

Here's My Camera Bag Checklist!

If you do any location or event photography, you're going to want to make sure you pack all the right stuff, and not leave anything behind. There's nothing worse than forgetting the one or two little items that could have made your life easier, if you'd only remembered to bring them along.

I don't trust anything to memory, especially when I'm headed out for an important day of shooting. Admittedly, I'm a "list" person. I make lists for everything; tasks, goals, and items I don't want to forget. I check and double-check all my gear, batteries (charged?), and personal items the night before a shoot.

One thing that really helps is a solid and flexible checklist for my camera bag. That's what I've put together for you in this printout. Emphasis on "flexible" because you'll need to add or cross out items based on your needs for a given shoot/event. I've also included a list of personal items you might want to keep in a separate, but accessible pack. And if you're traveling, remember restrictions on the items you can carry with you. Find out if certain tools and batteries have to be stored a certain way, or if some items aren't allowed at all.



Ok, you've got the idea. Now print out a few copies of the checklist (next page) and use it to help stay organized the next time you head out for a shoot!

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Camera Bag Checklist

Camera Gear

- [ ] Main Camera
- [ ] Backup Camera
- [ ] Camera Batteries
- [ ] Cards/Recording Media
- [ ] Verticle Grip(s)
- [ ] WB Card
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

Lens Gear

- [ ] Wide-Normal/Telephoto Zoom (24-70mm)
- [ ] Wide Angle
- [ ] Telephoto (70-200mm)
- [ ] Standard (50mm, 35mm)
- [ ] Close-up, Macro
- [ ] Lens Protective Filters
- [ ] Neutral Density (ND) Filters
- [ ] Polarizing Filters
- [ ] Special Effects Filters
- [ ] Close-Up (extension tubes, diopters)
- [ ] Lens Caps (rear & front)
- [ ] Lens Tripod Mounts
- [ ] Lens Cleaning Cloths
- [ ]
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Camera Support

- [ ] Tripod
- [ ] Monopod
- [ ] Tripod Heads
- [ ] Quick Release Plates
- [ ] Allen Wrenches, Keys (adjustments)
- [ ]
- [ ]

Lighting - Compact

- [ ] Flash Unit(s)
- [ ] Flash Batteries and/or External Power Packs
- [ ] Diffuser and/or Bounce Card
- [ ] Gels (color-correcting: CTO, OTG)
- [ ] Flash Trigger/Transmitter & Batteries
- [ ] Compact Lightstand
- [ ] Flash Bracket
- [ ] Collapsable Umbrella and/or Softbox
- [ ] Gaffer Tape (small roll)
- [ ]
- [ ]

Storage & Devices

- [ ] Laptop, Fully Charged
- [ ] Card Readers
- [ ] Portable Drive
- [ ] Portable Power Supply for Devices
- [ ] Power Cords, Cables: USB, etc.

Personal

- [ ] Phone, Wallet, Keys!
- [ ] Multi-Tool or Swiss Army Knife
- [ ] Notebook & Pen
- [ ] Small Flashlight
- [ ] Spare Eye Glasses, Readers
- [ ] Extra Shirt, Pants
- [ ] Water Bottle
- [ ] Snacks, Energy Bar
- [ ] Sunscreen
- [ ] Mosquito Repellent
- [ ] Lip Balm
- [ ] Moist Towelettes
- [ ] Pain Reliever, Non-drowsy
- [ ] Rain Poncho, Umbrella
- [ ] Earplugs
- [ ] First Aid Kit
- [ ]

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Camera Bag Checklist

Other:

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Tips: Before You Head Out to Your Photoshoot

Lay Out Your Gear Before You Pack

You want to get a good visual of all the gear you're about to pack away. I usually arrange things on the floor. I set one camera down, then all the batteries and gear that belong to that camera get placed next to it. I try to group everything like this so it's easier to see if something's missing. Take a quick photo with your phone so you can be sure of what you've packed once it gets into your bag.

Client or Model Contact & Meeting Info

Are you supposed to meet up at a certain place and time? Emails and DMs might have worked fine during the planning stages, but you don't want to be out of contact when things don't go quite as planned. Make sure you write down the names and numbers of the people you're supposed to meet, as well as things like the meeting place name and address (and maybe even the venue's contacts). Print out an easy-to-read map to the general location, too.

Permits, Documentation

Some locations require prior permission and/or permits and payment to shoot. Make sure you bring anything necessary to prove you have the right to be there if you are challenged. And make sure everyone else brings along any necessary ID or documentation in case questions come up.

Model Releases

Even if you normally use a model release app, it's a good idea to keep a few paper copies in your bag just in case. There are various types of releases (including property releases), but I mainly keep general "pocket" releases, paid model releases, and TFP (trade for photos) releases handy.

Shooting Outdoors

Whether you have an assistant or you're working alone, I'd suggest bringing along a light stand sand-bag or other way to weigh down and stabilize your lighting stand(s) outdoors. Even a slight breeze can take down a large softbox or any size umbrella.

Business Cards

When people see a professional at work, inevitably someone's going to ask for a business card. I wouldn't recommend pushing your card on guests at a wedding, or anytime it seems inappropriate, but if someone asks for your contact info, be prepared to hand them a business card.

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