

The Art of A Smooth Check-in At Walt Disney World: Save Time and Trouble On Your Next Trip

by Justine Fellows, PassPorter Guest Contributor and Host of Travel Girl podcasts

So I have to think about checking in? Is it not enough that I have planned for hours, reserved dining, memorized the maps, pre-purchased the park tickets? I know, sounds crazy, but you have to trust me on this one - checking in the right way can make the difference between a smooth, problem free trip and one struck with issues. Here's the biggest problem when you check in to any hotel- you're excited and in a rush! Who wouldn't be? You've just tackled car rides, plane trips with screaming children, shuttle rides, baggage lugging, stroller collapsing, juice spilling, hours of travel, and you are psyched! You made it, you're still alive and you only lost one child for a brief moment. You are ready to rip off the tags of your brand new shorts, don your favorite Mickey tee, slap on the sunscreen and head out. STOP!!!

Trust me. Take a breath. Hold out the anticipation for just a few more minutes. Plunk your spouse and the kids in front of the Disney movies in the lobby and prepare to spend some time perfecting your trip, this is the last step in a perfectly planned out vacation. Here's what you need to do:

1. Have your paperwork ready, including hotel confirmation numbers, any requests you made such as a crib in your room, your park tickets if they do not come with your package, your list of dining reservations, activity reservations, and any special events.
2. Start at check-in. Make sure to verify everything -- dates, room location, will they be sending the crib, has your luggage arrived and if not, when should you expect it. Make sure that your Keys to the World -- your hotel keys that look like a credit card -- include everything in your package, hotel room, dining plan, and park tickets. You also have charging capabilities on this card so make sure to check the limit and set a limit for your children old enough to go off on their own. REMEMBER that you must have all cards when you head to the parks -- park tickets are on each individual card.
3. Next stop, lobby concierge. Don't do it later, trust me, just get it all over with. At the lobby concierge desk have them print the list of your dining reservations - make sure they are all correct. Pick up any event

tickets such as Hoop Dee Doo Revue. Get maps, park times, and the resorts calendar of events. There may be a craft activity for the kids or movie on the beach that you otherwise wouldn't know about. Ask for any coloring books, stickers, and hidden Mickey hunts that they might have to keep the wee ones amused.

4. If it is your first time to the resort have them explain the transportation options, find out where the bus stops are and make sure to take a map to find your way around.
5. If you bought your park tickets separately, concierge can put the tickets right onto your Key to the World to make it more convenient.
6. Lastly, ask any questions that you may have, the lobby concierge staff will be your best friends throughout the trip!

I know that not rushing to your room or out to the pool may be VERY difficult but I promise you, careful and thoughtful check-in is the last step to planning a perfect Disney World vacation!

About The Author: Justine Fellows, the author of [PassPorter's Disney Speed Planner: The Easy Ten-Step Program](#), works in education in Connecticut. She is also the host of [Travel Girl's\(TM\) Tips for Disney World](#) podcasts

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