

Airlines

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Intro

The skies are dark these days. After 9/11, the Amerikan Government has made it more difficult to get on a plane even the traditional way. The safest way to get free or cheap airfare is to see if somebody in the "general aviation", or private pilots, have room for you. Many may get sketched out by this, so look for people who seem cool about it. It may sweeten the pot a bit if you act like a young college kid, a plane nut, or offer some cash for airplane fuel (like, \$20-50) or a place to spend the night if it's a cross-country trip in a Piper Cub. One of the best offers for trade is to wash the plane before or after the flight, have a bucket, dish soap, chamois, and clean sponge ready, hang out in the airstrip coffee shop and look for pilots, a hitch hiking sign on your wash bucket helps. Always look for airports that offer lessons and grab a pilot burning air hours to upgrade their license. It could very well be a loud ride and you may not get there as fast as a jet (prop planes go about 1/2 the speed of a jet), but its an amazing experience, and it beats driving!

(Not)Skyjacking

Only an idiot would try hijacking a flight after 9/11. Some pilots now are armed and sky marshals who are on a small percentage of domestic and international flights have orders to shoot to kill if anyone tries to take control of the aircraft. We aren't really scared of these people and the few flights they are on, we are really scared of what a gang of flying rednecks would do to be like the pocketknife guys on 9/11 and save the day. Please ignore Abbie's advice from a simpler era. Take comfort in the fact that the airport-pigs are mostly simple power hungry types if your non-skyjacking scam is outside of what they are ordered to watch for and your documents appear to be in order you are likely home free much easier than in the old days.

Fre-E-Ticket Hopper

Once you have passed the frat hazing dances like the removed shoes shuffle, the trashed shampoo swing, and the rectal exam jam the TSA freaks feel they have pulled out all of the rebels, what sane unbroken person would not take a swing at their crudely grunted orders. Your guerrilla acting skills have gotten you past, and on to cashing in on Abbie's dream of free flying for the bold.

The best option is to download one of the programs that make and print fake e-ticket boarding passes, these should scan in as legit at the time of this writing, if that is not an option but the boarding pass system is still used try this:

- Pick up a few e-ticket boarding passes from the trash outside an airport to copy, these are printed on a home computer.
- Find a print cartridge that is won't print right or set your paint program to (a)put streaks parallel into the barcode and (b)wipe out a few numbers under the bar code, both are important.
- Print out a new e-ticket with the correct date and where you want to fly. You have to use extreme caution that the flight number and time and other details are exactly right.
- Arrive at the airport dressed nicely, you want to look vanilla.
- Wait until right before final boarding call and rush up, when the bar-code scan doesn't work they will usually send you aboard.
- Since you should be the last guy boarding grab an open seat in first class and start asking for the free booze. (NOTE: On most airlines nowadays, they want to lick the asses of the corporate moneybags who pay \$2000 to go from New York to Miami in front, so they address them by name. They look at the manifest, a document that has a list of everyone who bought a ticket, only in front; so if you sit in the back they won't notice that that seat should have been empty.)

If this plan doesn't get you a wave through right away, before they even hassle you or offer to access the computer try to find you on the computer claim to have another ticket leaving right now (know the flight number and gate) that you have to run to on another airline because you thought you would miss this flight, stay cool, get gone, try again later. Since this trick requires speed a little stress and carelessness on the part of the agent don't try any other scams like having them gate check an extra bag, being late is the best way to stay out of trouble with this gag.

Missionary Position

Many missionary organizations will fly you to a third-world country for free to preach the word of Jesus to the heathen locals, and fly you back in a year or so. Do your research before working with an organization many also pressure you to self fund your trip. Simply ditch out for the year, peruse the more touristy spots, make some money, etc., then return when the time is up with some cock-and-bull story of independent missionary work prepared you might even bogus up a diary as proof. These people are usually not hard-asses, so even if they don't buy it for a second, they won't ditch you in deepest, darkest Peru, but research them and feel them out to see if they sue ditchers.

Around The World Tickets

If you have a year off and want to hit many locations as you tour an around the world ticket is likely the fare you want. Before leaving find out how many stops you can make and how long the ticket will be valid. Most RTW tickets will end up cheaper than a long trip and return to Europe or Australia from North America.

Air Courier

Believe it or not, you can fly on the cheap if you deliver a package to the city of your destination... and no, there's no drugs or other contraband involved. Flying as an air courier can be a dirt cheap way of travel. There are a few catches: You have to sign up for the program and pay an initiation fee and/or annual dues, if you are working with an informal courier service. You need to be at least 18 (or in some cases 21); You need a valid passport and a clean-cut appearance; You're responsible for getting your own Visa(s); You're limited to carry-on baggage and the flight schedules can be erratic (You may be flying the Red Eye to Singapore after only two day's notice). On the plus side, you can fly for up to an 85% discount and your Air Courier ID card may get you hotel discounts in some places. If you want to, you can schedule additional assignments from your destination and turn your trip into a Grand Tour. If you travel frequently and don't mind last-minute booking, consider this option. If you do, keep a list of the phone numbers of your country's embassies overseas. Research the agency you are working through, many are scam fronts that want a large membership fee up front and may not ever provide real courier work or any reasonable fare discount.

A better option if you want to get regular at this is to get incorporated and bonded (speak to a small business lawyer) and have a legit home business. You will do better if you have an actual pool of available couriers some local advertising and a phone book entry and a phone number that rings to somebodies home or mobile phone that is available during business hours. The reason to DIY your courier business is that these big membership courier fronts double dip by charging whatever business for the service of transporting their package and also have the courier/traveler pay for a large part of the airplane ticket, pure profit!

Form a relationship or partnership with a cool independent travel agent, perhaps they can be the contact side of your courier operation since they already have the office and legit business presence and will make money both on a cut for the transport fee and on the tickets you will buy to make the delivery. Travel agents already have the access to travel and hotel discounts which they can transfer to you as "employees", they are also looking for new income streams since online ticket sites are cutting deep into their bottom lines.

Upgrades

Dress nice and ask politely for an upgrade for First or Business Class, on long flights the free booze and leg room is sometimes still just a request away. You might offer to wait for the next flight in the schedule if the volume is heavy and they need a few open seats, but it will be worth it on long flights. If you are "bumped" from an overbooked flight, you may get an upgraded seat if you raise enough of a fuss (If they do, it's mostly just to keep you quiet). The trick is to be good enough at complaining but make it sound like the airline is screwing both you and the agent, if you just act like an ass they can call security at the drop of a hat.

Support Gear

Have your in flight support gear in your carry on bag, buy a inflight audio plug adapter (two pin) and get some old style tube earphones for older airplanes. For those who are more sensitive when trying to nap, your pillow or neck pillow and a nicer sleeping mask and earplugs or noise canceling earphones(music works too) might make a difference. If you have a HPC or PDA you can extend the usable life on long flights with a external AA battery pack, now your e-book, movies, or music will last.

On newer aircraft (especially in first and business class) your seat may have a laptop power plug, but you will need a special adapter. Getting an air-to cigarette (12v) adapter and a 12v to 120v adapter will allow you to plug the gadgets made for Cars, and your normal laptop power brick. There are 'all in one' auto/air adapters but they are expensive! (NOTE: Not true any more. Now, \$5-10 at flea markets or Chinese sites, and just pennies more at the temples of capitalism that line the roads of suburbia).

Carry your own food, enough for the whole flight. You will not be able to get your soda through security (as they try to make you buy their overpriced post-security items however possible), but if you bring an *empty* bottle, it's perfectly fine. So bring your favorite water bottle (make sure it's empty otherwise it's now the property of the government) and fill it up on the other side of security. Even with the security confiscation you still need to plan for the airplane to either not have your special meal or surprise you by charging for the meal. (NOTE: Sodas are free on most flights, but food within the US of A is charged for; expect \$10) Use discretion on hyper-hydrating before the flight or eating salty food or coffee, we have heard of airlines ordering credit card slots for bathroom doors. Yup, they want to charge for joining the mile high crappers club. (NOTE: None in US and only RyanAir in Europe- Edit-Ryanair have been prevented from charging from using the bathroom)

Beating the Luggage Surcharge

You can avoid the \$35 or so for that second piece of luggage by getting in touch with a friend, supportive relative or other trustworthy contact waiting for you at your destination and ship them your secondary gear a week or so before your flight, so it will be waiting for you when you arrive. When returning, take your less than necessary items and ship them back home before you leave.

Sky Phones

We have tried to stealthily use our mobile phones and a data cable to get an Internet connection over the US and Europe without success, but SMS reception seems to work at times. There are plans afoot for airlines to have their own hyper-expensive roaming plan with a special mini cell station on the airplane. Try to hack the Air-Fone on the seatback for free calls, with a modem port for super slow data you might get one or two web pages to load during the flight for a price of around \$8 a minute.

Headphones

A big moneymaker is those little headphones that the flight attendants will sell on the plane for \$5 so you can watch the in-flight movie or listen to the recorded music selections. Usually the sound quality of the headphones is poor and you can't plug in your own headphone because of the goofy twin-prong plug the airlines use. Check out your local Radio Shack or electronics gear shop and ask for an "airline headphone adapter". This is a twin-prong plug that you can plug your own headphones in, and then plug the adapter into the airline sockets. They range from \$2 to \$5.

Bicycles

If you are flying with a bicycle visit a bike shop and ask for a free box, if they want money go to the next shop, these are thrown away otherwise. If you have a full size bike you will normally be charged for oversize, so stuff the box with other gear too. Remove wheels and pedals, take off the derailleur and zip tie to the frame, load the frame against one side of the box and the wheels on the other, remove the skewers and tape the pedals together then to the frame. Don't worry about deflating your tires the urban legend is that depressurized air inside the plane can cause the air in the tires to expand, possibly even burst if there is serious structural damage, but don't let it stress you out, atmospheric pressure is 15psi and you only loose about 5psi when in at altitude, a good intact bicycle can easily survive even being blown out the airlock of a spaceship into hard vacuum, direct summer sunlight heating the tires will cause a much greater change in tire pressure. Carry the tools to attach your pedals. Use fiber packing tape to secure the box and pack the tape and loading instructions in the box for security repacking.

If you have a folding bike use similar technique and even a 20" wheel bike should fit into a regular check suitcase if you remove the wheels, derailleur, and seat post from the frame. Bike Friday in Eugene, Oregon sells a clamshell suitcase drilled for a trailer tongue and wheels that attach to the suitcase with wingnuts, the suitcase that your folding bike rides in becomes the trailer. ([://bikefriday.com/](http://bikefriday.com/)) We expect that you could also make such a setup for much less with a trip to the thrift store and hardware shop.

Guns

Legal firearms and limited ammo can be checked on domestic flights and with proper permits also international flights. A record may be kept that you have traveled with firearms. Cover your locked gun case with a generic cardboard box. Pyrotechnics are not allowed including signal flares. A bonus to sending a gun is that once you declare the firearm and check the bag the TSA is from then on *forbidden* by federal law to randomly open and root through that bag. This, of course, can be used to your advantage. Check out Packing and the Friendly Skies (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110903191748://deviating.net/firearms/>) (the first presentation at the top of the page) by Deviant Olam for more on this.

Heavy Baggage

After your check in and weigh and tag your bags go back and add a few pounds of stuff before giving to the freight guy. Overload your carry-on with heavy stuff if you can avoid an overweight charge but make sure the bag still fits into the size test box. Grab a few duty-free bags so you look legit taking extra stuff on as carryon. Sometimes you can gate check stuff like strollers and wheelchairs so you will have them right away at landing.

Camping Gear

Camping gear that uses stinky fuel can't be taken along unless you clean out the fuel bottles with alcohol and let them dry. Leave the bottles open. If there is a problem with your clean fuel bottles or stove, ask for a manager. Compressed fuel is not allowed on flights, so mail it to General Delivery at your destination.

Layovers

Strikes, bad weather, fuel shortages, volcanoes, just about anything can cancel a flight and leave you stranded overnight. For those who expect the worst, check out "The Guide to Sleeping in Airports" ([://www.sleepinginairports.net/](http://www.sleepinginairports.net/)) to see what, if any, amenities are available for stranded passengers. (The best rated at the site is Singapore's Changi Airport, while the worst is Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, France.)

Stowing Away

We in *no way* recommend this foolhardy way of catching a ride in the skies! This is information for someone desperate enough to try this anyway. Most stow away attempts are made at airports outside the United States where security is lower and involve jumping or cutting the fence to access the runway and taxiway areas. Most of these attempts result in the crush death of the stow away as the landing gear comes up or when the rider dies of hypoxia (lack of oxygen) or hypothermia (cold exposure). It is much better to fake your way on board with fake ID as a bogus pilot or flight attendant and end up in jail than this 70-90% fatal stunt.

Anyone planning to stow away needs to plan for where to hide from the security teams but also avoid the retracting landing gear, do some research into the design of the aircraft and evaluate the space one more time as you crawl in and attach your climbing harness taking into account any attachments on the landing gear.

Avoiding the cold requires planning for many hours at forty to sixty degrees below zero Fahrenheit or around -50C. Mountaineering grade warm clothing must be worn paying particular attention to keeping your hands, face, and feet from frostbite and your head armpits and crotch well insulated to keep your core temperature. Some aircraft have hot pipes that pass through the wheel wells which might save your hands or feet. Be sure to eat a very protein and fat heavy meal before and carry hot water with you in durable bottles for the flight inside your coat. Don't go if you are having any gas or ear problems at all the change in altitude could cause massive pain and damage.

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Oxygen is required since a modern jet flies between 35000 and 40000 feet, hypoxia knocks out most airplane stow aways. A non-rebreather or even better a pressure type aviation oxygen mask mask fed with oxygen from a paramedic type oxygen bottle will keep you alive and often even conscious during the trip but don't expect one small bottle to last the whole flight, plan for blacking out at altitude. Be sure to calculate oxygen use and carry enough or you will likely die from hypoxia. Representative oxygen bottle sizes and duration at 15,000 ft not using a CO2 scrubber rebreather.

Cubic Feet 6 CU. FT. 9 CU. FT. 15 CU. FT. 24 CU. FT.

Capacity L 198 liters 297 liters 495 liters 792 liters

Duration 5:28 hours 8:07 hours 13:48 hours 22:42 hours

Bottle life will actually be better at higher altitude since each breath takes in less bottle volume. Breathe slowly conserving oxygen, set the oxygen flow to just fill the reservoir bag below the mask so you get a good breath without wasting. This chart is a guide, only trust your own research.

The rebreather design in Underwater Trashing will give you many times longer oxygen supply from the same volume of oxygen because it doesn't waste good oxygen but recycles it scrubbing out the CO2 waste. Be sure the rebreather system has a demand valve so you do not need to manually add oxygen to your loop if you black out.

Once you have go so far as to prepare an oxygen system you should invest the time and money in finding a quality parachute, that way as soon as the landing gear door opens you can jump and avoid the security patrol at the destination airport and probably jail or deportation. This works better if you arrive at night when people will not see the parachutist drop from a commercial airliner near the airport.

FAA spokesman Ian Gregor said in 2007, that since 1947, there have been 74 known airplane stow-away attempts worldwide. Only 14 of the individuals survived. Here is one story of a survivor <http://>

www.altitude.org/survival.php So you say the good ones got away without being found out, and most fatalities were wearing jeans and a shirt, but still...

Now, after reading this, ask yourself this question: **Do you *still* want to try this incredibly stupid stunt?**

Mail Yourself

Dead bodies in caskets and large parcels are frequently sent as air freight on passenger and cargo flights. The good news is unlike a death wish inside a wheel well the cargo area is pressurized and kept at normal temperatures, the only thing missing is drink service, movies, and dog food meals. If you are the really paranoid type have a friend do a gray or green latex face mask job to make you look like a sculpture in case the feds make a check on the box before it goes into the airplane, whatever you do make the packing list match your reasonable weight. Be sure you are overnighting or next day shipping yourself or you could get stuck in a warehouse for a few days, have a tool to break out in case of emergencies.

If you are going with the casket gig you will need a copy of the "death certificate" and a burial permit, the good news is you will not need long term reservations. If you go out like the title character in the film "Weekend at Bernie's" you should be able to make a few trips to Hawaii and South America before you begin to smell bad. This trick should freak out the feds; now they will have open every casket to taser the corpses just to be sure!! Always have your straighter friends ask for the bereavement discount as they accompany the dearly departing at gate 27, final boarding call.

Fly Your Own Plane

It is possible with a few months of evening work to build a full sized working air legal airplane with nothing but painted fabric, plywood, glued douglas fir pine, hardware store parts, and an air cooled VW bug motor. Looking for more power add a second pusher engine, you could probably get a friend or two into the air, maybe even some luggage. The greatest expense will be the radios, instruments, and navigation aids, which are mostly optional on nice days. You can actually make and fly these DIY planes legally, but unless some tests are done by the FAA only other certified pilots may ride with you. Expect to spend around \$1000 to \$2000 depending on size and what you use to make your plane and if you choose to buy a hand held nav/com radio so you can talk to air traffic control and use navigation beacons.

In the United States no license or training is required by law for ultralights, but training is highly advisable. For light-sport aircraft a sport pilot certificate is required, which is similar in requirements to other countries' ultralight license. The governing regulation in the United States is FAR 103, which specifies a powered "ultralight" as a single seat vehicle of less than 5 US gallons (19 L) fuel capacity, empty weight of less than 254 pounds (115 kg), a top speed of 55 knots (102 km/h or 64 mph), and a maximum stall speed not exceeding 24 knots (45 km/h or 27.6 mph). Restrictions include flying only during daylight hours and over unpopulated areas. Unpowered "ultralights" (hang gliders, paragliders, etc.) are limited to a weight of 155 lb (70 kg) with extra weight allowed for amphibious landing gear and ballistic parachute systems.

If you stick to rural areas and operate from dirt strips you can probably get away with flying a larger than ultralight plane pirate, although if caught you can get in big trouble for operating an aircraft without a license, use an airman's map to stay away from real airports, large cities, or flight paths. If you want to stay legal keep at or near the ultralight rules and you wont need to certify yourself or your aircraft, but take flying lessons anyway. Border crossings are very iffy, you might get away with it if you know how to hide below radar by using hills and valleys but remember even with an all wood and cloth airplane the control cables and engine will still show up on military radar moving at 50-100mph. One trick that an airborne drug smuggler we knew in the 1980's used was to find a police radar detector which covered the military radar bands near the border, the detectors were able to pick up a radar installation or fighter jet radar signal before it could detect the small airplane.

The biggest danger with home made aircraft is safety, you are in a vehicle moving through the air at highways speeds without brakes and three dimensions of possible movement, plus the ability to stall out if you make too violent a maneuver. It is imperative to use a good design and to pre-stress all joints before you go up the first time. This is not your junker car, regular manitinance and inspection are key to survival.



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