

Maximize Your Park Time with FastPass+ and Express Transportation: A Walt Disney World Planning Article

by Sarah Hart, PassPorter Guest Contributor

I have come up with four touring strategies to use to make the most of Fastpass+ when Park Hopping.

On our most recent Walt Disney World vacation my boyfriend and I made three Fastpass+ reservations each day at our 60 day window. We made all of these reservations before or around noon so that we would be able to make more reservations once ours had been redeemed. On this trip we purchased Park Hopper Tickets. We knew that we would have a plan for the morning of each day but nothing more than that and wanted to have the ability to Park Hop. We like to be able to have some spontaneity in our vacation. We also like to give ourselves flexibility to change our plans and add to our plans whenever we feel like it. We make a couple of Advanced Dining Reservations throughout the trip that give structure to our time.

Make One Fastpass+ at a time, then another, then another, then another

□ On the second to last day of our vacation we decided to do the infamous "Disney Grand Slam". That's right: all four parks in one day. We decided the day before and before we really decided to do it we talked hypothetically what we would want to do and how we would attempt it. We DID NOT use any Extra Magic Hours. We decided that we wanted to at least ride one big ride at each park: Expedition Everest, Toy Story Midway Mania, Test Track, and Space Mountain.

□ I checked the My Disney Experience app and found a Fastpass for Toy Story Midway Mania for 11:00-12:00. Perfect. We decided that we would first start in Animal Kingdom, then Hollywood Studios, over to Epcot, and end at Magic Kingdom. We started the day with only one Fastpass+ reservation: Toy Story Midway Mania. We went to Animal Kingdom in the morning for park opening and rode Expedition Everest and a few other rides then hopped to Hollywood Studios. While in line for Toy Story I booked our next Fastpass+ for Test Track. The My Disney Experience App will not let you reserve Fastpass+ in more than one park but it will let you reserve a new Fastpass if you do not have any other reservations for that day. Because we had scanned our Magic Bands the app registered our Fastpass as used and let us make another

Fastpass in a different park. We were unable to do this ahead of time but we could make reservations on the go.

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□ Use Express Transportation

□ We bought Express Transportation on our first day. We used this service at least two times a day on our trip. Most days we went to at least three parks. We are a couple in our 20s so we had the energy level to tour the parks this way. When we were feeling like a park was crowded, we had experienced everything we wanted to for that day, or we wanted to eat at a particular restaurant we would head for the nearest Express Transportation location within the park and board a bus to our desired location.

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□ This cost us \$29 a person but we felt like we used it enough over six days that the cost was completely justified. The Express Transportation buses leave every 30 minutes to each park. We found that we had very good luck and never had to wait more than 10 minutes for a bus. We loved this service because the bus stop was located inside the park and when we got to the next park we did not have to go through security again. This is a HUGE time saver.

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□ Don't Be Afraid to Change Fastpass+ Reservations

□ We made Fastpass+ reservations 60 days in advance using My Disney Experience but we did not keep every single one of those reservations. We thought of our reservations like a rough draft for our trip. It was not set in stone. While eating breakfast each morning we would think about our goals for the day. After making our goals we would look at My Disney Experience and adjust our Fastpass+ reservation to meet those goals. Midday we would think about where we wanted to go next. This would usually mean Park Hopping. Before hopping to our next park we would make a Fastpass for the park so that when we arrived we could usually go directly to our next ride.

Start at One Park and Save all of Your Fastpasses for the Next Park

□ On the day that we conquered the Disney Grand Slam we started our day at Animal Kingdom and hopped to Hollywood Studios for our first Fastpass of the day. By getting to Animal Kingdom for park opening we could ride all the rides of our choosing before the lines started to build. We didn't need any Fastpasses to get all of those rides in because it was early in the day and the wait times were very low. We could take advantage of the low times and leave the park once we had ridden everything on our wish list.

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□ When we arrived at Hollywood Studios we did not have the same gift of low wait times but we were prepared because we had Fastpasses ready and booked.

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□ We had a wonderful trip to the World in April. I felt like we were able to do and see everything we wanted to and then some. The only day that felt like we tried to bite off more than we could chew was the "Grand Slam" day. The rest of the days felt like a really healthy balance of structure and spontaneity.

About The Author: Sarah lives in Concord, New Hampshire with her boyfriend and their cat Ace. She is Boston Red Sox fan who enjoys baking, hiking, and skiing. Her favorite places include York Beach, Maine and Walt Disney World.

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