

Tip Sheet For On The Plane

Boarding and Take-off

Board when call for 'parents traveling with young children' is given

Unpack items you need during taxi and take-off. Place everything else in the overhead locker or under the seat in front (if not bassinet row)

Remove most of the magazines etc from the seat pocket in front of you so you have maximum storage space for toys, books, bottles etc. Place them in the overhead locker. Ensure sick bags and safety card are still accessible.

Change nappies if required

Have your bottle ready or a drink bottle handy for older ones. If breast-feeding or using a bottle, try not to give anything to the baby / toddler until you are starting to take-off. Sometimes it is unavoidable as you need to give them something to settle during taxi - but try and wait as long as possible.

Ask for your extra baby seat-belt if you have a baby / toddler on your knee during take-off and landing. Attach your baby as late as possible to give them maximum time for freedom.

Have wet-wipes handy

Have some snack food available

Turn on the video screens if these are appropriate

Have simple activities available during take-off and landing. A range of books, sticker books, magnetic drawing board, dolls etc. Be prepared to entertain them any way possible - variety and focus are vital.

In the Air

Check for times the toilets are quiet - use these for nappy changing or taking children to the toilet.

Check the aircraft to see if there are any spare seats that may assist on long flights if the children are needing space to sleep.

Get out a range of other toys - colouring books, cars, duplo etc

Move around with your children - walk them up and down the aisles. Visit the air-crew, look out windows, explore the plane.

If it is a long flight - plan the children's sleep times and how you can maximise their sleeping. Remember to factor in meals.

Make use of the air-hostesses and stewards if you need a break, extra hands or have a crisis - sick child, nappy malfunction etc.

Most longhaul aircraft will have a variety of baby food if you run short - ask them if needed. Also, they can warm baby food using hot water if required.

Make use of your time to fill in any paperwork required for arriving in your new country. If you have a number of children, it can easily take 20-30 minutes!

Landing

Change nappies / diapers. Put pull-ups on a toddler if unsure they can hold on all the way to the terminal!

Prepare babies bottle and other drinks for a toddler

Have snacks and appropriate activities ready

Pack away as many items as possible so you can exit the aircraft quicker

Have your canvas bag ready so you can quickly gather all other items to take off the plane when time to depart the aircraft

Have lollipops / chubba chubs ready to protect the childrens ears

Seat-belts on

Keep active with your child - talking, activities and ensuring they are eating and drinking to help their ears

When getting ready to exit the aircraft - pack any extra gear into your canvas bag, check all your lockers and around the seats and have all your bags ready for disembarking

If your baby / child is asleep and you have too many items to carry, ask the aircrew for assistance.

Once off the plane, look for a push-chair or stroller to assist in carrying your child and luggage