

Travel Lite

Basic Steps for the Concerned Traveler

Many people that have suffered through a bed bug infestation describe it as a living nightmare and will do whatever it takes to make sure that they never repeat the experience again. This guide has been largely written for those people that want to take every precaution to avoid staying in bed bug infested quarters and more importantly, to avoid bringing bed bugs home when they return from travel. As a result the comprehensive and detailed nature of this guide may be overly comprehensive for individuals who are concerned, but not consumed, with protecting themselves when they travel.

Travel "Lite" has been written for the traveler concerned about bed bugs but feels that going to extraordinary measures during their travel is too much of an inconvenience or a hassle. The information below describes the most important actions compiled from the contents of "[Complete Guide to Traveling Bed Bug Free](#)".

This condensed version does not provide in depth explanations or advise the reader of important precautionary measures as does the comprehensive version.

Prior to Leaving on Your Trip

- 1. Make sure that all of your mattresses and box springs are encased prior to leaving on your trip.**
This is a very important pro-active step that will prevent bed bugs from getting inside of your mattresses & box springs and will aid in the early detection of the bugs in the event that you accidentally bring bed bugs into your home. It is our opinion that the best encasement available is [BugLock™ manufactured by Protect-A-Bed®](#). The Bug Lock™ encasements are available through www.bedbugcentral.com.
- 2. Pack Heavy Duty Plastic Bags in Your Car**
Purchase heavy duty (>2 ml) plastic bags that are large enough to place your luggage in. When you return from your trip it will be important to seal your luggage in these bags before placing them in your car. This will isolate any bed bugs that may be associated with your luggage and prevent your vehicle from becoming infested on your way back home. Once you arrive home you will be able to deal with your luggage and its contents using the recommendations provided later in this guide.
- 3. [Purchase No-Pest® Strips](#)**
Prior to leaving on your trip you should purchase [No Pest® Strips](#) containing DDVP (Vapona). [No Pest® Strips](#) can be used upon your return to destroy bugs that may have hitched a ride back with you in your luggage. It should be pointed out that the use of this product is controversial in some circles, but can be used safely when used in accordance with all of the manufacturer's label directions.
- 4. Packing for your trip**
Hard shelled luggage is less bed bug friendly than fabric. Clothing that can be hot laundered or dry cleaned can be easily dealt with when you get home, however items that cannot be laundered such as electronics toiletries etc. can be packed in sealed Ziploc® bags to protect them from becoming infested should you encounter bed bugs.

During Your Stay at Your Destination

The likelihood of encountering bed bugs and bringing bed bugs home with you can be reduced by thoroughly inspecting your accommodations and taking measures to protect your luggage and its contents throughout your stay. Due to the inconvenience of many of the steps involved in protecting yourself from bed bugs during your travel, this section is limited to the most basic steps that will result in little to no inconvenience.

- 1. Keep Luggage Closed and Away from Bed Bug Prone Areas**
Keep all zippers closed and do not place or store luggage on or next to beds, upholstered furniture or in a closet. The further away you store your luggage from these areas the better.
- 2. Keep items that cannot be laundered in sealed Ziploc® Bags**
Items that cannot be laundered such as books, electronics, toiletries, jewelry etc should be kept sealed in Ziploc® bags whenever they are not in use. Even laptop computers can be kept in sealed Ziploc® bags when not in use, especially during the nighttime hours while you are sleeping.
- 3. Conduct a Very Basic Inspection of the Bed**
A well established infestation of bed bugs may be detected by pulling back the bed linens and checking the visible edges of the mattress and box spring. You are looking for evidence of live bugs, dark brownish to black spots/stains or shed skins from bed bugs.
- 4. Notify Property Management Immediately if You Suspect Bed Bugs**
Notify the property management if at anytime during your stay you see evidence of what you believe might be bed bugs or you begin to develop itchy welts on your body. Just because you see an insect or develop bite-like symptoms does not mean that bed bugs are present, but management should be aware of your concern so that the possibility of bed bugs can be investigated.

Returning Home From Your Destination

This is the most important section if you want to reduce the likelihood of introducing bed bugs into your home. Due to the condensed nature of this guide you are much more likely to have brought bed bugs back from your travels than someone that has followed all of the steps in Bed Bug Central's "Complete Guide to Traveling Bed Bug Free". If you have any reason to believe that you have encountered bed bugs during your stay or that your personal belongings are infested, you should keep all items sealed in bags and call a pest management professional to evaluate the situation. Otherwise, we recommend the following:

1. Bag and seal luggage before placing in your vehicle

All luggage should be placed in the heavy duty plastic bags that you packed in your vehicle before leaving on your trip and sealed tightly. If bed bugs are associated with your luggage this step will keep them isolated until you can deal with the luggage and its contents effectively at home and will prevent any bugs from leaving the luggage and infesting the vehicle.

2. Unpack Luggage Carefully and Methodically

Do not take your luggage inside your home. If possible, unpack your luggage in an area that is well lit and away from any furniture and sleeping areas (some examples include: outdoors, in a garage, or in a cleared area in the basement).

- Unpack one suitcase at a time, separating clothing that can be laundered, clothing that must be dry cleaned and items that cannot be laundered in the following manner (but first take the bag that the luggage was removed from and discard it in an outdoor trash receptacle).
- Items that cannot be laundered that were sealed in Ziploc® bags throughout your stay can be removed from the bags and the bags immediately discarded in an outdoor trash receptacle. If you were diligent in keeping these items sealed while traveling except for times that they were in use, the likelihood of these items being infested is minimal. If you still have any concerns about these items you can refer to the actions listed below for "Items that cannot be hot laundered or dry cleaned"
- Clothing that can be hot laundered should be sealed in plastic garbage bags, or dissolvable laundry bags then sealed tightly and placed aside. When bagging the clothing it is a good idea to separate the clothing into one bag for light colors and a separate bag for dark colors. Clothing that requires dry cleaning should be placed in a plastic garbage bag, sealed and placed aside.
- All bagged items should remain sealed in the bags until they can either be hot laundered, dry cleaned or dealt with using one of the alternative methods discussed in the section below "Addressing Items that Have Been Removed from the Suitcase"

3. Addressing Luggage and Items that Have Been Removed from the Luggage

• Items that cannot be laundered

Items that cannot be hot laundered or dry cleaned include luggage, electronics, etc. Before addressing any of the items that have been removed from the luggage, it is important to first address the luggage itself to contain/isolate any bugs or eggs that may be associated with the luggage. There are several options that exist for luggage and other items that cannot be laundered.

OPTION 1 DDVP/Vapona No-Pest® Strips

A No Pest Strip containing DDVP/Vapona can be placed in heavy duty plastic bags containing empty luggage and items that cannot be laundered. The bags should be sealed and left for at least two weeks in order to kill any bugs that may be present. This is the easiest but most controversial method for dealing with items that cannot be laundered or dry cleaned but can be very effective.

*Under no circumstance should this method be used for food items, medications, cosmetics or any other item that is intended for consumption or body care. Note: All label directions, precautions and restrictions should be adhered to strictly.

OPTION 2 Heat

During times of the year when outdoor temperatures reach 85°F or hotter, it may be possible to expose bagged items to lethal temperatures by sealing items in black plastic bags and placing them in a very hot environment such as an automobile. It is important to point out that this method will only be effective if the core temperature of the items placed inside the plastic bag is able to reach lethal temperatures (>115°F) for at least 20 minutes. If you are concerned about the plastic bag melting on surfaces you may not want to use this method.

• **Clothing**

Hot Washing of Clothing

Clothing that has been separated into [dissolvable bags](#) can be placed directly into a washing machine and laundered according to manufacturer directions. All items being laundered must be laundered in the hottest possible wash cycle (recommended water temperature of at least 140° F), and then placed in the dryer on the hottest cycle possible for at least 30 minutes.

Dry Cleaning

Bagged clothing that cannot be hot laundered but can be dry cleaned should be taken to the dry cleaners. If you take any items to a professional cleaning service, you should advise them that the items may have been exposed to bed bugs

4. Inspect your mattress and box spring encasements

Your final defense in catching bed bugs early is your encasement you installed on your bed prior to travel. Encasement should be inspected from time to time after returning from your trip. If any evidence of bed bugs is detected or you begin to experience itchy welts you should immediately call a pest management professional to investigate the possibility of bed bugs.



Bed Bug Central™ Suggested Products

Your Online Resource from the Bed Bug Experts



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Mattress & Box Spring Encasements

Only use the Protect-A-Bed® Bug Lock™ Brand

Encasements are not all the same. Protect-A-Bed® encasements were co-designed by the manufacturer in conjunction with bed bug expert Richard Cooper. These encasements are specifically designed for preventing and detecting bed bugs. To learn more about the difference between encasements watch the You-Tube video on Richard Cooper's presentation to the Entomological Society of America www.bedbugcentral.com/ESA or visit www.bedbugcentral.com/encasements_101.asp.



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RestEasy™ Luggage Treatment before you Leave

Before leaving on your trip treat your luggage with [RestEasy™](#) and make your luggage an unfriendly environment for bedbugs. Produced by JT Eaton, a leader in pest control products, [RestEasy™](#) comes in a 6 oz spray bottle. [RestEasy™](#) is a permethrin based product that repels bed bugs and kills them on contact.

Simply spray [RestEasy™](#) on the outside and inside of the luggage before you leave on your trip and the likelihood of bringing bed bugs home with you is greatly reduced.



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Green Clean™ Dissolvable Laundry Bags

Carefully washing your laundry so you do not transport bedbugs from your luggage to your house is a critical step in preventing the spread of bed bugs into your home. The [GreenClean™](#) line of dissolvable biodegradable laundry bags makes the process of transporting your clothes from your luggage to the washing machine a simple one-step process.

Simply place your clothes into a [GreenClean™](#) bag, tie the bag with the attached dissolvable tie strip, walk to your laundry machine and drop the bag into the machine, add your normal detergent and set the cycle to hot laundering and turn the washer on. When you return only your clean clothes will remain and they will be free of bed bugs.

GreenCLEAN™
Dissolvable Laundry Bags



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HotShot® No-Pest® Strips for Treating Hard Goods and Luggage between Trips

Once you have arrived home and your luggage is emptied you still need to insure that no bed bugs have escaped your diligent efforts. That is where the [HotShot® No-Pest® Strip](#) takes over. By placing your luggage into a garbage bag and inserting a Hot Shot® strip inside, tying it shut and leaving it for two weeks you will insure that any surviving bed bugs are killed. This same method can be used for other items that you may suspect that have bed bugs but cannot be laundered.



Purchase the "Complete Guide to Traveling Bed Bug Free" from Bedbugcentral and receive 10% discount off these products.



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