

Grace's Cruises – Insider Tip: Smart Packing Hacks for Cruisers

A cruise cabin is cozy by design — which is great... until you're stepping over shoes, digging through suitcases, or realizing there's nowhere to hang damp swimsuits. This guide is a follow-up to my main Cruise Packing List and focuses on the little "cabin hacks" that make a big difference once you're onboard. (Your original packing essentials are still the foundation.)

Cabin Organization Must-Haves

- **Magnetic hooks** (heavy duty). Cruise cabin walls/ceilings are often metal, so these are perfect for hanging hats, lanyards, light jackets, swimsuits, and day bags.
- **Over-the-door organizer** (shoe organizer style). Great for toiletries, chargers, sunscreen, hair tools, and small items that otherwise clutter the bathroom counter. Opt for clear-pocket versions to spot items quickly.
- **Foldable laundry bag or pop-up hamper**. Keeps dirty clothes contained and makes it easier to pack on the final night. New cruisers: Use one per person to avoid mix-ups; pros bring extras for sorting delicates or gym wear mid-cruise.
- **Packing cubes**. The fastest way to stay organized (and find things) without unpacking your whole suitcase.

Space-Saving Packing Tricks That Actually Work

- Plan outfits by "mix-and-match" (2–3 bottoms, several tops, one neutral layer) so you pack less but wear more.
- Roll casual items and use packing cubes by category (daywear, eveningwear, swim, gym).
- Bring a small "day bag kit" (sunscreen, lip balm, Band-Aids, motion remedies, hand sanitizer) and keep it ready for shore days.
- Pack a lightweight foldable tote — it becomes your pool bag, buffet carry bag, and souvenir bag.

The "Cruise Reality" Extras Most People Don't Think About

- Wrinkle-release spray. Cabin closets are small, and irons are typically not allowed.
- A small night light (or motion-sensor light). Cabins are very dark at night and it's easy to trip.
- A few clothespins or towel clips. Helpful on windy decks for towels and damp swimwear.
- Refillable water bottle. Easy for excursions and onboard (and it helps avoid buying bottled water).

Families With Kids: A Few Cruise-Smart Add-Ons

- Ziplock bags (wet swimsuits, snacks, seashells, mini first-aid kit).
- Extra swimwear (things don't dry fast in cabins).
- Lightweight activities for downtime (cards, travel games, downloaded shows + headphones).

Bonus: Top 5 Items Cruisers Always Forget to Pack

- Chargers/power bank (especially if you're out all day in port)
- Nightlight or Motion-Sensor Light: Inside cabins (and even balconies at night) can be pitch-black. A small plug-in light prevents stubbed toes during midnight bathroom trips.
- Reusable water bottle (you'll use it constantly)
- A small backpack/day bag for shore excursions
- Duct Tape or Multi-Tool Tape: Fixes everything from broken luggage zippers to securing cords. A small roll goes a long way for unexpected repairs.

★ Two quick tips for first-time cruisers

- Don't overpack dressy clothing — most lines are “smart casual” most nights, with only a couple of dressier evenings.
- Keep travel essentials (passport, meds, boarding docs) in your carry-on — not your checked bag.

⚓ Final Thoughts From Grace

Smart packing isn't about bringing less; it's about bringing smarter. These hacks build on the basics from my original list, helping you enjoy the cruise more and stress less.

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