

What You Don't Know About Travel Insurance

Being knowledgeable about travel insurance is crucial to any trip you plan. It's the best method to protect everything from flights and luggage to accommodations and medical emergencies. Many people are hesitant to buy travel insurance because they believe nothing could go wrong. But, sometimes things are out of your control and the reality is that all trips have the possibility of hiccups and you'll be glad you had a backup plan. The trip of a lifetime should not be ruined by unforeseen issues. Read on to discover what you don't know about travel insurance, but should!

1. The Cost - Travel insurance isn't terribly expensive, especially if you keep in mind how much it can help you if something were to go awry. The insurance should cost between 4 and 8 percent of your trip's prepaid cost, while full cancellation for any reason insurance can be closer to 10 percent. Anything lower than 4 percent should raise a red flag because that means there probably isn't sufficient coverage. Simply put, remember to put value on the trip and experience and the cost will make sense.

2. How to Compare - You can get insurance from a few places including independent insurance companies, tour operators, brokers, and tour agents. If you're working with a tour company or agent, they usually have a recommended insurance plan for you, which can be directly from them or an insurance company they work with to get good deals. It's best to review those rates and then get quotes from other companies or brokers. It's important to read the fine print and make sure it covers everything you want it to—whether that is flights, luggage, medical, or full cancellation. That will help determine which is the best deal.

3. When to Buy - The best way to get an excellent deal for your insurance is to buy it the day of or within the first week of booking. It will qualify you for bonuses such coverage for pre-existing medical conditions, tour-supplier bankruptcy protection, and more. It also crosses an important item of your travel to-do list and ensures you don't forget to do it later on.

4. Sometimes it's a Requirement - When it comes to booking with a tour operator or taking a volunteer trip with an organization, they may make it a requirement for you to buy insurance. For tour operators with a high volume of travelers, there is a greater chance of issues and incidents, so requiring insurance makes it quicker and more efficient to handle those problems because you'll have global emergency assistance, access to immediate medical care, and a more direct way to file a claim. When it comes to volunteer trips in which you may be traveling for a longer period of time or staying in lesser developed areas, they are looking out for your protection and similarly to tour operators, they want you to have easy and efficient resources in case of emergencies. Plus, because they require it and likely have a good relationship with the travel insurance company, a lot of the time it ends up being the best deal.

5. You May Already Have Insurance - Depending on what you're looking to have covered when you travel, your other insurance plans or even credit cards may be sufficient. Some health insurance plans will cover you for medical emergencies, homeowner's/renter's insurance plans may cover some valuable items, and many premium credit cards offer protection of things like luggage, provided you booked your full trip with the card. Be sure to review those plans you have as you may already have some coverage and then you can combine it with a lower-cost travel insurance plan.

The key things to remember about travel insurance is that there are different kinds, it's best to do some comparing between them for coverage and cost, and it helps to buy it as close to your trip booking as possible. Having travel insurance makes it possible to have a worry-free travel experience. Even if things go wrong, you'll feel secure and protected.