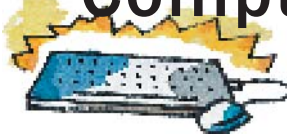




Traveling with Computers



Planning to travel across the country or around the world and need to take your laptop? Knowing the following tips and taking along some of the right equipment can make your trip more pleasurable.

Need to know...

1. **Voltage: 110 volts or 220 volts?**
2. **Frequency: 50 Hertz or 60 Hertz?**
3. **Telephone/Modem: Analog or digital?**
 - a. **Dial tone: Standard or PBX?**
 - b. **Line noise: Tax impulsing?**
4. **Plug type: Electrical/Modem? Which kind?**

Voltage: 110 volts or 220 volts

- Many computers automatically adjust to the correct voltage on the line, from 110 to 240 volts. Check the manufacturer specifications.
- If your computer does not have the capability of adjusting to the correct voltage, you will need to use a converter to change 220/240 volts to 110/120 volts. You must use a converter designed for 220 volts.
- Converters can be purchased for around \$50.00.
- You may need a converter for printers, camcorder rechargers, and other equipment.

Frequency: 50 Hertz or 60 Hertz

- Like voltage, many computers automatically adjust to either 50 or 60 Hertz. Check the manufacturer specifications.
- If not, read frequency info at: <http://kropla.com/frequency.htm>

Telephone: Analog or Digital

- Modems, for telephone calls and accessing the Internet, utilize analog signals. Hotels often use digital (PBX) systems that run higher current. Plugging your analog modem (computer or external) into a digital system can damage your modem.
- Take along a digital phone line tester and/or digital phone converter to detect high currents in digital phone systems and provide an analog data port to connect your modem safely.

www.csus.edu/uccs/documents/quikrefsite



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Dial tone: Standard or PBX/Tone or pulse?

- Dial tones in other countries may not be recognized by your modem. Try placing a check next to Ignore Dialtone in your modem set-up.

Line noise: Tax impulsing?

- Line noise could compromise your Internet connection. Try connecting your modem at a lower speed.
- Tax impulsing, a high frequency signal, is used on some telephone lines to meter the connection for billing purposes. Using a line filter or adjusting your modem settings may help. Check your modem manual.

Plug type: Which of many?

- Two-prong, flat blade, three-prong? Access <http://www.kropla.com> for photos and a list of plugs used worldwide.



Notes

- If your computer is manufactured to run on both 110V 60Hz and 220V 50Hz, you need only an adapter plug for the wall outlet. However, using a universal surge protector is advised—one that operates on 220-240V.
- Carry proof of ownership for your computer equipment for your re-entry through Customs to prove you purchased the equipment prior to your travels.
- Identify your computer:
 1. Place a unique, identifying mark on the underside of your laptop or attach your business card.
 2. Add a file called *if_found* to your desktop with your name, address, and telephone number.
 3. Write the Serial Number of your laptop on a card or paper that you keep with you, but not in your computer bag.
- Use and store your computer away from televisions, clocks, hair dryers, etc. as these may contain small magnets that could damage your data.
- Pack your laptop in a carry-on bag and be prepared to take it out at security checkpoints to prove it is a functioning computer. Carry your power cable or have the laptop battery fully charged so your computer will power up.
- X-ray machines at airports will not damage your computer or storage disks unless they are scanned many times. However, do not put your computer through a metal detector. Instead, you can ask to have the computer hand-checked by the security attendant.
- Recommended operating temperature and humidity: 41°F-95°F, 20-80% humidity.
- Carry film in your carry-on baggage. Passenger checkpoint x-rays will not damage undeveloped film. However, equipment used to screen checked baggage can damage film.
- PDAs may automatically adjust from 110 to 240 volts. Read your manual. If not, you may need a travel charger. USB rechargers are also available to charge your PDA through your laptop.

References

Computer & phone connections:

<http://www.voltagevalet.com/computer.html>

Electrical worldwide systems, plugs, phones, advice:

<http://kropla.com/electric.htm>

High-speed connections worldwide:

http://www.ipass.com/support/support_broadband.html

ISP & cybercafes worldwide, phone/modem connectivity, and much more:

<http://www.laptoptravel.com/>

Internet access numbers, international electricity:

<http://www.walkabouttravelgear.com/modem.htm>

Transportation Security Administration - travel tips, take-off preparation, security:

<http://www.tsa.gov/public/display?theme=175>

U. S. Department of State - Tips, background notes on country history, government, current political situation and more:

<http://www.state.gov/travel/>