

# Expedia's Airplane + Hotel Etiquette Study Reveals the Latest in Travel Annoyances

## Seat Kickers and Barefoot Passengers are travelers' worst nightmare

BELLEVUE, Wash., April 30, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Today Expedia.com® released the results of its 2018 Airplane and Hotel Etiquette Study, a deep dive into travel behavior from 35,000 feet to 350 square feet. The average person takes five flights per year and spends 14 nights in a hotel, so it's not surprising strong opinions are formed when traveling. Although everyone has their own unique pet peeves, the top three things most people can't stand are seat kickers, barefoot passengers and excessively chatty or loud travelers.

"Whether you've been on one vacation or 100, you've likely experienced some form of annoying behavior while traveling," says Nisreene Atassi, Global Head of Communications for Expedia brand. "At Expedia, we want to ensure that every leg of a traveler's journey is enjoyable. Our goal with this study is to better understand travelers' biggest pet peeves and offer tips to help them maximize comfort and minimize annoyances."

This year's findings highlight the sometimes-unwritten etiquette rules that, if followed, ensure getting to the destination is half the fun.

### The Seat Kicker Reigns Supreme as the Worst Passenger to Encounter During a Flight

For the fourth year in a row, more than half of global respondents identified the passenger who constantly kicks, grabs or bumps their seat as the most annoying. With the average amount of legroom decreasing on some airline carriers to accommodate more seats, this behavior is likely to remain one of the most common and most hated.

Travelers might find some insurance against seat kicking by upgrading to premium economy or choosing a seat in front of an exit row. Or join the 62 percent of travelers who politely notify airline staff about the annoyance and save themselves hours of irritation.

Top ranked list of worst flight passengers:

- The Seat Kicker/Bumper/Grabber (51 percent)
- The Aromatic Passenger (43 percent)
- The Inattentive Parent (39 percent)
- Personal Space Violators (34 percent)
- Audio Insensitive (29 percent)

### Bare Feet Are A Flying No-No

Over 90 percent of global respondents agree it's not ok to be barefoot during a flight. This is particularly true for nearly 75 percent of Americans who said they always keep their shoes and socks on. Getting comfy on a long flight is tough, but there is a happy medium to avoid grossing out seatmates. Only remove shoes, and never prop feet up on the seatback or encroach into the next row.

### Shhh... Do Not Disturb

Whether in-flight or in bed, people just want peace and quiet. Nearly 90 percent of Americans prefer to keep to themselves during a flight, while 66 percent always or frequently use the privacy indicator to prevent hotel staff from entering their room. To pass the time while flying, Americans would rather sleep (69%) than talk to other passengers (28%). And flying isn't the time to ramble - our study shows 77 percent of Americans dread sitting next to someone who talks too much.

Carrying a pair of headphones or earplugs is an excellent way to cancel out unsolicited chatter on a flight. For light sleepers, requesting a high-level, corner guestroom away from elevators and street level could also minimize noise.

Top ranked list of worst hotel guests:

- The Inattentive Parents (45 percent)
- The In-Room Revelers and The Hallway Hellraisers (41 percent)
- The Complainers (29 percent)
- The Party-goers and The Bar Boozer (27 percent)

### Fees and Freebies Drive Booking Behaviors

Travelers are extremely budget conscious; price and associated fees are among the biggest factors people take into consideration when booking a flight or hotel. There's some notable commonalities and differences in how travelers go about saving money, but overstuffing carry-ons to avoid checked baggage fees is the most common behavior. Americans lead the way here, far surpassing any other country and illustrating the deep impact of changes in fee structures.

The thriftiness doesn't stop there. 75 percent of travelers deem freebies such as Wi-Fi, breakfast, resort credits, free parking, and room upgrades as very or somewhat important when booking a hotel. Twice as many Americans would volunteer their seat on an oversold flight in exchange for a free voucher compared to other countries. Only one in four travelers would pay to upgrade their seat, while even fewer would pay for in-flight Internet access.

#### **Other fascinating findings include:**

- **Across the globe, travelers are most annoyed to find bed bugs, a used condom, cigarette smoke or foul smell upon checking into a hotel room** – while dirty surroundings are the main reason travelers request to switch hotel rooms, more than half rarely or never sanitize items like the remote and phone, or wear shower shoes to protect their feet.
- **South Koreans are the most likely to get drunk on a flight** – Thai and American travelers round out the top three.
- **Travelers typically recline their seats for two reasons** – only if it's a long flight, three hours or more, or when going to sleep. A quarter of Americans said they never recline their seat because it's rude. Europeans tend to be more likely to ask fellow passengers to un-recline their seat.
- **54 percent of people agree it's ok to wake snoring passengers** – and when it comes to passing a sleeping passenger, most don't hesitate to wake them and ask them to move. 20 percent say it's ok to just climb over with your back to them.
- **Online and mobile check-in are taking the world by storm, just over a third of travelers still check-in at the airport** – 50 percent of Americans check-in online for their flights. Meanwhile 72 percent still print a boarding pass and less than 30 percent use a mobile boarding pass.
- **Hotel habits** – most travelers admit to hiding valuables from housekeeping and taking items from a hotel room.

Visit the [Expedia Viewfinder Blog](#) for a full analysis of the 2018 Airplane and Hotel Etiquette Study.

#### **About the 2018 Airplane and Hotel Etiquette Survey**

This study was conducted on behalf of Expedia by Northstar Research Partners, a global strategic research firm. The survey was conducted online from February 22-March 19 across North America, Europe, South America and Asia-Pacific using an amalgamated group of best-in-class panels. The study was conducted among 18,229 respondents across 23 countries.

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For further information: For further information or to schedule an interview, contact: Alexis Tiacoh, PR Specialist, [press@expedia.com](mailto:press@expedia.com)

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