



Cancun Travel Checklist

A printable pre-trip checklist for first-time visitors to Cancun

Created for AskTourGuide.com | Updated October 2026

How to use this checklist: print it, save it on your phone, or use it as a planning sheet before your trip. Entry requirements, visas, medications, and customs rules can vary depending on your nationality and circumstances, so always verify official sources before you travel.

Quick essentials

- ☐ Valid passport in good condition.
- ☐ Visa or visa-exemption requirements reviewed for your nationality.
- ☐ Flight, hotel, and activity confirmations saved offline.
- ☐ VISITAX requirements reviewed if you are a foreign tourist visiting Quintana Roo.
- ☐ Transfer from Cancun International Airport to your hotel arranged.
- ☐ Medications and customs restrictions reviewed before packing.
- ☐ Money plan prepared: Mexican pesos, debit card, credit card, and a backup option.
- ☐ Offline maps, bookings, and hotel address saved on your phone.

Tip: create a digital folder called CANCUN TRIP with copies of your passport, bookings, insurance, emergency contacts, transfers, and itinerary.

6 to 8 weeks before your trip

Itinerary and bookings

- ☐ Decide where to stay: Hotel Zone, downtown Cancun, or another nearby area.
- ☐ Define your trip style: beach and relaxation, excursions, nightlife, family travel, adventure, or a combination.
- ☐ Book flights and accommodation.
- ☐ Check the expected weather for your travel dates, including rainy season and possible tropical storms.
- ☐ If the beach is important for your trip, check recent sea and sargassum conditions before you leave.
- ☐ Decide which excursions you want to do so you do not fill too many days with long transfers.
- ☐ Book your most important experiences in advance, especially Chichen Itza, Isla Mujeres, parks, and full-day trips.
- ☐ Organize your itinerary while leaving some free time to enjoy Cancun without scheduled activities.

Documents and money

- ☐ Check the official visa requirements for your nationality and purpose of travel.
- ☐ Make sure your passport is valid, readable, and free of major damage.
- ☐ Purchase travel insurance that covers medical care, delays, baggage, and cancellations.
- ☐ Keep copies of your passport, insurance, flights, accommodation, and emergency contacts.
- ☐ Confirm that your cards will work in Mexico.
- ☐ Verify or set up your card PINs before you leave.

Entry reminder: immigration requirements depend on your nationality and the purpose of your trip. Always check with Mexico's National Immigration Institute and, when applicable, the relevant Mexican consular office before you travel.

3 to 4 weeks before your trip

Medications and health

- ☐ Review your medications by active ingredient, not only by brand name.
- ☐ Keep medications in their original packaging whenever possible.
- ☐ Bring the corresponding prescription for important medications.
- ☐ If you are carrying controlled medications or psychotropic substances, verify the applicable requirements before you travel.
- ☐ Keep essential medications in your carry-on bag.
- ☐ Pack sunscreen appropriate for the activities you plan to do.
- ☐ Bring insect repellent.
- ☐ Consider your personal needs regarding heat, humidity, and extended sun exposure.

Phone, internet, and apps

- ☐ Download an offline map of Cancun and the areas you plan to visit.
- ☐ Download offline Spanish in a translation app if you do not speak the language.
- ☐ Decide between eSIM, local SIM, or roaming before you arrive.
- ☐ Save your hotel's full address and pinned map location.
- ☐ Save the vouchers and meeting points for your excursions.
- ☐ Check which tours include hotel pickup and which ones require you to reach a meeting point.
- ☐ Share your itinerary with your travel companion or emergency contact.

Tip: many operators send pickup details or last-minute changes by email or messaging apps. Review the contact information included in each booking.

1 week before your trip

Final planning

- ☐ Check whether you need to pay VISITAX before the end of your trip.
- ☐ Confirm your airport-to-hotel transfer.
- ☐ Confirm check-in time and luggage storage options.
- ☐ Book any remaining activities, restaurants, or excursions.
- ☐ Prepare a small amount of Mexican pesos for your arrival.
- ☐ Download all your bookings to your phone and cloud storage.
- ☐ Take a screenshot of your hotel address.
- ☐ Save the exact meeting point for your airport transfer.
- ☐ Review your airline's baggage rules.

24 hours before departure

- ☐ Charge your phone, power bank, camera, and headphones.
- ☐ Place your passport, cards, medications, and important documents in your personal item.
- ☐ Check your flight status and terminal.
- ☐ Save your eSIM or roaming instructions for offline access.
- ☐ Download your tour and ticket vouchers.
- ☐ Check the weather forecast for your first few days.
- ☐ Share your flight, hotel, and itinerary details with someone you trust.

Arrival tip: Cancun International Airport has multiple terminals. Check your reservation carefully to confirm the terminal and the exact meeting point for your transfer service.

Packing checklist

Packing essentials

- ☐ Passport and passport copy
- ☐ Flight and hotel confirmations
- ☐ Travel insurance information
- ☐ Debit card and credit card
- ☐ Mexican pesos for the first day
- ☐ Medications and prescriptions
- ☐ Phone and charger
- ☐ Power bank
- ☐ eSIM, SIM, or roaming information
- ☐ Swimsuit
- ☐ Sandals
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes
- ☐ Lightweight, breathable clothing
- ☐ A light layer for air-conditioned indoor spaces
- ☐ Light rain jacket or compact umbrella
- ☐ Reusable water bottle
- ☐ Small backpack for excursions
- ☐ Dry bag or waterproof pouch
- ☐ Hat or cap
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Basic toiletries
- ☐ Bag for wet or dirty clothes
- ☐ Luggage tag
- ☐ Camera or memory cards

Optional but useful

- ☐ Waterproof phone case.
- ☐ Foldable beach bag.
- ☐ Rash guard or swim shirt for water activities.
- ☐ Quick-dry towel for excursions that do not include one.
- ☐ Reusable bag for shopping or beach items.
- ☐ Copies or screenshots of restaurant reservations.
- ☐ Printed hotel address for taxis or emergencies.
- ☐ Personal motion-sickness medication if you usually need it on boats.

Arrival and daily checklist

Your first day in Cancun

- ☐ Connect to the internet before leaving the airport.
- ☐ Confirm that you have Mexican pesos or access to money for the first 24 hours.
- ☐ Follow the instructions for your pre-booked transfer.
- ☐ Save your hotel as a favorite in your maps app.
- ☐ Confirm breakfast hours, check-out time, and important hotel services.
- ☐ Confirm your return airport transfer if it is already booked.
- ☐ Store important documents and valuables in a safe place.
- ☐ Check where and when your first booked activity begins.

Daily review

- ☐ Check the weather before going out.
- ☐ Carry water and protect yourself from the sun.
- ☐ Carry some cash in addition to a card.
- ☐ Confirm the pickup time and pickup point for your excursion.
- ☐ Save the activity voucher for offline access.
- ☐ Make sure your phone has enough battery.
- ☐ Save the route back to your hotel.
- ☐ Review what your tour includes before you leave: food, drinks, entrance fees, equipment, or transportation.
- ☐ Follow environmental and safety guidelines in cenotes, parks, beaches, and protected areas.

Money and transportation tip: cards are useful, but carrying some cash in pesos can make small purchases and unexpected expenses easier. If you use a transportation service without a pre-set price, confirm the cost before starting the ride.

Emergency info and travel notes

Important information to fill in

Traveler name:

Passport number:

Blood type / allergies:

Main hotel:

Hotel address:

Emergency contact:

Travel insurance policy:

Embassy or consulate:

Medication notes:

Return airport transfer:

Notes

Official references you should verify before you travel: National Immigration Institute (gob.mx/inm); VISITAX Quintana Roo (visitax.gob.mx); National Customs Agency of Mexico / Aduana Fácil (anam.gob.mx); National Meteorological Service (smn.conagua.gob.mx).

This checklist contains general trip-planning information and does not constitute legal, immigration, or medical advice.