

The 2 Idiots Travel Blog

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Why It's Easier to Travel with Kids than Ever Before

You can't help but admire the parents who travelled long distances with their children back in the *olden days*—and by the olden days, we mean the era before smart phones, tablets, and other modern luxuries. How did they do it? How did they maintain their sanity? How did they *cope*?

That's not to say that traveling with your kids is a cake walk even today—but let's be honest: Parents have never had more tools and resources available to make traveling easier. Apps and other technologies enable you to find the necessary route, locate nearby dining and lodging choices, and more. Plus, you can use technology to keep your child distracted during some of the hairier parts of travel.

This is something we're constantly telling the other parents we know: There's no reason to put off your adventures until the kids are older. Take advantage of the tools available to you *now*.

Technology for Planning Your Trip

And what are those tools, exactly? Well, start with all the apps that allow you to more easily plan your trip, letting you have a better sense of where you're going and what you'll do when you get there. If you have a [good data plan](#) (and we highly recommend investing in one), there are plenty of apps you can have at your fingertips, allowing you to pull up maps, check the status of your rental, check in at the airport in advance, scout out local restaurants—the options are endless.

For example, one of the apps we depend on the most is [Trip Advisor](#). We like it because you can see what others recommend or have to say about different places. You can quickly get a feel for the area and what is worth seeing. We will write about how to make the most of Trip Advisor in a future post. We also recommend [Google Maps](#), which ensures that you no longer have to rely on paper maps to find your way; you and your family can simply set a destination and then enjoy the journey together, as opposed to constantly poring over that big fold-out Rand McNally!

There's also a lot of value in using the Airbnb app to find places to stay. Hotel rooms give you limited space, and everyone is usually crammed into one room. [With Airbnb](#), you can book a flat, apartment, or entire home where you'll have plenty of space and great amenities like a full

kitchen, laundry facilities, and separate bedrooms. This helps kids adjust. And the best part is you can manage all of it from an app on your phone!

Technology to Keep Your Child Occupied

Technology has made it easier to plan your trip, but it's also made it easier to keep your little one occupied during long plane rides or busy days of sightseeing. You don't have to pack a thousand toys and books to keep your little one entertained, nor worry about one parent having to take the child out of a restaurant due to a mealtime meltdown or tantrum. With a phone or an iPad, you'll have plenty of options for keeping your child's mind on something else. And as an added bonus, these options can actually be educational. (Indeed, our philosophy is to only allow our son educational apps, games, and videos—more on that in [this post!](#))

Our son really likes [these educational apps](#), and they have served us well in our travels. While he has limited screen time at home, when we are traveling, he is able to watch learning-oriented videos offline during a long flight or play a learning game while waiting for dinner. Plus, it can really help to curb meltdowns. If we're going on a guided tour that he wouldn't understand, he can play a game or watch a video quietly while we're able to enjoy the activity.

We realize that many people fear that their child will get hooked on these devices and not want to go back to not having them as often at home. We were the same way! But we discovered that since he uses them so much while traveling, the novelty has worn off for him, so they're not as desirable when he has other options for things to do. And, it only took two or three days for him to adjust to less screen time following an 8.5-month trip.

It was certainly worth it in our eyes, and we could really get the most out of our travels. We're not encouraging you to solely entertain your child with devices, but they can be a wonderful distraction when you need it most.

Make the Choice to Dive In

The moral of the story? Stop putting your life on hold just because you have kids. Make them a part of what you do. Traveling is such an incredible experience for everyone, and there is so much to be gained from the adventure that travel provides. Plus, getting up and going—even with a little one in tow—has never been easier.