

1+ year before departure

- Decide why you are taking this trip.** Coming up with your why will help shape your trip.
- Choose the pillars, or must-sees for your trip.** These will help shape your itinerary.
- Come up with a preliminary budget.**
 - Research your pillar countries and per day costs of traveling there.
 - Download the RTW Planning Spreadsheet and enter countries you plan to visit and per day costs.
 - Go to indie.bootsnall.com, enter your estimated route and dates to get an estimated price on your flights.
 - Total your flights and costs per country to find out your preliminary budget.
- Figure out how much you can save per month**
 - Document your current monthly budget in the RTW Planning Spreadsheet
 - Put a plan together to cut unnecessary spending from your monthly budget
- Find ways to make more money**
 - Evaluate all your possessions
 - Make a list of what you will keep
 - Make a list of what you can get rid of (in the RTW Planning Spreadsheet)
 - Make a list of what you can sell for money
 - Make a list of what you can give away
 - Start selling some of your unnecessary possessions to add to your travel fund
 - Devise a plan for storing the things you will keep for after your trip

6 months - 1 year before departure

- Find your departure date**
 - Evaluate your current bank balances
 - Look at recurring monthly bills you'll have to pay while on the road
 - Come up with an amount you want to have for your "coming home" fund
 - Add all these figures into tab 4 of the RTW Planning Spreadsheet to figure out how soon you can leave
 - Set your departure date
- Getting rid of housing**
 - If you rent, look at your rental agreement and give the appropriate notice that you are moving out
 - If you own, decide on renting vs. selling
 - If selling, talk to a real estate agent & get a plan in place for when you will list your house

- If renting to someone else, look into all options
- Ask family, friends, and friends of friends if they may be interested in renting
- If you don't know anyone interested, have a timeline in place to take out ads (Craigslist, Airbnb, newspaper etc).
- If renting, find a family member or close friend in your hometown to be your go-to person for any issues that may arise
- Start the immunization process**
 - Research which shots are required for the countries you will visit
 - Research which shots are recommended for the countries you will visit
 - Research costs of these shots where you live
 - Make a decision on which ones you will get
 - Schedule your first round of shots (Note: some shots are done in a series, with the 1st shot 6 months before the 2nd)
- Decide what to do about your job/career**
 - If you want to return to your current job, look into sabbatical policies
 - Talk with your boss/HR about the possibility of a sabbatical or leave of absence
 - If you don't want to return to your job, start planning now for what you will do after your return

3 - 6 months before departure

- Consider slow travel as part of your itinerary**
 - Look into spending more than a few weeks in one location
 - Choose a few locations where you may want to do this
 - Research long-term rental costs and options
 - If you want to travel slowly, build into your itinerary and adjust your budget accordingly
- Decide on flights - Traditional RTW ticket vs. buy as you go vs. combination**
 - Look at your itinerary and research all possible flight options for your trip
 - Get prices for each option
 - Prioritize price vs. freedom vs. having a plan
 - Decide which option you will go with
- Solidify your route**
 - Decide where else you want to go and start building your route around your pillars
 - Research seasons - high and low and weather - in each place on your itinerary
 - Start planning the order of places you will visit and look into flight options/costs
 - Decide where you will begin your trip

- Book your first flight, first few legs, or entire trip with the provider that's best for you
- Start telling people**
 - Come up with a plan for telling family and friends about your trip
 - Come up with a plan for breaking the news at work, even if you won't tell them until right before you leave
 - Start spilling the beans
- Look into your accommodation options**
 - Research all options available - hotels, hostels, rentals, house-sitting, camping, couchsurfing, etc.
 - Research prices for all options that interest you
 - If traveling during high/festival/holiday season, send inquiries/make reservations when necessary
 - Adjust your budget accordingly
- Research overland travel**
 - Research different regions you plan to visit and what overland travel is like there
 - Look into traveling overnight in the regions you will be visiting
 - If you are traveling in more developed and expensive regions, research overland travel there
 - Research flights in those more expensive regions-they may be cheaper
 - If passes are available, cheaper than flying, and must be purchased before departing, buy them
- Decide on travel insurance**
 - Research the difference between trip protection and travel insurance
 - Shop around to see what each company offers (don't forget to read the fine print!)
 - Have a plan in place for being covered medically when you return
 - If you plan on taking part in any extreme activities, know what each policy does and doesn't cover
 - Make a decision and buy the policy best for you

1 - 2 months before departure

- Get your gear and clothes packing list in order**
 - Decide on which type of camera to bring
 - Decide whether or not you will bring a laptop and/or tablet
 - Decide whether or not you will bring an ereader
 - Decide whether or not you will bring a phone
 - Get a preliminary packing list of clothes together
 - Start a list of what you have and what you still need

- Start shopping and keeping an eye out for what you still need
- Choose your luggage**
 - Decide which type of luggage you will bring (backpack, suitcase, or hybrid)
 - Decide which type of daybags you will bring
 - If you need to purchase anything new, go to a store and look at your options
 - Test out any new bags before purchasing
- Packing list**
 - Come up with a master packing list, broken down into categories - clothes, gadgets, toiletries, and first aid
 - Get everything together that you wish to bring and lay it all out somewhere
 - Do a test run and pack everything you want to bring
 - Adjust and prioritize if you have too much stuff
- Get rid of your house/apartment/condo**
 - If you rent, give the appropriate notice that you are moving out
 - If you will need a place to stay prior to leaving, set that up
- Get your visas situated (or have a plan in place)**
 - Look into visa requirements for the countries you are visiting
 - Get any visas in advance that you can
 - If you will be obtaining many visas on the road, research what you will need to do so
 - Make and bring copies of your passport, passport photos,
 - Make sure your bank account/credit card information is easily accessible from the road
 - Have a plan in place for what to do about proof of onward travel

1 month before departure

- Automate your bills/Banking**
 - Sign up for an online money management software (we like Mint)
 - Know what bills you will continue paying while on the road
 - Get them all set up to be paid automatically
 - Consolidate and delay - IRAs, investments, automatic transfers, etc.
 - Cancel services and bills that you will no longer need (Netflix, cable, etc.)
 - Implement a plan for paying or deferring student loans
 - Look into your bank's ATM fees - for withdrawing money internationally

- Shop around for a different bank and find one with the least amount of international fees
- Look into your credit card fees - get their policies in writing for use overseas
- Look into and sign up for a travel credit card
- Designate a power of attorney at home
- Taxes - will you need to file your annual return from the road, at some point during your trip?
- Working on the Road**
 - Decide if you will need to work on the road in order to travel for as long as you want
 - Look into your working on the road options
 - Get any necessary paperwork together - diplomas, certifications, resumes, letters of recommendation, etc.
- Staying connected**
 - Make sure anyone you hope to stay connected with knows how to use Skype, Google Hangouts etc. (Do a test run).
 - Put a hold or forward on your mail.
 - If you plan on having a blog, start it before you leave
- Book 1-3 nights in your first destination
- Make any last-minute doctor or dentist visits

2 weeks before departure

- Quit/leave your job
- Pack all the things you aren't bringing and get them in storage
- Have a going away party
- Eat and drink at all the places you will miss

1-7 days before departure

- Cancel any other bills/services that you haven't finished yet (cell phone, Internet, renter's insurance etc).
- Pack your bags for your trip

Get on the plane and go!
