

ADVICE FOR AGE PLAY CONVENTIONS

Before getting started, there is some information and advice I cannot give. The main convention I will be discussing is CapCon as that is the convention I am familiar with and have frequently attended. Locations, hotels, dates, pictures, and things of that nature are not allowed to be given for security purposes. Like fight club, the first rule of CapCon is you do not discuss those details of CapCon. That being said, there is still a ton of information I would have liked to have known prior to the trip that would have improved my experience. In this article I'm going to cover various aspects, how to get information, purchasing tickets and costs, verification, packing, travel, the convention, itself and how to avoid or handle con drop and the dreaded CapCon Crud.

So, the first question to answer is why should you attend an AB/DL age play convention? The answer will vary from person to person, and I promise my answer is not a cop out. I will go over a few motivations. The first reason is obviously it's just an amazing time. Imagine an entire convention hotel being taken (Hotel Takeover) over by thousands of age players. All of the public spaces are themed and filled with toys, décor, and activities for various different age play brackets. For people looking to learn, the convention is a true convention that offers panels, lessons, and advice given by experts and creators in the community. Attending an age play convention is a great way to meet other like-minded individuals. If you are feeling like you are feeling alone or that lone strange person in society there is no faster way to dispel those feelings than going to a place with thousands of individuals around, you with common interests for days.

Staying informed – For individuals looking to attend a kink convention you need to first know what events exist, when they are, where it is going to take place, and what the costs will be so you can plan ahead. The only way to stay informed is to join and follow the convention's social media and subscribe to their website. Most, if all, kink conventions do not have the same event dates or times from year to year and ticket sales do not always fall in the same time period so it is important to follow the social media and announcements so you don't miss out. CapCon for example maintains a website, <http://www.capcon.club> and there a potential attendee can find information, create an account for verification, (We'll get to that) and subscribe for the email announcements when information and ticket sales are scheduled. Aside from CapCon there are two other well-known and active AB/DL conventions. They are Littles Jamboree and Baby Fur Con. Baby Fur Con, like CapCon, is a hotel takeover, but according to their website they are a 21+ or older event while CapCon and Littles Jamboree are both 18+ according to their website. If you are interested in attending any AB/DL it is the best advice to follow their social media, make an account on their website and be prepared if and when tickets go on sale. As already mentioned the

website for CapCon is www.capcon.club and the websites for the other two are www.LittlesJamboreeee.com and www.babyfurcon.com.

Costs – This aspect of attending a kink convention is entirely dependent on the attendee, but the basic ticket package for a standard room and pass for the entire convention is roughly \$1200.00. That cost only covers the convention pass and the hotel for the duration of the convention. There are various options a potential attendee to go about, which will either increase or decrease the costs.

First, we will cover ways to make Conventions more affordable. Having roommates and splitting the cost of the hotel is the first and possibly largest money saving options. How this works is when tickets first go on sale through the website one member of the planned group purchases their ticket and room reservation. This is called a “Room Captain” Attendee tickets go on sale generally the following day or days later and there are instructions how to show as a roommate under the room captain on the CapCon website. Other age play convention options may differ. Another potential cost saving measure is to forgo purchasing meal plans from the convention. The meals in the past have had a fixed menu and serving times and some of the food options may be foreign and not to the liking of an attendee. I personally would purchase breakfast but would go out or order for lunch and dinner. The last large money saving option is to volunteer at the convention either as a presenter or as a volunteer working part of the convention in various roles like setup, tear down, security, bag check in, or various other positions. In order to volunteer, in the case of CapCon, an announcement is made via email accepting applications and applicants can apply. This process has changed recently, as applications were taken before tickets were on sale and volunteers and percenters, if selected were guaranteed a host hotel room option and a discounted ticket, but that has recently changed so it is currently unknown if this option will remain in the future.

Aside from making large purchases and meal plans, costs can increase by purchasing larger rooms, upgrading a room to have a crib in it instead of a bed, and other accommodations like a VIP package. There is often “field trip” add on options as well in which many attendees will be bused from the convention and attend some sort of little’s outing like a zoo. These options are not required but they do come with an additional cost. Just to be clear, additional cost options are not hidden fees, but are all clearly explained out on the websites as to what the packages are, what they include, and what the additional charges are for that option.

Purchasing Tickets – Ticket sale dates are announced via emails for all subscribers, so be sure to review the “Stay Informed” section of this article so you don’t miss the announcement. THIS NEXT PART IS KEY: If you want to attend a convention like CapCon you have to be ready to purchase tickets the second they go on sale. The host hotel always sells out on the same day, and recently the spill over hotel was also sold out on the same day. In the case of CapCon, tickets can ONLY be purchased through the official CapCon website. So, anyone offering to sell you their tickets or any

other site or source is a scam. Tickets are verified for the purchaser only, so it is not possible to buy and scalp tickets. BEWARE OF SCAMMERS.

Verification – If you are planning on attending CapCon there is a verification process. I have heard other venues also vet potential attendees, but I haven't attended those, so I can't speak as to what exactly to expect. One of the newer additions and improvements the CapCon planners have implemented in recent years is the creation of a personal account on their website. This account is part of the initial verification process. The verification process is essentially a background check of all potential attendees. Background checks, and a review of social media and/or FetLife accounts are all done to ensure that you are not only who you say you are but also not someone trying to attend the convention in bad faith such as a journalist seeking to "break a story" or someone with differing political, religious or lifestyle views that wish to attend as a bad faith actor in order to disrupt or stage a protest or scene in the middle of the convention.

Some of the advice I have for anyone planning on attending is to create and verify a FetLife account. This will not only provide you with access to the several various FetLife forum channels concerning CapCon such as channels devoted to looking for roommates or social groups discussing CapCon plans. The verification process for FetLife requires you to provide a picture of your ID and information. You may need to repeat a similar process with the CapCon organizers. I know some people are uncomfortable providing this information, but I can assure you both are a professional organization with a steadfast dedication to privacy. If you have AB/DL social media accounts, you may also be asked to provide that information as well. Again, this is just a verification measure.

Packing – The advice for this topic is dependent on your travel plans. If you are planning on flying to the convention, then you will be greatly limited by what you can bring. My advice is to order diapers at the convention to save on packing space. There is sometimes a possibility of shipping things to the convention so looking into that is also a good idea. You may also want to look into costs of having a second bag, but if that is not an avenue that you'd like to take I'd highly recommend investing in vacuum seal travel bags which will help optimize space. You'll want to have a main suitcase in the largest size, and you can use your diaper bag as you carry on.

If you are planning on driving this greatly reduces some of the packing constraints but every year I have attended CapCon I have carpooled for the trip and even with just three people in a KIA Soul, space was so limited that my friend in the back seat was squished up against the door for the duration of the road trip. The three of us just completely overpacked. The following year I installed a roof rack on my car to try and alleviate some of the issues, but even then, we had brought a lot of things that we wish we didn't. So here is some key advice from what I have experienced. Don't bring food, diapers, changing supplies (other than basic travel sized if you wear in public). This isn't a Disney World vacation. Most items will not have a dramatic mark up,

and one of the first trips my friends and I make upon arriving and checking into our rooms is to do a trip to the nearby Walmart. If you are set on bringing a stuffie... bring only one (I know they are our friends, but we literally had a stuffie suitcase the first year and it was such a bad idea.) For more advice on packing for an AB/DL convention please see my ABDL Convention Packing List Article.

Travel considerations

Road Trip

For those planning on attending a convention via a road trip. Here is a list of things I recommend doing weeks prior to departure.

☐ **Complete Car Maintenance/Pre-trip**

(This includes oil change, tires/rotation, topping off fluids, air filter etc....)

☐ **Update/Verify insurance, License.**

(Have an updated copy of Proof of insurance, Registration, and License easily available in visor or console in case of pull over)

☐ **Pre-Plan packing**

(If you have several Littles/CGs you need to have a solid idea of how many bags everyone has and where they will be going in the vehicle.)

☐ **Pre-Plan the route and Drivers**

(It is a good idea to have an estimate of where you are going, if you plan on swapping out drivers and if you are planning on making any rest stops or breaking the journey into multiple days where you plan on stopping)

☐ **Discuss Car Rules/Roles**

(To ensure safety and fun it is a good idea to have a discussion of some basic rules or roles in the car. Some examples that my friends and I implement are: The front passenger is there to assist the driver if something is needed. All occupants need to use headphones if they are playing something to not distract the driver or wake up the co-driver who may be sleeping before their driving shift starts. The rear passenger controls the cooler and snacks and distributes them when asked. When exiting the car at stops, pants must be worn and not overt AB/DL activities should be visible or obvious (Paci use, bottles, public diaper changes)

Some things to consider and lessons I have learned from multiple convention adventures.

- Increasing your storage for the trip is well worth the money and investment. For my first trip to an ABDL convention me and my friends overpacked and just didn't make the best use of storage and as such the trip was somewhat uncomfortable. The following year I invested in a roof rack and travel rack for my car (I have a KIA Soul), and the trip was much more comfortable. I have since added a trailer hitch and a back storage rack as well to make free up as much space in the car as possible.
- Only pack the diapers that you will need for travel and plan on buying them at the convention.
- Vacuum travel bags are an awesome investment for all travel. Harbor Freight sells four packs of vacuum bags for roughly (\$7) and you can get a small vacuum from there as well for around \$30.
- The Ideal Packing goal is every occupant has one large suitcase and one diaper bag. Vacuum bags are helpful for this.

- Aside from road snacks, drinks, and travel sized changing supplies it is recommended to not purchase any toiletries, trash bags, food, etc.... One of the first convention stops you should make after arrival is to purchase basic toiletries, food, trash bags, and diapers for the convention.

Air Travel

For air travel, it is recommended to have one carry-on bag and one large suitcase. Much of the previous advice like vacuum bags, purchasing all toiletries and diapers is very important for the air travel Littles and CGs. The ideal packing situation is to choose a carry on that will double as your diaper bag at the convention. If you are a diaper wearer, I'd recommend having one spare diaper in your carry on and a set of clothing as well as your important travel documents and electronics. You could always have an additional bag for the cost.

The Convention and Taking the Leap

Making the most of the convention is what everyone hopes to do. Knowing the rules, and game planning ahead are ideal for making the most of your time at a convention. You will not be able to do everything that is going on so you'll have to sometimes decide between two things that are ongoing at the same time. For example, the ABDL Casino might be open at the same time as the Nerf War or a dance party might take place during a karaoke event. Printing out the schedule and setting a reminder alarm to help you plan out your day are a great way to make the most of your time. If there is only one thing I can suggest to newcomers, it is to Take the Leap... get involved in conversations, plan on going to several of the activities, and network... I personally have custom business cards made that have all of my ABDL social media contacts on them. It is easy enough to hand these over to people I just met and then have conversations not only during the convention but after the convention is over. It is better to try something new or start a conversation than not make the attempt at all and regret it later. ✨

Sleep and Hygiene

This is going to sound counterintuitive to what you'd want to do on a vacation... but you need to ensure that you are eating healthy, getting enough sleep, and doing everything you can towards maintaining proper hygiene. To quote "Neeko" in the Community. You must follow the 6, 2, 1 rule... That is 6 hours of sleep a day, have at least two proper meals, and at minimum 1 shower per day. There is stuff going on with the convention all the time and unfortunately you can only do so much, so it is very important that you plan ahead, but you have to get enough sleep. If there is a night party, you want to attend you need to plan in a nap. Sleeping in the day is okay... just as long as you get the must needed rest.

Hygiene should also be a top concern for all. The "A" in ABDL stands for adult and you may not know it... but body odor is a real issue and can drive people away

from wanting to be around you. Deodorant, brushing teeth, mouthwash, and frequent showers and diaper changes are a must! Although some folks may be into long term wet diaper experiences you need to be mindful of those around you. (Messing is not permitted at the convention space. If you have a medical condition that may cause a messing you need to change immediately in your room.)

Post Con... aka Con Drop

“Con Drop” or “Con Crud” are real situations you want to prepare for if you are going to be attending a convention. Personally, I take additional days off work to help get over the drop... What those terms refer to: Con Drop is the sad depression that sets in after the convention ends. Most are not immune to it, and it is not uncommon to shed a tear or feel an overwhelming feeling of emptiness upon the conclusion of the convention. Everyone has their own ways to overcome this... personally my friends and I will tell stories on the drive home from the convention and we will even start planning out the changes we want to make for the next year, thus planning the seeds of longing for the next convention. Con Crud or Con Flu is a literal sickness that sets in following the convention. This isn't unique to Age Play conventions but is a phenomenon that happens when gatherings of people from all over the world gather in a confined space for extended periods of time, for example cruise ships. Staying hydrated, proper hygiene measures, and plenty of sleep are good steps towards working towards preventing Con Crud, but it is a common occurrence no matter the preventative measures.

