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# How to Survive Holiday Family Visits When You're Totally Over It

BY EMILY SCHLEIGER | DEC 22, 2015



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Survive  
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Getting together with family members this holiday season is

important to you. Maybe. Or maybe it's just been five years since

you've seen them, and they're threatening to visit *you* if you don't

make the effort. For obligatory holiday travel survival, follow these 8

helpful tips.

## Make Viruses Work For You

You know that your 4-year-old nephew Jimmy will wipe his nose on

his hand before he grabs yours, and Great Aunt Nancy totally made

that pomegranate chicken salad 5 minutes after recovering from a

nasty MRSA infection. You can't beat them, so join them. A week

prior to your trip, lick every public handrail in sight, drink no liquids,

and get no more than 2 hours sleep per night. This will ensure you'll

contract a heinous virus, which has two advantages:

- First, if you're sick with one thing, you're not going to get sick with another. With your body's immunity already working overtime, you'll fight off everything faster.
- Second, family members will stay away from you, and that means treasured solitude and peace during your stay.

## Gifts Take Up Too Much Valuable Packing Space

They also require shopping and wrapping time, which you don't have

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because Netflix. If you donate to a good cause on behalf of the gift recipients, however, no space need be taken at all. This year's good cause just happens to be your friend's Kickstarter campaign to develop the video game "Cleatus the FOX Sports Robot vs. Gary Busey." It's the gift that will keep on giving— if the campaign is successful, next holiday season you'll have several copies of the game to gift, at no additional cost to you!

8

helpful  
tips...

## Plan Your Transportation Wisely

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**By Plane:** Plan your departure flight according to the most demand. Overbooked flight=you're the volunteer to forfeit your ticket and get that free voucher for a later flight. Which you'll use to fly anywhere else. In the meantime, you've just abbreviated your trip. BOOM.

**By Amtrak:** You'll barely arrive in town before you'll have to head out again in order to get back to work in five days.

**By Car:** If you must travel by highway and are expected at a certain time, travel by smart car and fill it with cigarette smoke. At least you won't get stuck having to cart anyone else around once you arrive.

## Find Your Suitcase Easily

At baggage claim, your family members will join the line of people who stand right on top of the suitcase chute, thus immediately making you claustrophobic and testing your patience. The mob rivals that of the Titanic passengers scrambling for lifeboats, and

the desperation is just as palpable. There are two (2) tactics for getting your suitcase easily without all the skirmish.

**Option 1:** The night before your trips, eat as much combustible food as possible, e.g., beans, brussels sprouts, peppers and cabbage. Let it all rip right near that baggage chute and watch the seas part.

**Option 2:** Pack your suitcase at least half full of glow sticks that you've snapped right before arrival at the airport. Leave a few luggage zippers slightly ajar. Other passengers are sure to avoid your radioactive bags.

## **Buy Things to Keep Your Nieces and Nephews Busy So They Leave You Alone**

Ideas:

- Puzzles with missing pieces
- Tiny plastic toys hidden inside your chewed gum
- Tubes of Crazy Glue
- Extra-heavy bowling balls
- Crisco for sliding down bannisters
- Screwdrivers for disassembling appliances
- Live chickens

Hand out new items each day, and hide. Be sure to lock the door to your own sleeping room to keep your stuff safe.

## Avoid Chores

No one is going to ask you to help cook if you're prone to accidental over-salting and over-baking soda-ing. Nor will you be asked to help wash dishes if your hands are always so oily that everything you touch drops and breaks. And given the things you handed the kids to play with, you are no one's babysitter, either. You're free to go recline and drool with your very elderly relatives.

## Bring Conversation Starters

Your best bet to keep things light and avoid yourself or others as the subject of discussion? Bring a pile of gossip magazines. The more far-fetched the tabloid, the better. Discuss topics as if they were real, important news, and get everyone in on the conversation. Take many polls. Great Uncle Harold surely has an opinion on the romance between Gwen Stefani and Blake Shelton. The last thing you want to do is discuss your lackluster career or how well your sister is doing at her law firm.

## Or...

Screw it all. Skip all that effort and just Skype.

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(<http://twitter.com/EmilySchleiger>)) is a Chicago-based writer

whose suitcase is always last out of the chute. Find more of her

