



Grace's Cruises – Insider Travel Tip

Cruising With Kids & Teens: Smart Family Travel Hacks

Cruising is a wonderful way for families to vacation together, with activities for every age, multiple dining options and exciting destinations. But when four people share one stateroom, things can get a little crowded! Here are some of my favourite tips to make family cruising easier.



1. Pack Smarter When Sharing a Cabin

Four people sharing one stateroom means four sets of clothing, shoes, toiletries and personal belongings. A little organization before leaving home can make a big difference.

- Use different-coloured packing cubes for each family member.
- Pack a laundry bag and a separate bag for wet swimsuits.
- Choose versatile outfits and limit the number of shoes.
- Bring a small day bag for sunscreen, water bottles and other essentials.



Tip: Pack each family member's swimsuit and a change of clothes in their carry-on bag. Checked luggage may not arrive at your cabin until later in the afternoon, so everyone can head straight to the pool after boarding.



2. Make the Most of Your Cabin Space

Cruise cabins are cleverly designed, but sharing one with four people can still be challenging.

Here are a few ways to keep everything organized:

- Unpack and store suitcases under the bed.
- Use magnetic hooks on suitable metal walls for hats, lanyards and lightweight items.
- Keep shoes together in one designated area.
- Use a toiletry organizer to keep bathroom counters clear.
- Ask your stateroom attendant about sleeping arrangements and storage if your cabin has upper Pullman beds or a convertible sofa.



Tip: Check your cruise line's rules before bringing magnetic hooks or other organizers. Never attach anything to ceilings, sprinklers or safety equipment.



3. Stay Connected Without Buying Everyone Wi-Fi

One of the great things about cruising with teenagers is that they can enjoy different activities around the ship while parents relax or explore on their own.

But how do you keep in touch when everyone is doing something different?

Many cruise lines have their own mobile apps with onboard messaging features. Depending on the cruise line, family members may be able to send messages to one another without purchasing an internet package. Most cruise lines offer complimentary onboard messaging, while some charge a small fee. Check the availability, age requirements and device compatibility before sailing.

Before your cruise:

- Download the cruise line's official app on each compatible device.
- Check the minimum age requirements for children and teenagers.
- Once onboard, connect to the ship's guest Wi-Fi network.
- Set up the onboard chat feature for each eligible family member.
- App compatibility and parental permissions may also vary.
- Test the messaging feature before everyone heads off to different activities.

💡 **Tip:** Establish a family meeting place and regular check-in times. Choose an easy-to-find location where everyone can meet if their phones are unavailable or messages are delayed. Make sure younger children know what to do if they become separated from the family.

4. Make Dinner Time Easier

After a busy day of swimming, sightseeing and onboard activities, getting everyone ready for dinner can be a challenge.

A few simple ideas:

- Choose a dining time that works with your family's routine.
- Allow extra time to shower and get dressed.
- Check the evening's dress code in advance.
- Consider casual dining on evenings when everyone wants a more relaxed meal.
- Give teenagers some flexibility to enjoy their own activities while still planning family meals together.

5. Download Entertainment Before You Sail

Even with all the activities onboard, children and teenagers may appreciate some quiet time.

Before leaving home, download movies, shows, music, games and books onto their devices. This is particularly helpful during long flights, sea days or when someone simply wants to relax. Remember that streaming services and online games may require a paid internet package onboard.

6. Register for Kids' Clubs Early

Many cruise lines offer supervised kids' clubs and teen programs with age-appropriate activities, games and entertainment. These are wonderful opportunities for children to make new friends while parents enjoy some time to themselves.

Complete any required registration before sailing, if available, or as soon as you board. Check the activity schedules and age requirements, as some programs and activities have limited capacity.

💡 **Tip:** Check whether advance reservations are required for popular activities, especially during school holidays.

🔧 7. Four People, One Bathroom? Try This!

When four people share one stateroom, getting everyone showered and ready for dinner can take quite a while. Here are two ways to make things easier.

Take Advantage of Split Bathrooms

Some family-friendly cruise ships, including many Disney Cruise Line staterooms, feature split bathrooms. One room has a toilet and sink, while the other has a bathtub or shower and a second sink.

This allows one family member to shower while another uses the toilet or gets ready at the second sink. A great feature for families sharing one cabin!

Spa Locker Room Showers

On many ships, adults may be able to use the showers and changing facilities in the spa locker rooms while other family members get ready in the cabin.

💡 **Tip:** Many ships offer complimentary access to their regular spa locker room showers, even without a spa treatment or pass. However, access varies by cruise line and ship, so check with the spa staff onboard before making plans.

🚢 Final Thoughts From Grace

A little planning can make sharing a cabin with the whole family much easier. Pack smart, organize your space, take advantage of the ship's facilities and establish a simple way to stay connected.

While everyone will enjoy having their own activities and a little independence, some of the best family vacation memories come from the time you spend together. ❤️



GRACE MARKUS

Your journey. Perfectly planned.

**Toll Free:**
1.844.84.SHIPS (74477) (ext 102)

**Direct Line / Text:**
604.265.4782

**Email:**
grace@gracescruises.com

