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TRAVEL TIPS

# 1

## GROUND WORK

# THE BEST TIME TO BOOK FLIGHTS TO GET THE BEST RATES

## FAQs for beating the system

### When do tickets go on sale for flights?

Usually, 11 months in advance. Reasons for this are arcane and historical – in the days of printed seat plans, airlines wanted to avoid booking people on to the right plane, on the right day, in the wrong year.

### So should you charge in and book almost a year ahead?

Not normally. Airlines can (and often do) update fares every hour using complex algorithms. This is the dark art of yield management – trying to get the fullest planes, with passengers paying as much as possible for every seat.

### So when is the best time?

There are certain broad trends: on average the best time is five weeks before travel. If you have time it can pay to watch your route carefully and educate yourself about when cheaper seats are generally available – varying day of departure and time of day can make a big difference.

### What about if you're flying at a very busy time, like over Christmas?

This may be the time to book very early: all fare classes will be available, and you should score a price that won't be beatable nearer the time. You'll also ensure you get a seat on the plane you want.

Filip Filipov, Head of B2B, Skyscanner



## 2

### GROUND WORK

## ALWAYS GET THE BEST PRICE ON AN AIRLINE SEAT

### How to bag a bargain in an airline sale

When the need to fill seats meets the recent explosion in capacity on key international routes – driven by recent expansion by Middle Eastern and Asian carriers – passengers can, in theory, pick up great deals on seat sales.

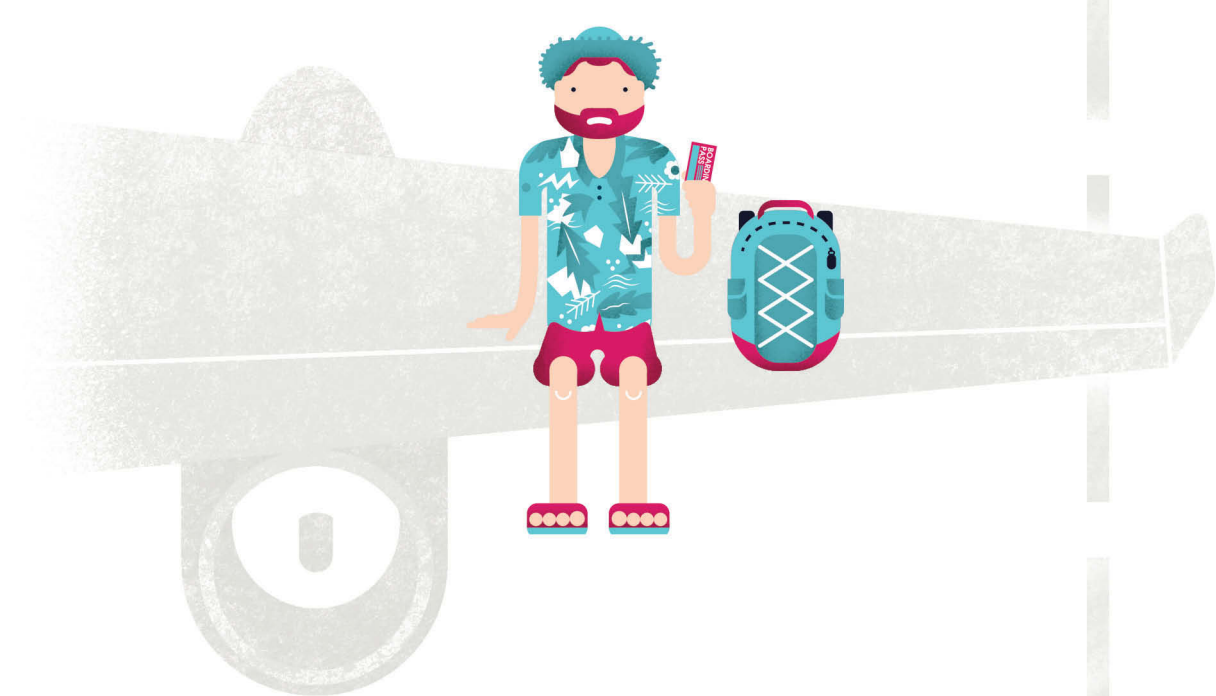
**1** 'As a general rule carriers will have a January sale and a September sale,' says Stuart Lodge from roundtheworldflights.com. 'Airlines are trying to fill seats for the next "shoulder season" – March to May for the first sale, and October and November in the second. Sales aren't unheard of outside this time, but they're certainly less frequent.'

**2** If you're travelling during school holidays or other peak periods, there's no point waiting for a sale – you just won't get the deals.

**3** By definition, seat sales target routes with sluggish sales. A high-demand, low capacity route is less likely to feature in a sale.

**4** Airlines often follow each other's lead in sales, which can cause domino effects in discounting. It's not unusual to have half a dozen airlines on sale at once.

**5** Sign up for email alerts and social media accounts from airlines to find out about sales. This is generally how airlines announce sales.



## BAG THE ULTIMATE ROUND-THE-WORLD TICKET

Stuart Lodge from [roundtheworldflights.com](http://roundtheworldflights.com) offers tips for getting the most from the biggest ticket you can buy

### Decide to go

Travel between mid-April and June to get the best prices, or at least avoid peak travel times – July, August, December and January. By travelling east to west at this time you'll also follow the best weather around the world.

### Decide where

Most people structure their trip around two or three of their must-see destinations. Be aware that adding South America generally adds complexity and cost.

### Know the rules

Most people make several changes after their initial booking. Flexible tickets cost more at

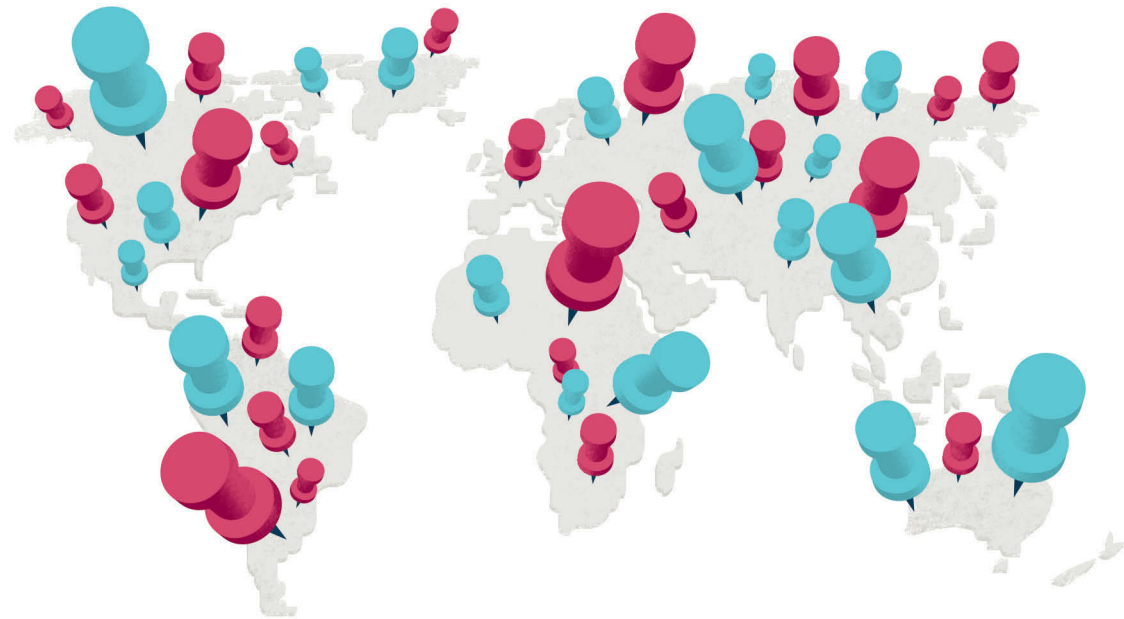
purchase, but will save you money in the long term.

### Know when not to use your ticket

Some countries, such as Indonesia and many places in South America, are popular without being well-served by RTW tickets. In these cases it's cheaper and easier to get to a nearby hub and hop on a low-cost flight, then rejoin your RTW later.

### Land ho

Open sections of RTW tickets allow for a mammoth train ride to see the world from ground level. If you're finding the trail well-worn, deviate from the norm by drawing a 'v' rather than a straight line between a and b.



## FIVE TIPS FOR TRAVELLING LIGHT

Doug Dymont – travel speaker, go-light guru and author of [OneBag.com](http://OneBag.com)

- 1 There's only one real 'secret' to travelling light: a proper personal packing list. It's a contract you make with yourself, a personal pledge that you will never pack anything in that isn't on your list. And for most people, such a list, able to accommodate destinations ranging from India to Inuvik, needn't hold more items than will fit in a single, carry-on-sized bag.
- 2 Learn about luggage. Most bags on the market are designed to sell easily, not facilitate lightweight travel. So learn about design (shapes, configurations) and construction (fabrics, zippers). You may even discover that the primary function of a wheeled bag is to support itself, not efficiently transport anyone's belongings!
- 3 Avoid liquids; they are the bane of the light traveller. Liquids (and gels) are heavy, bulky, prone to leakage (particularly on planes), and suspicious to security. Did I mention heavy?
- 4 Do some laundry. This needn't be onerous: done properly, and regularly, it's more like brushing your teeth than a major chore. With the right gear (traveller's clothes line, powder detergent, universal sink stopper), three pairs of underwear will take you anywhere.
- 5 Coordinate your colours. An excellent way to derive maximum use from a modest amount of clothing is to ensure that every item goes with every other one.

