

## Want a Travel Discount? Ask and You Shall Receive

The first step to getting any travel discount is to ask.

Many resorts, hotels, restaurants, tour operators, transportation carriers, and other travel providers offer special travel discounts for older travelers, but if you seem willing to pay full price, what's their incentive to offer you a better deal?

Many travel service providers that don't have regular travel discounts may be willing to offer you a travel discount rather than watch you take your business elsewhere.

Speak up and ask for what you want

## For the Best Travel Discount Opportunities, Be Alert and Flexible

Airfares, hotel rates, tour prices and other types of travel discounts all tend to change frequently and without much notice.

Last-minute travel discount deals can save you hundreds, or even thousands of dollars over regular rates if you're flexible and adventurous enough to take advantage of them.

Besides shopping for travel discounts by telephone and on the Web when you're planning a trip, be alert to travel opportunities and travel discounts that may pop up when you least expect them.

One way to find travel discounts is to sign up for email newsletters that highlight some of the best travel discounts currently available. Most travel providers -- from individual airlines and cruise lines to online travel sites such as [Orbitz.com](http://Orbitz.com) and travel aggregators such as [Travelzoo.com](http://Travelzoo.com) now offer newsletters, so ask their representatives or check their Web sites.

## Looking for a Travel Discount? Do Your Homework

Some senior travel discounts are available to you as soon as you turn 50, while others kick in at 60, 62, 65, 70 or other birthdays.

Some travel discounts are tied to membership in various senior organizations, while others are simply the privileges of age.

If you are interested in particular travel discounts, be sure to find out how old you need to be to qualify, and whether membership in an organization will be required to receive these travel discounts.

Keep in mind that many travel discounts apply only at certain times or may carry other restrictions. Do a little research before making your reservations, and try to travel or

use various travel services during the hours, days or seasons when the best travel discounts are offered.

### **Secure Your Travel Discount Early**

Always ask for your travel discount or special package at the start of any transaction or experience to which it may apply.

Raise the question of travel discounts each time you make a reservation, check in to a hotel, or ordering a meal. If you wait until you're checking out or paying your bill to ask for a travel discount, it may be too late to negotiate one.

If you complete your hotel stay without raising the question of a travel discount, or you finish a restaurant meal without asking about available discounts, the service provider is justified in expecting you to pay full price.

### **Share Your Travel Discount with Your Travel Companions**

There is a little-known feature of several senior travel discounts that may save you and your family even more money.

In many cases, if the person purchasing the tickets or trip is the right age to qualify for the senior travel discount, a traveling companion or the rest of the party will be entitled to the same reduced rates, no matter what their ages.

### **Want to Protect Your Travel Discount Arrangements? Use a Credit Card**

Pay for all travel expenses with a major credit card whenever possible. That way, if you encounter any kind of problem during your trip or need to dispute an expense once your return home, you will have the clout of the credit card company on your side.

Most major credit card companies allow you at least 30 days to dispute or reject an expense on your card, and they will help you negotiate with the travel provider if there is a disagreement about your bill.

It is especially helpful to have your credit card company's help if you received poor service or didn't get the travel discount you were promised.

### **Identify Yourself to Receive a Travel Discount**

Always carry identification that verifies your age. Most of the time, your passport or driver's license will be enough to verify your age. Other forms of identification that may do the trick are a wallet copy of your birth certificate, a resident alien card, or a Medicare identification card.

If membership in an organization (like AARP, AAA, or a professional organization, for instance) entitles you to a travel discount, be sure to carry that membership card with you when you travel. The one time you forget to bring the card could be the one time you are asked to prove your membership.

### **The Best Travel Discount May Not Be the “Senior Discount”**

While there are many great travel discounts available to seniors, the “senior discount” isn’t always the best deal available.

Before asking for the senior discount, be sure to check out special promotional discounts or other travel discounts that may be available to people regardless of age. Sometimes they turn out to be better deals than the senior discounts.

Don’t hesitate to compare the deals that are available. *Always* ask about the *lowest possible rate* and the *best deal available* before choosing to go with a senior discount.

Source: Seniorliving.com