of the way, shall we? You need to have your license with you and it needs...

- To be valid in the country you plan to drive through
- To be up to date
- To have all the components (e.g. paper and card)

### INSURANCE

Car insurance is NOT something to mess around with, obviously. But it can also become extortionate because it's one of the ways car rental companies can make money out of your confusion (and apathy since, let's face it, it's such a dull topic.) For hiring a car in the UK, [this guide from Money Saving Expert](#) is a great way to navigate hidden charges.

### ROADSIDE RECOVERY DETAILS

If you rent a car, this should be part of your package but it's always a good idea to check.

When driving your own car, then remember to bring your own roadside recovery details. Be aware that limitations may apply if you're out of the country for more than a certain period of time (often 30 days but may be as little as 14.)

And, of course, your home package may not cover you if you're driving abroad.

Keep a copy stored electronically, as well as a paper copy in the car.

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## PERMITS

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Many beautiful places in the world require permits. Permits to enter, permits to drive, permits to park and permits to take photographs. Gathering these permits may require more time and paperwork than your mortgage application did, particularly when it comes to national parks. Start early and be thorough.

Roaming through the Australian outback, US National Parks, the national parks of Tierra del Fuego and many more besides all have permit restrictions. Some you buy at the gate (so you'll need the right method of payment, in the right currency, with the right ID) and others you MUST arrange in advance.

If something like this forms the *raison d'etre* for your trip *then I cannot stress enough that you should look into it in advance!*

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## TOLL PASS DEALS

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Long drives through certain parts of the world (particularly in America and Spain) require frequent stops to pay tolls.

These can be pretty confusing for visitors, not to mention irritatingly expensive. Sometimes, car rental companies will suggest you use an alternative scheme whereby you pay them a fixed fee in order to ignore the tolls as you drive.

Is this good value for money? It depends on how much driving you'll be doing and where you'll be going. If you possibly can, try to calculate this in advance. Both jet lag and general travel fatigue easily cloud your mind, making it hard to add things up quickly at the airport counter.

Don't make the worst mistake of all, of course, which is to pay for the pass and then drive in the wrong lane so you end up paying twice (or end up paying a fine.)

**WHAT  
TO KNOW WHEN  
YOU RENT  
A CAR**

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## HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT VEHICLE FOR YOUR ROAD TRIP

Again, this feels oh-so-obvious! But there are pitfalls that I've seen others make (and, ahem, I've made) time and time again.

### WHEN YOU'RE USING YOUR OWN CAR

Is it up to the task? Will you be driving through different conditions that require, for example, different equipment like winter tyres and snow chains?

Have you factored in how much luggage you'll have with you?

Will there be room for both luggage and passengers? Are you comfortable driving a vehicle that size in the city or would a smaller one be better?

Do you have your car manual? If not, do you have an electronic copy?

### CAR RENTAL

If you plan on picking up a car, then check through the separate checklists in this travel toolkit.

### KNOW THE RULES OF THE ROAD

In Britain, you drive on the left. And Japan. And Australia, Jamaica, Malawi and the Maldives and many more.

So, for one, check [whether to drive on the left or right with this handy website](#).

But the rules don't end there. Some countries require certain equipment, such as a spare pair of glasses in the glovebox, or restrict various others. [See not being allowed to drive in flip flops in Spain, among others](#).

Check the rules of the road in the country (or state) you plan to drive in. You may be surprised...

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# ROAD TRIPS

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# IN SPECIAL

# CIRCUMSTANCES

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## ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

So far, we've covered pretty general scenarios. But this toolkit promised to help you plan the perfect driving holiday *anywhere in the world*, right? So, a few more things to think about when it comes to things to bring on a road trip.

### LONG ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS

#### COOKING EQUIPMENT

When it comes to cooking on the road, you generally have the following options: cooking in a self-catered apartment, cooking in a caravan or RV or cooking in a campsite or glamping area.

Since my early backpacking days, I tend to be a self-catered or glamping kind of girl (or, let's face it, a quick shower and head to a restaurant kind of person.)

But cooking for yourself can not only save money, it can also save sanity when you're travelling with young children or when you're travelling for anything more than a week or so. There's also a tremendous feeling of satisfaction about sipping that first cup of tea outdoors in nature or roasting marshmallows around a fire as stars fill the sky.

#### ICE, ICE, BABY

So, depending on what you have in mind, you will need to bring along some ice. At the very least, you'll need a cool box or folding cool bag

Bring an ice cube tray or be prepared to buy ice at supermarkets. Most hotels in America have ice machines on each floor but that's not the case in Europe so you'll need to top up as you go.

#### MAKE IT HOT



Obviously, with self-catered apartments, cottages, villas and when glamping, you won't need to bring too much equipment. But a portable stove and camping mugs and plates can mean you can easily prepare a simple meal and cup of tea almost wherever you like.

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## A TOOL FOR ALL OCCASIONS

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My ever-faithful Swiss Army Knife comes in handy on driving holidays, for everything from cutting open stubborn food packets to fishing lost toys and coins out of the strangest places.

## SOLO ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS

I've driven solo in Morocco, Austria, Australia and more, through cities and on long, extended trips. And believe me, if I can do it, you can do it. BUT there's no need to be foolish. A very well educated and responsible friend of mine nearly lost her life on an academic dig in the Australian outback.

In some ways, of course, it's no different to travelling with other people. In others, it's all the difference in the world, particularly but not exclusively for women. All of the road trip essentials apply equally here...

But. You will need to be a little more cautious in the ground you cover (however great you are, there's only one of you.)

Plan for more breaks, more stops for navigation, more streetwise approaches to camping outside and be sure you can handle the situation if your car breaks down. Be extra vigilant in how you dress and what you leave in your car at night. Ideally, leave nothing on show.

## FAMILY ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS

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## CAR SEATS, CAR SEATS, CAR SEATS!

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Different places have different rules but physics and gravity stay the same wherever you go.

**Children's car seats save lives** and there is an overwhelming amount of evidence to back that up. Check the rules where you go (bear in mind that even between Europe and the US, the specs change, even within states in America.)

Is it worth taking your own car seat to use on the plane? Do you need to reserve a car seat in advance with the car rental? Will you need a bigger taxi to take the car seat if you're not picking up the car right away but spending a few days in the city?

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## OTHER FAMILY ROAD TRIP TIPS

The key point to remember is that little people can't tolerate as much as adults. And adults are only happy if the kids are happy.

Plan for shorter drives with frequent stops and make sure you are stocked to within an inch of your life.

Road trip essentials for kids include snacks, hats, sunscreen, entertainment, water and shade... Read the whole article again and double down on it for travel with children!

## DRIVING IN THE SNOW

Will you need snow chains and do you know how to put them on? A torch is essential for this, as well as decent, waterproof gloves. Have you changed to winter tyres? Do you have a snow shovel and ice scraper?

- Don't forget to put the windscreen wipers up in the air overnight. Look at what others are doing and follow!

## DRIVING SOMEWHERE REMOTE

Consider a compass and a personal locator beacon and stock up with spare fuel, screen wash, coolant and extra water. Have a backup plan. Check with park or land authorities and ask for their advice.

## DRIVING IN THE HEAT

You'll need plenty of water in the car and remember to look for air conditioning when booking your vehicle.

Buy and pack your own silver reflective windshield guard and use it. Pack sheets or dark cloths to use as shades if you have children (or adults!) trying to sleep in the back.

You'll also need sunscreen, of course. And make parking in the shade an absolute priority.

## DRIVING AROUND WILD ANIMALS

It's obviously not a good idea to be stranded in the Serengeti at night when the temperature plummets and the man-eating animals prowl around. Particularly if you need to pee.

What's possibly not so obvious (particularly if you live in Britain) is that dangerous animals are more common than you might think. You know those cute yellow kangaroo signs in Australia? They're not just for fun.

Kangaroos can be massive. Collide with one of them, a moose in Canada, a coyote in the US or a cow in India, and everyone's in trouble.

In the Middle East, you have roaming camels to contend with.

The most common safety advice is to avoid driving at around dusk or in the dark on remote country roads. But check online before you go and then double check at the car rental pick up desk for local wildlife advice. Staff often forget that what locals already know isn't that obvious to foreigners.

## DRIVING AROUND CITIES

First of all, do you have to?! In some cities, you need to drive, but in most it's just a hassle.

Traffic congestion and parking charges, not to mention teeny-tiny pre-car roads mean that driving in many global cities is about as pleasant as ending up with the middle seat on a long-haul flight with turbulence.

Honestly, in many old cities, like Seville in Spain, it is simply physically impossible to drive through many of the central old parts of town.

### THE SOLUTION? GO CARLESS FOR A FEW DAYS?

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Consider a few days in the city before going to pick up your car for the bigger journey ahead. Or, if you must collect your vehicle at the airport, then pick a smaller car to make parking easier (and car rental cheaper.)

Finally, don't forget that many modern cities have inner city charges that the visiting traveller has little hope of understanding. The London Congestion Charge and the Dublin orbital motorway charge spring to mind.

Check with your hotel concierge and car rental pickup desk and follow the instructions to the letter!

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## ROAD TRIP ESSENTIALS: IN SUMMARY

- 1 - Get your paperwork in order
- 2 - Get the right vehicle for the job
- 3 - Learn the rules of the road
- 4 - Plan your route
- 5 - Pack for you and for the car
- 6 - Check any special circumstances
- 7 - Explore the world and go and have a lot of fun!

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Take care of your road trip essentials and then go and have an absolutely amazing driving holiday!

**WHERE  
TO GO  
FROM  
HERE**

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## WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

### ENJOY

Don't forget to enjoy your trip. Really, don't dwell in the planning.

Just take care of the important stuff and enjoy it from there.

And then share the photos with us on social.

Hashtag #abidrovemetoit

See you later!



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## WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

This is one in a series of travel planning resources from [Inside the Travel Lab](#). Head to the blog to find out about the rest of them.

If you have bought the Road Trip Planner, or in fact, any of our other tools, thank you very much for supporting small, independent creative businesses!

I hope you are loving it and that it is helping you to chart out your own adventures.

Let me know any feedback you have. And I will see you again soon.

Cheers,





# Cheers

"AND JUST LIKE THAT, WE  
WERE ON OUR WAY TO  
EVERYWHERE."

— EMERY LORD, OPEN  
ROAD SUMMER

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