



Hawaii

Destination Guide

PACKING

- All travel documents, identification, medications and prescriptions (including glasses), valuables, electronic devices, and charging cords should be in your carry-on bag, NOT in your checked luggage.
- Don't pack "his and hers" suitcases. Mix items for each person between all your checked bags.
- Liquids, gels, and powders in your carry-on luggage are restricted. Review the current TSA regulations at [TSA.gov/travel](https://www.tsa.gov/travel).
- Baggage fees may apply to checked and carry-on luggage. Visit your airline's website—including any service between islands—for pricing and details about baggage quantity, size, and weight.
- Place identification on the outside and inside of all checked bags. Also include a copy of your travel itinerary inside each bag to assist airline personnel in case of lost luggage.

FLIGHTS

ONLINE CHECK-IN – Most flights offer online check-in starting 24 hours before departure time, which is helpful for securing your seat assignments. Use the confirmation code in your travel documents to check in using the airline's website or app.

DEPARTING TO HAWAII – For most US airports, you should plan to arrive 90 minutes – 2 hours before your flight. Add more time for holidays or peak travel periods.

DEPARTING FROM HAWAII – Recommended airport arrival time is a minimum of 2 hours before your flight boards. Your luggage is subject to mandatory agricultural inspection before you approach the airline ticket counter. Some fruits, vegetables, and plants are not allowed to be transported to the mainland. (See [HDOA.Hawaii.gov](https://www.hdoa.hawaii.gov) for details.)

JET LAG

TIME ZONE – Hawaii is five hours behind Eastern Standard Time and two hours behind Pacific Standard Time. Add another hour during March through November, because Hawaii does not observe Daylight Saving Time.

STAY RESTED – Get enough sleep in the days leading up to your trip, and if possible, gradually adjust your schedule to match what your new time zone will be. Avoid overscheduling your first day or two of vacation activities, while you allow your body to adjust.

HYDRATE – Drink plenty of water before and during your flight. Since liquids are limited through airport security, bring an empty refillable bottle to use once you're past the checkpoint. Avoid caffeine and alcohol.

BE COMFORTABLE – Make it easier to rest during your long flights by dressing in comfortable clothes. Consider accessories like neck pillows, noise-cancelling headphones, and an eye mask. Try to walk and stretch at least once or twice during each flight.

CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS

- In addition to the purchase price applied to your card, hotels, cruise lines, and car rental companies may place a hold on an additional amount to cover potential additional charges. Holds may not be released until 5-10 business days after travel, and funds may not be available to use during that time.
- Debit cards—even those that offer a credit option—may NOT be accepted by some hotels or car rental companies.

RENTAL CARS

LOCATIONS – Rental cars are available in a variety of locations. Allow extra time for pick-up and drop-off at busier spots, such as airports and cruise terminals.

LOCAL LAWS – Ask the car rental agent to review local traffic laws with you. Note that Hawaii has strict regulations against drivers using electronic devices, including at a stoplight or while stopped with the engine running.

ROAD RESTRICTIONS – Even with a 4x4 vehicle, rental companies will enforce restrictions prohibiting off-road usage or driving in remote areas. Carefully follow the guidelines in your rental agreement.

THEFT – Don't leave items unattended in a vehicle or leave electronic accessories in plain sight. Even trunk storage is risky, so if you decide to use it, secure items inside before arriving at your destination.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

PRE-BOOKED TRANSFERS, TOURS, AND SHUTTLES – Follow the instructions in your travel documents for pre-booked transportation. Some hotels offer shuttle service into town or to popular tourist attractions.

TAXI – Instead of hailing a cab on the street, it is more common to find taxis at stands at shopping areas, hotels, or by asking a concierge. Rates and service types vary between islands, and prices can be high for long distances.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION – The island of Oahu offers bus and trolley service; ask your hotel staff or the visitor center for details. Other islands have limited, if any, public transportation.

RIDE-SHARING – Services such as Uber and Lyft are available on many of Hawaii's main islands.

INTER-ISLAND TRAVEL – Hawaii's main airport is Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL). A few airlines offer flights between islands—sometimes direct, sometimes connecting in Honolulu—and tickets should be booked in advance for the best schedule options.

TIMESHARE / VACATION CLUB

Offers of discounted tours, promotional items, or other “freebies” are likely connected with a timeshare or vacation club company. Their presentations may take up considerable time and can be high-pressure sales pitches. Firmly say no if you do not wish to be approached about this. If you do attend, USE EXTREME CAUTION before entering into a contractual agreement.

LANGUAGE

Hawaii's two official languages are Hawaiian and English. While English is common throughout all the islands, there are a few Hawaiian words you should be familiar with: aloha (greeting, hello, good-bye), lei (popular flower garland), mahalo (thank you), pau (finished).

CELL PHONES

COVERAGE – Most major US companies provide service. Ask your carrier to see if roaming charges apply on your plan. Reception may be limited due to Hawaii's terrain, especially in remote areas.

CROSSWALK LAW – In addition to driving restrictions, Honolulu has a law prohibiting pedestrians from looking at an electronic device while crossing the street. Violators can be ticketed and fined.

CLOTHING

Average daytime temperatures are between 75°–85° F, but conditions vary due to Hawaii's diverse landscapes and microclimates. Pack based on your planned activities.

BEACHWEAR – Shirts and swimsuit coverups are recommended while not at the pool or beach. Water shoes can be helpful for rocky areas.

WATER SPORTS – Bring sportier bathing suit styles and protective clothing like rash guards or swim shirts for boating, snorkeling, surfing, etc. Wetsuits and other gear can be rented locally.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES – Temperatures can drop at higher elevations, and rain is more common in some areas. Lightweight rain gear, sturdy shoes, and layered clothing items work well. Long shorts or pants may be required for some activities.

GOLF – Many courses require proper golf attire of collared shirts with dress shorts or slacks. Most prohibit tank tops, t-shirts, denim, and sports-style shorts.

DINING – Casual collared shirts, sundresses, and sandals will work in almost any island restaurant. Consider a jacket or light sweater for breezy evenings and air-conditioned locations. Hawaiian shirts are very popular options for men to wear for all occasions.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SUN – Hawaii's strong sun is intensified near water and sand, or at higher elevations. Island breezes or clouds may distort your perception of exposure. Apply plenty of high-SPF sunscreen, plus wear a brimmed hat, sunglasses, and protective lip balm. Reef-safe sunscreen is recommended to help protect coral and ocean life from harmful chemicals.

OCEAN – Use caution during swimming and beach activities. Stay alert to changing ocean conditions, observe posted signs, follow instructions from lifeguards, and read updates on HawaiiBeachSafety.com. Don't touch or stand on coral reefs.

BUGS – Mosquitoes like Hawaii's warm climate, and are most active around sunrise and sunset. Prevent bites by using insect repellent, dressing in light-colored protective clothing, and avoiding areas with standing water.