

How to find the perfect travel buddy: a checklist

Picture this: you're studying abroad or have just moved to a new city (or even country) for school or work. You're super excited to explore your new surroundings. One day, between coffee breaks, a new friend asks if you'd like to take a trip together. Even though you both get along great in the classroom or office, how can you be sure that they'd be a good travel buddy?



1. Night owls vs. early birds

- ☐ Imagine, your friend wants to check out a new club, but you want to take your full eight-hour beauty sleep. You decide to part ways, but in the morning, your friend is still snoozing while you're ready to hit the road – your whole day seems ruined. To fully enjoy your trip, make sure you pick a travel buddy who's on the same schedule as you: night owls and early birds don't always mix.

2. Personality types

- ☐ Are you an energetic, go-go-go type or do you prefer to take things easy and soak in the experience at a nice café with a view? Type A personalities are all about the action, while Type B people prefer to 'be in the moment' and savor every step of the trip. Keep in mind the personality types when you're making travel plans.

3. It's all about the money

- ☐ Some people like to bum their way from hostel to hostel and have picnics instead of eating at restaurants. Others prefer to splurge on hotels with at least three stars and room service: there's no right or wrong way, and it all comes down to budget priorities. To avoid awkward conversations about money on the road, it's best to figure out all that stuff beforehand. This will also prevent both of you from constantly running into new frustrations – after all, who wants to have to bicker every day over whether to take a cab or a bus?

4. Laughing matter

- ☐ Mishaps are bound to happen when you travel: you miss a bus, it rains for days, or you forget your luggage. This is all part of the experience, but regardless of what happens, it's a good idea to travel with someone who can make light of such situations and have a good laugh.

5. Disorderly order

- ☐ Are you traveling with an organization junkie who likes to have everything planned ahead of time, down to the last meal? Or are you exploring the world with a happy-go-lucky kind of person? Ideally, your personalities don't clash but complement each other when it comes to itineraries (or the lack thereof). This way, no one locks horns and the trip goes smoothly.

6. Shared Interests

- ☐ You have a two-week trip ahead of you, but you've already started to run out of things to talk about on the first day. You spend the next days scratching your head to find a topic, any topic, of conversation. What a nightmare! To avoid an awkward and silent trip, make sure you have (at least) one interest in common with your travel partner – no matter if it's basket weaving or photography.

7. A practice run

- ☐ You've checked points 1-6, and you're ready to pack and ride into the sunset together? How about a practice run first? Try spending (at least) one whole day together: maybe take a short trip to a place you've both never been and figure out what happens if you have to find a mode of transportation, activities, and restaurants while navigating new surroundings. This is the time where you can put everything to the test and see how much you both have to compromise to make the travel adventure fun. It might seem to be a lot to organize, but trust me, it's not worth buying the cat in the bag when it comes to spending your precious vacation with someone.

8. Individual activities

- ☐ You might not find THE ideal super travel buddy right away, and that's perfectly ok. It will take time and is a learning experience. If you like museums and your friend likes to go skydiving, you can still have an amazing time: it's crucial that both of you pursue their plans and not compromise on everything. Keep in mind that just because you travel together doesn't mean that you have to spend every minute together. Planning some separate activities, especially when you're on a longer trip, can lighten the mood and gives everyone something to talk about when they're home.

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