Best Free Travel Apps

[**Guides by Lonely Planet**](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/guides-by-lonely-planet/id1045791869?mt=8)

Similar to [2015’s pick](http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandratalty/2014/12/11/best-travel-apps-for-2015/#3c0d9e03ed2e) [Localeur](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/localeur-travel-recommendations/id777769897?mt=8), Lonely Planet guides are a great way to plan a trip to a new city. You can download one for free before hitting the streets, so no need to use data if you’re traveling abroad. Score.

Known for budget travel recommendations and quirky cafes, Lonely Planet does an amazing of providing sightseeing suggestions as well as local hot spots.  They have a bevy of local and expat authors writing for them, so their suggestions are nuanced. The app is fairly comprehensive, offering guides for cities like [Rio Di Janeiro](http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandratalty/2016/07/20/attending-the-rio-olympics-what-it-will-cost-you/), Barcelona, Cape Town and Beijing, with more to launch in the new year. We can't wait.

[**Sidekix**](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sidekix-urban-navigation-trip/id1060013635?mt=8)

This [city exploration app](http://www.getsidekix.com/) offers downloadable city guides that lists recommended coffee shops, bars, shops and musuem. Think of it as [Yelp meets Google Maps](http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandratalty/2014/01/14/hottest-travel-apps-for-2014/#2a38ef80fd9d). With domestic cities like Albuquerque, St. Louis and Los Angeles, the continental United States is well-represented.

Using GPS-technology, users [navigate within the map](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/14/technology/personaltech/wanderlust-by-design-apps-to-help-organize-your-summer-travel.html). As you walk, recommended bars and restaurants pop up, as well as museums. If a coffee shop sounds interesting, you can click on it and read other customer’s experiences. Stores, parks and theaters are all also listed.

Fun [features include individualized shoes](http://mashable.com/2016/05/27/summer-travel-apps-2016/#heqP0_BvV5q1) (flip flips, ballet flats, sneakers) that you can use as your avatar. There are also downloadable guides for select cities, like Christmas in New York City or Tea Time in London that will take you give a themed tour based on local suggestions.

One drawback is that you need data for the results to populate. If you’re in a foreign country, that can get expensive. Use free WiFi to download a specific map before leaving a hot spot. It also uses a lot of battery, so start the day with a full charge.

**Hopper**

[Hopper](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/hopper-airfare-predictions/id904052407?mt=8) predicts the optimal time to snag a flight deal by analyzing billions of airfares daily and picking out those brief moments when a price drops below its historic average. Travelers with flexible dates can use Hopper's color-coded calendar to spot the cheapest dates in a month. Hopper's handiest feature, "Watch a Flight," sends a push notification when the price of a given route tends to bottom out.

**FIND A FLIGHT** , Kayak  
**Kayak's** website set the standard for streamlined searching, and its app delivers the same ease of use on the go. Simply enter your destination and travel dates, and the app spits back options sorted by price, time or airline; a single click takes you to the corresponding booking site. *Free.* *Download it*: [Android](https://market.android.com/details?id=com.kayak.android&feature=search_result), [BlackBerry](http://appworld.blackberry.com/webstore/content/2890?lang=en), [iPhone/iPad](http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/kayak-flight-hotel-search/id305204535?mt=8).

**Hipmunk**

Hipmunk ([Android](http://www.tomsguide.com/us/download/Hipmunk-Flight-Search,0301-44478.html), [iOS](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/hipmunk-travel-hotels-flights/id419950680?mt=8&at=1l3v52U&ct=TomsGuide)) presents a fast, all-in-one travel planning and booking solution, with a powerful flight and hotel search engine. In addition to the usual flight search criteria such as price, Hipmunk also includes an agony index for flight duration, number of stops and other factors. Users can also take advantage of last minute hotel deals, view reviews from TripAdvisor and other sources, and check out heat maps that show hotel proximity to shopping, dining and entertainment venues.

**Google Flights**

Google's own flight finder and price tracking service, [Google Flights](https://www.google.com/flights/), has steadily added on to its features and reliability since its launch in 2011, making it an excellent companion app for prospective travelers looking for a great deal on international and local flights. Google Flights works its magic by comparing prices across thousands of flights from flag carriers, budget airlines, and charter flights to bring the best price, and in addition, Google works in its own search magic into the mix, allowing users to filter their searches through a variety of parameters, searching for flights by date, departure or destination airports, and more. Google also added a price prediction feature, alerting you to price changes, and likely fluctuations in price.

[**Flight Stats**](https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/flightstats/id572700574?mt=8)

If the idea of a full service reservation program like Google Trips or Tripcase is too much, consider this app. Users can plug in their flight numbers to find out about terminals, gates and delays.

The app also searches by airport, so if you are interested in learning  about all the American Airlines flights out of [John F. Kennedy International](http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandratalty/2016/11/03/these-are-the-best-and-worst-airports-in-the-us-says-the-points-guy/#18ac6e77de08) airport in New York, you can search that way. For airline nerds out there, it even shows flight paths.

**Seat Guru**

SeatGuru.com was created to help travelers choose the best airline **seats** and in-flight amenities. Seat Guru helps you find your assigned seat and check out other seats on the same airplane.

**GateGuru, Your Personal Airport Assistant**

[GateGuru](javascript:void(oel('http://gateguruapp.com/'))) is the best friend of those unfortunate souls caught with long layovers and delays. This app provides you with a map of the terminals as well as reviews of restaurants within the airport. However, the most helpful features might be the "tips" section and the average wait time at each terminal's security checkpoint.

[**MyTSA**](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/my-tsa/id380200364?mt=8)

While following an airport on Twitter remains one of the best ways to know about travel delays, this app calculates wait times for clearing security in domestic airports and shows delays across the country. It also offers fun features like current weather and [where TSA PreCheck is available](http://www.forbes.com/sites/alexandratalty/2016/09/19/tsa-warns-of-longer-airport-security-lines-this-fall-heres-how-to-get-through-faster/#70981a064974).

**Mobile Pass**

The Mobile Passport app speeds you through U.S. Customs and Border Protection at 1 cruise port and 20 airports. Just fill out your profile and answer CBP’s questions – then go straight to the “Mobile Passport Control” express lane at the airport! There are currently 21 airports who have this service. PHX does not yet have it but more cities are being added.

**Smart Traveler**

Smart Traveler, the official State Department app for U.S. travelers,   
invites you to see the world with easy access to frequently updated official country information,   
travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more.

**LoungeBuddy**

Looking for a good airport lounge in which to kill time between flights? Whether you're traveling economy or first class, LoungeBuddy ([Android](http://downloads.tomsguide.com/LoungeBuddy,0301-56506.html), [iOS](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/loungebuddy-find-access-lounges/id674176920?mt=8&at=1l3v52U&ct=TomsGuide)) comes to the rescue, helping you find airport lounges in more than 500 airports around the globe. A helpful Lounge Access Wizard allows you enter trip details, service level and any applicable elite benefits or memberships; LoungeBuddy pulls up a list of locations you can access for free or a one-time fee. Users can also filter or search by amenities, as well as view and post reviews and photos to share their experience with other travelers.

[**Café WiFi**](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/cafe-wifi/id1147062241?mt=8)

Digital nomads, rejoice! Finally an app that shows where free WiFi is located.

There is nothing worse than ending up in a chain coffee shop in a new city, just because you need WiFi to send off some emails. (That being said, Starbucks and Dunkin Donuts are great in a pinch.)

Using FourSquare and user generated reviews, Café WiFi maps out local cafes and internet hot spots. The app recently launched so it is better in cities than small countries, but the founders are hoping to expand soon.

**TripIt Your Personal Travel Agent**

TripIt promises to cut back on the travel hassle by consolidating your travel plans into a simple, convenient itinerary. Viewable online and synced to your cell phone, you can also share itineraries with your contacts. You just link your email account to TripIt, and the service will automatically dig through your inbox for reservation confirmations and other forms. Using that data, TripIt builds an organized itinerary of your flight boarding times, hotel check-ins and more. The free app is ad-supported, while the paid version removes ads.

**PackPoint**

PackPoint ([Android](http://downloads.tomsguide.com/PackPoint,0301-59286.html), [iOS](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/packpoint-packing-list-travel/id896337401?mt=8&at=1l3v52U&ct=TomsGuide)) is a travel packing wizard that helps users by providing a checklist of travel essentials that they need to pack, depending on the nature of their trip. Users simply create a trip profile, with their destination, length of stay and purpose of travel. PackPoint then creates a customized packing and luggage checklist that takes into account whether you're traveling for business or pleasure, the type and amount of clothing to pack based on the weather forecast and other factors. The app also comes with a variety of premium features, such as TripIt integration for automatic packing list creation.

**Weather+Free Your Go-To Meteorologist**

Stop trying to decipher the weather forecast on the evening news (particularly when it's in a foreign language). With its simple interface, the [Weather+Free](javascript:void(oel('http://www.itwcalculator.com/online/'))) app informs you (in English) of the climate in multiple locations. It features the local time, temperature, humidity, visibility, wind speed, and other key factors that will inform your decision about what to wear before stepping outside.

**Here WeGo**

Finding your way around a foreign city can be a bit of a challenge, especially if exorbitant roaming data rates keep you from using your favorite mapping application. A good option is Here WeGo, formerly known as Here Maps ([Android](http://downloads.tomsguide.com/HERE-Maps,0301-62830.html), [iOS](http://downloads.tomsguide.com/HERE-Maps,0301-49088.html)). It provides detailed turn-by-turn navigation for more than 1,200 cities in more than 100 countries, which you can also download for easy offline use. Here WeGo comes with support for whatever mode of transport you want to take, such as driving, walking, train or bus; it even includes indoor maps for select public buildings. While other mapping apps may provide more robust features, Here WeGo's offline maps and commute directions make it a great option to avoid roaming data fees.

**Goby, Your Event Guru**

When you're in a foreign city, you sometimes look around and ask: Where are all the people? [Goby](javascript:void(oel('http://www.goby.com/'))) has the answer. This app pinpoints the neighborhood hot spots (including museums, hotels, eateries, and more) in your vicinity. But its true value comes in finding nearby events. You'll discover concerts, plays, and more right around the corner.

**Google Translate, Your Pocket-Size Interpreter**

When your Rosetta Stone education falls short, turn to [Google Translate](javascript:void(oel('http://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.translate&hl=en'))). This app can rapidly translate whole paragraphs of text or even the spoken word. Simply say a phrase in English, and Google Translate will repeat your words in the foreign language of your choice.

**OANDA Currency Converter**

If you're traveling internationally, converting currencies in your head can be painful. By using any standard currency converter on your smartphone, you'll wipe these headaches away. The [OANDA Currency Converter](javascript:void(oel('http://www.oanda.com/mobile/'))) stands out among the rest with its sleek styling and quick ability to factor the typical ATM rate (2 percent) or credit card rate (3 percent) into the conversion.

**XE Currency**

XE is the go-to site for currency conversions on the web, so it’s no surprise that its app is so popular: with over 20 million downloads since launch. It has lots of business-oriented features, such as rates for precious metals and historic currency charts, but for the traveller it is most useful for the simple fact that it’s able to convert every world currency. It also functions offline by saving the last updated rates, which is great if you’re in a place with limited connectivity or trying to save on data.

**Hotel Tonight**

If you're in a crunch to find a hotel for the night, [Hotel Tonight](javascript:void(oel('http://www.hoteltonight.com/'))) might just be your lifesaver. The program works with local hotels in major metropolitan areas to post last-minute room rates for properties with vacancies. A relatively new app, Hotel Tonight's coverage is not quite as expansive as one might hope, but it will only continue to grow.

**Uber**  
  
Getting around a foreign city can be a royal pain, especially if you don't speak the language, don't have any currency, or don't know the etiquette rules for tipping or haggling. Uber eases all these pains and others. With this car service app, you can request a car and tell the driver where to pick you up by dropping a pin on a map. The app gives you a fare estimate for a ride to your destination, and the driver can see it on the map, too. When your ride is over, Uber charges your credit card the right amount, and you don't have to tip. Uber is worldwide, with service [more than 50 countries](https://www.uber.com/cities).

**Skype**

Cell phone carriers tend to make off like bandits when it comes to international charges. Bypass the fees with [Skype](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.skype.raider&amp;hl=en), which routes calls over a Wi-Fi network for $.02 a minute. Calls placed to other Skype accounts, a user base of more than 250 million people, are free of charge.