

Moving Through Airport Security Quickly

Ever since homeland security has become such an issue, moving through airport security has become more difficult. As a seasoned business traveler, this part of your business trip requires some savvy preparation and your knowledge of the system so you can sail through security at the airport as quickly as possible. But the ability to navigate airport security quickly is not something that comes easy or without some significant planning and training.

The biggest problem of getting through security is not you, it's the other people who did not come prepared for this process. If you get stuck behind someone who is completely stumped by what is expected of them, it can take forever to get through the system. So the first priority is to hit airport security when the crowds are low. The easiest way to accomplish this is to take the first flight of the day out of that airline. This will be the time when there are fewer people in the airport than anytime of the day.

Usually it is only business travelers who are at the airport at six a.m. so they will be the ones that already know how to handle security and the lines will move much more quickly. Like them, you have already learned the most recent rules about what will pass through security and what will get you stopped. You will need your driver's license and boarding pass several times as you move through the process. So have that out early on and ready to show it often. Don't put that information away until you are on the other side of security and ready to go to the gate. That one-step alone moves you along quickly through the different checkpoints of airport security.

Usually airport security uses a queuing system to handle the crowds. That means that usually it is one long line moving up to the gates and then that line splits into several gates where various teams work the travelers through the scanning stations. As you are standing in line to go through the gates, keep an eye on the different stations. Some stations will stop more people or their equipment is too sensitive so it is moving slower. You may notice that a new team has arrived and is preparing to open a new station. With a bit of maneuvering in line, you can hit that new station as it opens and move through fast before the lines accumulate there.

This is also a place to do a bit of profiling. While it is not ok for police to profile, you can look over the people ahead of you and profile those who will either be detained for scanning or will be a big problem when they are ready to put their stuff on the belts. Certain ethnic groups might get scanned more often. It's sad but true. We all want racial equality but if you can avoid being behind that person, you might get through security faster. Also, avoid

"amateur travelers" who have lots of kids, the elderly, people in wheelchairs or anyone who looks like they are confused by this process. You can be a hero and help someone out if you have plenty of time. But as the lines split up to go to the different stations, you can simply avoid being behind people who will slow up the process and go to the fast lines to get through more efficiently.

You can cut down on how much you get scanned before you get to the airport. Wear slip-on shoes that you can get off quickly and back on quickly. Boots and tie shoes just slow you down. Keep the amount of "stuff" you are carrying through security to a minimum. Put your wallet, keys and other pocket material in your briefcase or purse before you even get in line. In that way you are down to shoes and that item to move through security and you can move more quickly.

These tricks of the trade can make the beginning of your business trip much less of a problem and get you to the gate more quickly. The security personnel will appreciate that you know what you are doing and you will reduce your stress and move along to your business goals with less anxiety and a greater focus on your objectives.

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