

Step-by-Step Guide to Planning a Vacation

-Example on second page -

✓	Start with money. How much money can you spend on a vacation?
	Figure out timing. When can you take the trip?
	What form of transportation do you need?
	Do you need a travel agent?
	How much cash do you need to take?
	Do you need a house sitter?
	Do you need a pet-sitter?
	Do you need an ID and/or passport?
	What do you need to pack?
	Will you use a cellular phone in another country?
	Are there reservations to be made before-hand?
	Is the home ready to be left as-is?

Example

✓	<p>Start with money. How much money can you spend on a vacation?</p> <p><i>This year, I can only afford a trip that would cost about \$3,000 for my family of 4.</i></p>
	<p>Figure out timing. When can you take the trip?</p> <p><i>I would rather not go in the summer. I use the summer months to take my kids to swim classes and to do some summer reading and backyard-enjoying. I'd rather go during the winter break – late December.</i></p>
	<p>What form of transportation do you need?</p> <p><i>My family and I are willing to do a boat/cruise trip, or a trip that involves flying, not driving.</i></p>
	<p>Do you need a travel agent?</p> <p><i>If I let a travel agent know my plans, he can probably look into something for me with my budget. Since I want to go in December, I have to decide if I want to be in a snowy place or a warm place.</i></p> <p><i>AAA has travel agents who can help, as well as Costco, and online sites like Travelocity. I prefer the individualized service of AAA so that's the company I use for my travel plans.</i></p>
	<p>How much cash do you need to take?</p> <p><i>This depends on whether I want to go on an all-inclusive trip or a self-directed type of a place. If I get to a destination and want to get around, I have to pay for food, car rental costs, or taxi cab costs. I need to take these into account as part of my overall \$3,000 budget.</i></p>
	<p>Do you need a house sitter?</p> <p><i>If we go on a trip for 4 days, since that's probably what I can afford to pay for my \$3,000 budget that involves airfare, I will not need a housesitter. I do need to ask the neighbor to put out our trash bins on our collection day.</i></p>
	<p>Do you need a pet-sitter?</p> <p><i>Yes, but I typically have a family member who can help watch the dog. I</i></p>

	<i>don't have to pay for a doggy hotel.</i>
	<p>Do you need an ID and/or passport?</p> <p><i>Each year in January, we take a look at all four of our passports to make sure they are not expired. If they are, we renew them, even if we are not traveling outside the country. It's just good practice to have that done ahead of time.</i></p>
	<p>What do you need to pack?</p> <p><i>This requires a checklist of its own. The checklist is available in the Downloadable section or on this site.</i></p>
	<p>Will you use a cellular phone in another country?</p> <p><i>I won't be able to afford traveling outside the country based on my budget for the four of us. If I was traveling outside, I'd have to call my telephone company to have them add an international plan to help me save on costs. If I can use email to communicate and social media, I'd be better off. Once I add an international plan with the telephone company, I have to call and cancel after the trip.</i></p>
	<p>Are there reservations to be made before-hand?</p> <p><i>I do a Google search ahead of time to see what I can do when we arrive at our destination. For example, when we traveled to northern California about 10 years ago, I did not realize there were some amazing restaurants in the Napa Winery areas. They get so booked that reservations must be made months in advance. I would have done that had I done my research ahead of time.</i></p>
	<p>Is the home ready to be left as-is?</p> <p><i>Lock doors. Close garage door. Turn off lights (some leave 1 light on). Set alarms, if any.</i></p>