

*HARRY POTTER PLACES*  
UK Travel Supplementum

# Packing Pointers



[www.HarryPotterPlaces.com](http://www.HarryPotterPlaces.com)

# *Harry Potter Places* **Potterite UK Travel Supplementum** **Packing Pointers**

Study the tips and lists provided by our two favorite travel experts—Rick Steves and Reid Bramblett—then peruse the extra packing pointers offered by *Harry Potter Places* authors and contributors.

## **Rick Steves' Packing List**

<http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/packlist.htm>

He also offers one for Women:

<http://www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/womenpack.htm>

Steve's travel store manages to offer most of his Amazon.com products cheaper than Amazon.com, so we aren't duplicating his products in the Harry Potter Places travel store.

And, wow! He's selling **UK electric socket adapters** for only a buck a piece!

<http://travelstore.ricksteves.com/catalog/index.cfm?fuseaction=product&theParentId=126&id=24>

Buy several of them, and follow this Steve's suggestion:

"I connect them to my appliance with a bit of electricians' tape so they don't accidentally stay behind in the wall."

## **Reid Bramblett's Ultimate Packing List**

[http://www.reidsguides.com/t\\_pa/t\\_pa\\_packing\\_list.html](http://www.reidsguides.com/t_pa/t_pa_packing_list.html)

"The five cardinal rules of traveling clothes: 1) nothing white; 2) nothing that wrinkles; 3) clothes you can layer; 4) lots of pockets; and 5) very few. Clothes take up the most space in your luggage, so don't pack many. Just get used to doing a bit of laundry each night or two in your room."

Be particularly attentive to packing items and suggestions that are *duplicated* by Rick Steves and Reid Bramblett. Clearly, repeated tips are the most important ones to follow.

# Extra Potter Packing Pointers

## Keep Original Copies of Important Documents on Your Person at All Times, and Pack Photocopies of Them

Savvy sojourners know to stash photocopies of all important identification documents somewhere within their luggage. This practice assists with obtaining replacements if any of your original documents become lost or stolen while traveling abroad.

We suggest that you print several sets of important ID document copies, so that one set can be stashed within *each* item of checked luggage, as well as within *each* carryon bag. That way, no matter which of your bags come up missing, you'll always have a stashed set of document copies.

Because these documents usually are valid for several years, their photocopies can be left in your bags. You'll not have to recreate, reprint, and re-stash them each time you travel.



**Please Note:** Be sure to **mark** each important ID document copy with a statement such as **“Copy for Travel Purposes”** in a place that doesn't obscure vital information, but prevents someone from using the copy to create false IDs.

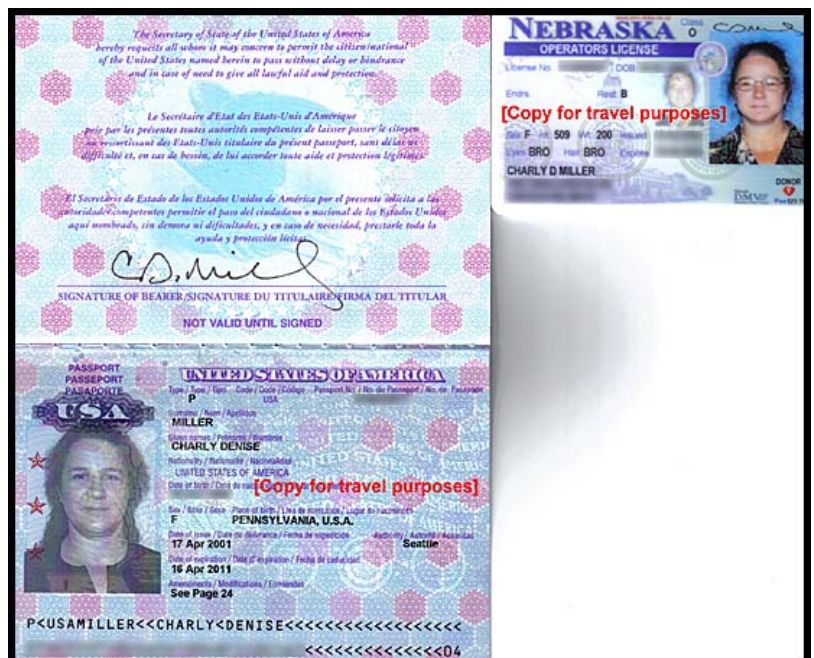
Whether neatly typed on a scanned jpg file before printing, or scrawled on a printed photocopy with a permanent marker, the trick is to interrupt water marks, seals or emblems, so that your statement cannot be removed without destroying the copy's legitimate image.

## Carry at Least TWO Photo IDs With You

Your passport will be one of them.

A driver's license works well as the other. If you don't have a driver's license, obtain another form of Photo ID, such as a State-issued ID card.

Include marked copies of both photo IDs in your document stash.



## Important Baggage Identification Practices

### Baggage ID Tags

All airlines dutifully instruct travelers to attach baggage ID tags to the handles of checked bags. They even provide elastic-attached paper tags for this purpose. Unfortunately, few airlines ever advise travelers to **tag the bags they carryon**, nor do they advise travelers how to **ensure that checked or carryon bags retain identification information**.

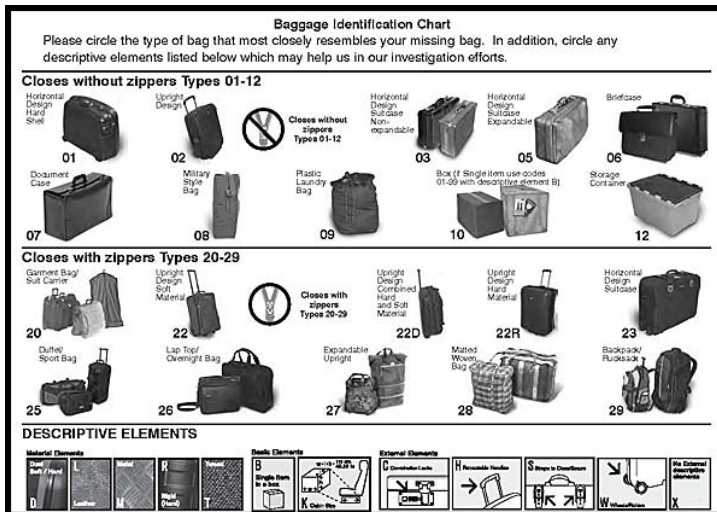
### Baggage ID Practices Important For Traveling to the UK—or Anywhere:

- Put your **name and UK cell phone number** on each external baggage tag.
- Do **not** put your **home address or home phone number** on your external tag when **heading to the UK**. You're not going home—you don't want your bags sent back there!

Instead, put the address and phone number of your **first UK destination's lodging** on your external tags, so that you can be contacted *there* (or your bags delivered *there*) if one or more of your bags is lost while enroute to the UK.

- If you'll be flying to other locations during your holiday, repeat the steps above for **each flight**, listing the address and phone number of your **next UK destination's lodging** on that tag.
- **Stash a copy of your baggage tag information INSIDE each piece of baggage**. If your external tag gets ripped off—something that *can* happen, whether the tag is paper *or* leather—having baggage information stashed inside is invaluable to being reunited with it. The internal baggage info document should include all your travel dates and first-lodgings-after-a-flight contact information, as well as your **home address and phone number**.
- **Tag ALL CARRYON items in the same way!** After all, carryon items can be lost or stolen almost as easily as checked baggage. Without accurate information attached to (and within) carryon items, airline personnel may not be able to contact you when they're found.
- The only time you should put your **home address and home phone number** on your *external* baggage tags (for both checked and carryon baggage), is when you are **on your way home**.

### Pack Photos of Your Checked Bags and Carryon Items



Filling out a claim for lost luggage is a **nightmare**, for a variety of reasons in addition to the fact that something you need has been lost or stolen.

While some airlines offer photos of standard luggage types to assist in filling out a lost luggage claim (such as **United Airline's Baggage Identification Chart** at left), generic pix really *aren't* that helpful.

Take photos of *all* the bags and carryon items you travel with, whether or not you're taking all of them to the UK. Paste each of those pix in a document file, noting each item's dimensions. (Include Model Numbers if pertinent.)

Print several copies of your travel baggage photo page and stash one in each bag. This practice is invaluable if something comes up missing. You just give your photo page to the lost luggage rep and have them photocopy it.

**Please Note:** When filing a lost baggage claim, be sure to mention that your baggage ID info is also stashed *inside* the lost item!

Like identification documents, your luggage doesn't change that often. So your stashed pic page can remain in your bags for future trips.



### Prescription Medication Information

Rick Steves promotes packing prescription medications in their original containers, labeled with legible Rx identification and replacement information. If you take more than a couple Rx drugs, however, packing each container can take up a ton of room. Additionally, if the pills or capsules within each original container aren't cushioned against travel motion, they may become damaged during travel. [Potterite pill packing pointers are provided on an upcoming page.]



Instead, we suggest carrying the original copy of your most recent Tax Receipt for each Rx drug on your person, and packing copies of them with your other stashed documents.

Each Rx tax receipt contains all the information that Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) personnel may want to see, as well as all information vital to replacing your medication if it becomes lost or damaged.

**\*Insulin-dependent (diabetic) Potterites**, or those who require other forms of injectable Rx medication, should also bring a signed physician's statement—written on a **prescription pad page**—attesting to your need for carrying syringes with **needles**. TSA personnel consider these items to be potentially dangerous, and Rx receipts bearing your name aren't commonly pasted on syringe packages.

## Additional Stuff to Stash—and Your Stash Checklist

Below is a checklist of **all** the important information and documents that should be stashed in each of your checked and carryon bags, beginning with those we just described. Everything on the checklist will **fit into a single envelope** that can be **hidden in the lining** of any-sized bag, especially if related information is printed on the front and back of each page.

### Stash Checklist

- Photocopies of all important identification documents.**
- Your interior baggage information page.**
  - The one that includes your UK cell phone number, *all* your travel dates and first-lodgings-after-a-flight contact information, *as well as* your home address and phone number.
- Your baggage photos and dimensions information page.**
- Copies of your prescription medication tax receipts** (and Doctor's syringe note if needed).
- Your Travelers Checks List.**
  - If you'll be purchasing Travelers Checks, put a copy of the check numbers (and denominations) list in each stash envelope. If you include a check in each envelope, note each hidden check number's location.
- Stash a list of all the Credit Cards you'll be traveling with.**
  - ◆ Note the **account number for each credit card**, but *not* its expiration date or verification number (the 3 numbers near the signature strip on back, or the 4 numbers on the front of an American Express card).
  - ◆ Note the **toll-free phone number** found on the back of each card, in case you need to *cancel* a stolen or lost credit card while abroad.
- Stash a page containing **the model and serial numbers (with photos)** of any expensive personal belongings you travel with—such as cameras, laptop computers, and the like.

## Pack an In-Flight Needs Bag

When flying across the pond, there likely will be a little movie screen on the headrest of the seat in front of you. Having a personal choice of movies to watch during a long flight is fantabulous for making time fly by! However, the computer unit required to grant this amenity hogs at least half of the space under the seat in front of you. No normal-sized carryon bag will fit there.

Pack a small, lightweight bag containing the items you'll frequently need to access while in-flight, and put it in one of your carryons. Actually, a couple gallon-sized zip bags work well—one for stuff, one for snacks.

When you board, tuck things such as your book or eReader, magazines, writing materials, and your **water bottle** in the seatback pouch. Stuff your small in-flight bag(s) under the seat in front of you, so you can stow your carryon(s) in the overhead bin.

### Items Commonly Needed In-Flight

- Gum or chewy candy to defeat cabin pressure ear effects.
- Any medications or supplements you may need during the flight.  
DC Carson recommends **No Jet Lag**, “an herbal supplement that keeps you feeling fresh while adjusting to the time change.” <http://www.nojetlag.com/>
- Saline eye drops and nasal spray to assist you in staying hydrated. Remember to move them from your liquids zip baggie to your in-flight bag—ditto for items such as travel toothpaste, lotion, lip balm, wet-wipes, and the like.
- Toothbrush, comb, ear plugs, etc.
- “Facial tissue” —for blowing your nose! Take a 1- to 2-inch stack of tissues from a large box and fold it (pull-flap side out) into a quart-sized zip bag. Roll out the air and zip it. Voilà! You now have a small bag containing far more tissues than pricy commercial tissue travel packs provide.
- Snacks (see suggestions below).
- Anything else you anticipate needing during a long flight.

### In-Flight Snacks

These days, airline meals and snacks are rarely plentiful, and often aren't free. Thus, savvy sojourners pack plenty of non-perishable and **crush-proof** snacks. Happily, *healthy* snacks are often the best kinds to travel with. Snack-sized zip bags work great for containing treats that aren't individually wrapped. And, after collecting and packaging a variety of travel snacks, you can toss the lot into a single gallon-sized zip bag. What follows is a list of our favorite travel snacks.

- Crunchy vegetables that aren't easily squished, such as peeled baby carrots, celery sticks, broccoli and cauliflower sprigs, edible-pod snap peas.
- Apple slices (rinse with lemon juice after slicing to prevent browning).
- Pretzels are snacks favored by many and aren't easily crushed to dust like most kinds of crackers. However, excessive salt intake can cause **increased jet lag** and **fluid retention**. If you want to peck at pretzels while on the plane, pack the *unsalted* kind.
- Rice cakes, hardtack crackers, or dried Chow Mein noodles (a CD Miller favorite) are great, relatively crush-proof, low-calorie snacks to pack.
- Unsalted nuts and any kind of dried fruits. (Craisins mixed with dried banana chips are *da bomb!*)
- Individually wrapped, single-serving cheeses.  
**Please Note:** Cheese does *not* have to be refrigerated. In fact, all cheeses are more flavorful when served at room temperature.
- Hard candies to suck on—sugar-free if you're worried about calories.
- Any other non-perishable, crush-proof snacks you might enjoy.

### Keep It Close or Closed

**Baggage Rule #1: *Nothing* of significant value should ever be put in your checked baggage!** If you're going to travel with something valuable, put it in a carryon and keep it with you.

**Baggage Rule #2: Luggage locks are ludicrous.** They usually are flimsy things, easily broken by rough baggage handling, or when becoming caught on parts of an automated baggage distribution system. **Thieves scoff at luggage locks.** Most can be snapped with a pair of pliers

and a flick of the wrist. And, if they aren't TSA-recognized locks, you'll have to be present whenever checked baggage inspections occur to avoid TSA personnel breaking them.

**Furthermore, most external zipper compartments *cannot* be secured by luggage locks.**

The first time CD Miller saw someone's underwear traveling around a baggage claim turnstile—along with other contents from a zipper compartment that had opened during transport—she vowed to *never* use external zipper compartments to store *anything*, unless they could be securely closed.

### The Answer? Plastic-Coated Twist-Ties!

Plastic-coated twist-ties can be re-used multiple times without shredding, and work exceptionally well for keeping *all* checked baggage compartments closed. They don't catch on anything, and TSA personnel can search your bags anytime they need to. According to CD Miller:

“In all the years I've been securing my checked baggage openings with plastic-coated twist-ties, TSA personnel have *never* failed to re-twist-tie the closures after inspection.”

The best twist-ties for securing luggage compartments are those created from the **tin-tie strips** commonly used to close **bags of gourmet coffee**. Tin-tie strips consist of **two wires** enclosed in thicker plastic than that which covers individual plastic-coated twist-ties. The *two* twist-ties created when one tin-tie strip is cut up the middle are each super strong and durable.



Main baggage compartments are usually closed by **two zippers coming together**, anywhere along the zipper track. When united, they form a common canal where a ludicrous luggage lock could be employed. Thus, it's easy to use a plastic coated twist-tie to secure main compartment zippers together. (Pic below left.)



**External zipper compartments, however, are rarely closed by the meeting of two zippers.** To secure external zipper compartments, insert a **large, sturdy safety pin** just beyond the place where it closes, giving you an anchor to twist-tie the zipper to. (Pic above right.) Yes, a safety pin could snag on something. But, but it takes far more force to break a sturdy safety pin than it does to open an unsecured zipper.



## Pill Packing

If you only have one or two prescription medications and you want to keep them in their original containers for TSA needs and refill reference, stuff several cotton balls inside to keep travel motion from turning them into dust.

Potterites who take several Rx meds or vitamins probably use pill organizers consisting of compartments that can be preloaded with daily doses for a week (or more). These organizers are far too bulky to pack and, like Rx bottles, don't protect pills from being pulverized by travel motion. But, they're handy for pill packing preparation.

Buy some tiny zip bags—available at any craft or hobby store for less than \$5 per package of 100 bags. (You'll also need these tiny baggies to pack your extra camera batteries, as you'll learn in the UK Photography Issues Supplementum: <http://HarryPotterPlaces.com/tips/UKphotography.pdf>)

Load your organizer, then dump each day's collection of pills into one little baggie. **Be sure to pack at least *two* extra days of drugs and vitamins in case your return home is delayed.**

If you're like CD Miller, and take a slew of vitamins and Rx meds at bedtime, but only two vitamins in the morning, you can pack the morning pills in several daily dose bags, *or* pack enough of them in one bag each. Similarly, if you take some Rx meds or vitamin supplements only a few times a week, pack enough of them in a single bag.



At left is CD Miller's **12-day trip supply** of meds, drugs, and vitamins.

In the lower left corner are only 4 tiny zip bags, each containing Miller's daily bedtime Rx meds and vitamins. (14 of *those* baggies would be too big a pile to photograph with the other bags in one frame!)

Next to them are two bags, each containing 14 days-worth of Miller's two morning vitamins.

What's in the *snack-sized* zip bag at top? Miller's ibuprofen—generic Advil!

**Over-the-Counter pain meds are far more expensive in the UK than in the US or Canada. Pack plenty with you.** If you're a Tylenol (acetaminophen) fan, it is called **paracetamol** in the UK. But, you won't need to know that if you bring enough with you.

Once you've packaged all your meds, drugs, and vitamins into tiny- or snack-sized zip bags, stuff the lot into one quart-sized zip bag.

Add the **original copy of your most recent Tax Receipt for each Rx drug** to the bag. (A copy of these receipts will be stashed with your other important documents in each item of baggage.)

Roll out the air, zip the bag, and put this cushioned collection of your pills in a carryon.

You're ready to fly!



## Zippity Doo DO!

**Extra zip lock bags** are incredibly handy to pack and bring with you, for a multitude of reasons.

According to Rick Steves:

“Bring a variety of sizes. ... they're ideal for packing leftover picnic food, containing wetness, and bagging potential leaks before they happen. The two-gallon jumbo size is handy for packing clothing. Bring extras for the flight home, as they can be hard to find in Europe.”

In addition to being perfect for packing an extra pair of underwear in your carryon, zip bags are wonderful organizers for things such as sales receipts with attached VAT forms, miscellaneous expense receipts, post cards and pamphlets. Basically, the list of stuff you can store in a zip bag is endless!

While zip bags *can* be purchased in the UK, it's far cheaper to buy them in the US (or Canada). And, since empty zip bags can be condensed down to such a light weight, low volume package, there's no reason not to bring extras. Roll up several sizes of empty zip bags and put them into one gallon-sized bag. Roll out the air, zip it, and stuff it in a checked bag.

If you buy a box of jumbo two-gallon zip bags for packing small items of clothing (instead of, or in addition to, the **Samsonite Space Saver Bags** offered in the **HPP Travel Store**), roll up the extras for packing.

There's no need to bring extra tiny zip bags, because you'll have plenty of empty ones after using the camera batteries or taking the pills you pack in them.

Please remember that all your carryon liquids and gels must be in 3.4-ounce or smaller containers, and all of these items must fit within a **single, quart-size zip bag**.

## Miscellaneous Must-Haves

Many of the following items can be inexpensively purchased at discount department stores such as Walmart or Target. For one-stop-shopping convenience, the items listed with a red-star [★] can also be found in the **Travel Supplies & Gadgets** section of the **Harry Potter Places website Travel Store**.

**\*Balega Hidden Comfort Socks** Tara Bellers swears that she’s never suffered a single blister since discovering these socks. “Though I’ve worn and washed them many times over the years, the first Balega socks I bought are still protecting my feet. Well worth the price!” A variety of sizes and colors are available in the HPP Travel Store. Alternatively, use the store finder on Balega’s website to search for a sales source near you. <http://www.balega.com/>

**Binoculars** The size and expense of binoculars needed vary according to individual interests. CD Miller carries only a small pair of plastic folding binoculars she once received as a party gift. Although they cannot be focused, their 3x18 magnification allows for reading street signs a block away (“saves having to backtrack because I went the wrong direction”). Potterites interested in enjoying close scrutiny of UK flora and fauna should consider the **\*Emerson Mini Binoculars** (\$10.24).

**Carabiners** A carabiner is a metal loop with a spring-loaded gate. Heavy-duty carabiners are used by mountain climbers for quick and easy attachment or detachment of equipment to or from a belt—or, for securing life-lines to anchors that prevent them from falling. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carabiner> The not-for-climbing variety of carabiners are far less expensive, and perfect for a Potterite’s needs.



[©2005 Polyparadigm]

Yes. Clipping stuff to your belt might make you look like a silly tourist. But, carabiners are too helpful to be avoided merely due to appearance concerns. **You are a tourist.** Embrace it!

By using carabiners to attach things such as shopping bags to your belt, you’ll be able to **Potter with your hands free**, and thus will **avoid losing things** because you had to set them down to take a pic and forgot to pick them up again.

**\*The HPP Travel Store offers a 6-pack of Grizzly Grip Utility Carabiners for \$9.95.** However, if you find a smaller and cheaper collection of non-locking, not-for-climbing Carabiners somewhere else, buy it. An individual Potterer doesn’t need more than 2 or 3 of them.

**A Compass is Crucial** From CD Miller: “Whether wandering a big city or meandering over the moors, you *must* have a compass. Even the cheap, pin-on, plastic versions work well. I bought mine at Walmart for a couple bucks.” From DC Carson: “I have one permanently pinned to my jacket. It’s come in handy in the mountains more than once.” Below left is Miller’s Walmart compass. Below right is the **\*Keychain Compass** available in the HPP Travel Store for *80 cents*, which can easily be attached to the zipper of a jacket or touring bag. [Photos below are not of equal scale and do not represent a size comparison.]



**Condensable Zip-Out Travel Bags** DC Carson says: “I have one of those nylon bags that zips-out to be quite large. It’s great for grocery shopping, or for stowing several bags of stuff purchased during a day’s tour, or for packing the few things I’ll need on a short train trip. When empty, it folds down to about the size of a coaster! Wouldn’t go anywhere without it.” Check your local discount department stores to find the most inexpensive varieties. If cheaply found, consider bringing two in case of a blow-out, or an unbridled shopping spree. **\***The spruce-colored (light navy) Rick Steves Hide-Away Tote featured in the HPP Travel Store is far cheaper than the same totes offered in Steves’ Travel Store. You’ll not need a blow-out backup for this sturdy bag, but you still might want to purchase and pack two of them.

**\*Flashlight** Buy a small, inexpensive LED flashlight (aka “torch”) to bring on your trek. Keep it in your touring purse, bag, or backpack. Pack one reload of fresh batteries in a tiny zip bag if your torch isn’t disposable.

**\*Insect Repellent Potter Style!** The UK, especially Scotland, is home to malicious little monsters called **midges**. Though some tourist sites insist that a midge bite is less painful than a mosquito bite, a swarm of midges can inflict about 3,000 bites in an hour, and 40,000 midges can land on an unprotected arm over the same period. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/outdoors/articles/midge/> Furthermore, the aftermath of each midge bite is just as itchy and uncomfortable as any individual mosquito bite.

When filming in Scotland, the Harry Potter cast and crew were menaced by midges, and couldn’t find an effective repellent. At last, someone told them what the British Army uses, **Avon Skin So Soft!** The original form of Avon Skin So Soft (SSS) credited with repelling midges is the dry oil body spray packaged in green bottles. (The pink SSS bottles don’t repel anything.) You’ll find an 8-pack of Avon Skin So Soft with Bug Guard individually packaged towelettes in the HPP Travel Store for \$8.84. A cheaper but less convenient option is to buy a bottle of Avon Skin So Soft with Bug Guard, and fill a 3.4-ounce travel bottle with it.

**\*Laundry Kit and \*Tide-To-Go Stick** These items are small, light weight, and vital to minimizing the amount of clothing you pack. Along with a few packets of detergent, the laundry kit includes a sink stopper (something not always found in a UK bathroom) and a suction-cup-anchored laundry line for hanging hand-washed clothes to dry. Consider also packing some **\*Travelon Laundry Soap Sheets**.

**Paper Clips** Put a bunch of them in a tiny zip bag and stick it in a quart- or gallon-sized zip bag. Use that bag for saving **purchase receipts paper-clipped to VAT forms**.

**\*Rain Poncho** Hooded, full-sized rain ponchos constructed of durable plastic weigh only a few ounces, and—when not removed from their original package—take up barely any room at all. Murphy’s Law dictates that being sure to pack one may even *prevent* rain! Since they cost only a couple bucks each, buy several to stow in your checked luggage. Stick one in your touring purse, pouch, or backpack. If you use it, stick a new one in your bag as soon as you return to your lodgings and toss the opened one.

**Shower Shoes** Cheap, rubber thongs—aka Flip-Flops—are important to personal hygiene and can double as slippers.

**\*Survival Sewing Repair Kit** Everything you'll need for a variety of sewing or repair jobs on clothing or luggage is in this marvelous kit—a super suggestion offered by DC Carson! It even includes a short roll of brass **wire** and 36 inches of **Duct Tape**.

Most travel-size rolls of duct tape (such as the HPP Travel Store item mentioned next) come in packages of two, 4-foot or 50-inch rolls. If you're happy with 36 inches of duct tape you'll not need to buy it separately, unless you're restocking your kit.

**Please Note:** Because this kit includes a "Military Approved Derma Safe Knife" (a razor blade that folds up into plastic handle for safe storage), it must be **packed in your checked baggage**.

**\*Travel Rolls of Duct Tape** Both Rick Steves and Reid Bramblett identify duct tape as being a vital item to pack. Obviously, it comes in handy for any number of repair-related reasons. But, here's a use many may not know about: If you've suffered blistered feet during holiday walking in the past, **protect the previously blistered areas with small sections of duct tape before you go out walking**. It's important that the tape is applied smoothly—no wrinkles!

**Please Note:** Some travelers suggest making your own, less expensive, travel rolls of duct tape by winding duct tape from a large roll onto a golf pencil or old credit card. However, some who've done that report that the rewound duct tape ends up sticking to itself, becoming difficult (if not impossible) to use. Harry Potter Places authors and contributors prefer spending a couple extra bucks to be sure that the travel duct tape we pack will quickly and conveniently save us in times of need.

**\*A Whistle** Especially when meandering the Yorkshire moors or hiking the Scottish highlands, you need to have a whistle with you. The universal signal for "I need help," is three, sharp and equally quick whistle blasts. Rest, then repeat the three blast pattern.

Visit the **Travel Supplies & Gadgets** section of the Harry Potter Places website Travel Store to see other handy items we might have discovered.

**Please Note:** The products seen in the **Similar Items** list at the far left were not put there by Harry Potter Places authors or contributors. That section is automatically generated by **Amazon.com**. But, if something looks interesting, check it out.