

# PARIS TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST: EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR A PERFECT VACATION

These simple and organized checklists, created by local Paris tour guide Vadim Hedonist, will help you plan your trip to Paris smoothly.

## 1. Pre-Trip Checklist for Paris

### **Passport & Visa**

- Make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months.
- Check if you need a Schengen visa to enter France.

### **Travel Insurance**

- Get travel insurance that covers medical emergencies, theft, trip cancellations, and lost luggage.

### **Budget Planning**

- Plan your expenses for flights, accommodation, food, attractions, and local transportation.

### **Flights**

- Book your flights early to get the best prices.

### **Book Accommodation**

- Choose and book a hotel or apart-hotel (renting a private apartment in Paris comes with risks—hosts sometimes cancel last-minute for a higher-paying guest, the quality may not match expectations, and authorities are cracking down on illegal rentals, which could lead to eviction).
- Stay in a safe neighborhood close to major attractions to save time and money on transportation. You can download a file with safe and unsafe areas for accommodation on my website.
- Old buildings in Paris rarely have elevators, and if they do, they are often very small (only fit one person with a small bag). Keep this in mind if you have large luggage, a stroller, or mobility needs.
- Many older buildings don't have air conditioning or central heating, and rooms can be as small as 97 sq ft (9 m<sup>2</sup>). If this is important to you, choose a hotel in a modern building and read the listing carefully.

### **Plan Your Days**

- Make a flexible itinerary that balances sightseeing, guided tours, museums, local cuisine, and time to relax.

### **Getting Around in Paris & Apps**

- Download offline maps (Google Maps, Maps.me, for example) to navigate without Wi-Fi.
- Download apps for official taxis like Uber, Bolt, or G7.

### **Public Transport Tickets & Apps**

- The best way to buy metro, bus, tram, and RER train tickets is through a mobile app—no need to stand in line or deal with paper tickets, which often get demagnetized and stop working.
- Download Île-de-France Mobilités or Bonjour RATP to buy and store digital tickets and plan the best routes using different types of transportation.



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### Attractions & Tickets

- Buy tickets in advance for top attractions like the Eiffel Tower and Louvre to skip long lines.

### Money & Currency

- Check exchange rates (Paris currency exchange offices are often less favorable than those at home).
- Inform your bank about your international trip to avoid card blocks.
- Review currency and customs regulations if carrying large amounts of cash or valuables.

### Safety

- Learn about common tourist scams and pickpocketing schemes in Paris. This is always important when traveling to a new country. You can find and download the full list of common scams and safety tips on my website.

### Ask Experienced Travelers

- r/ParisTravelGuide on Reddit is a community where travelers share tips, recommendations, and experiences about visiting Paris. You can ask your own questions or find answers to similar ones.

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## 2. Essential French Phrases for Your Trip to Paris

The French will surprise you with their warmth if you follow a little local etiquette and say just a few words in French. A simple effort goes a long way, and most of the time, they'll happily switch to English after that!

### **Bonjour** (*bohn-zhoor*) – Hello / Good day

Always start a conversation with *Bonjour*. If you skip it, people might see you as rude.

### **Excusez-moi** (*ehk-skew-zay mwah*) – Excuse me / Sorry

This phrase often comes right after *Bonjour* when you're about to ask a question or request something.

### **Vous parlez anglais ?** (*voo par-lay ahn-glay?*) – Do you speak English?

French people appreciate it when you ask before switching to English.

### **Merci beaucoup** (*mehr-see boh-koo*) – Thank you very much

### **Au revoir** (*oh ruh-vwahr*) – Goodbye

### ⚠ **Important:**

Never call a waiter *garçon* (it means *boy* and was used for servants in the past). Instead, simply raise your hand with one finger up and wait for them to notice you. Shouting across the room is considered rude in France.

⚠ If you speak French and want to practice it in Paris, always address strangers with "**vous**," not "**tu**." "**Vous**" is for people you don't know, while "**tu**" is only for friends and family.



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## 3. Packing Checklist for Paris

### Clothing

- Many tourists don't expect cold weather in Paris and leave warm clothes at home—only to end up getting sick or spending extra money on new clothes.
- A pullover, warm sweater, and a windbreaker are essential year-round.
- Summer days can be extremely hot, but mornings and evenings often feel surprisingly chilly, especially near the Seine.
- In winter, the air feels much colder than the actual temperature because of the high humidity.
- If you plan to visit the **Eiffel Tower**, bring a windbreaker—it's much colder and windier at the top than at ground level.
- Rain is common in Paris throughout the year, no matter the season.
- **Layered clothing** is the best choice for any season so you can easily add or remove layers as the weather changes.
- Many tourists regret overpacking trendy outfits because they expect Paris to be all about high fashion. But when they arrive, they realize Parisians dress simply—usually in comfortable, neutral-colored clothes (black, gray, brown) without big logos or flashy designs.

### Shoes

- Parisians wear **comfortable sneakers or ballet flats**.
- The city has a lot of **cobblestone streets**, so heels are impractical.
- **Parks in Paris** often have sand and gravel paths, so people **don't wear open-toe shoes or flip-flops** to avoid getting small stones in their shoes or injuring their feet.

### Accessories

- Umbrella or raincoat – It rains in Paris year-round.
- Sunglasses - The sun in Paris can be very bright at any time of the year.
- Cap or hat – The summer sun in Paris can be very intense.
- Handheld fan – Summers in Paris can reach over 40°C (104°F).

### Travel Essentials

- Power adapter for European outlets
- Portable charger for your phone

### Toiletries

- Travel-size toiletries that meet airline regulations

### Medications

- Pain relievers, stomach medicine, allergy medicine, cold medicine, and any prescriptions you take regularly. In France, it can be difficult to buy common medications without a prescription.

### Documents

- Passport, flight tickets, travel insurance, and copies of important documents.

### Luggage Size & Weight

- Double-check that your luggage meets your airline's size and weight limits.



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## 4. Arrival Checklist for Paris

### Airport Transfer

- Arrange transportation (RER train, direct airport bus, licensed airport taxis "Taxi Parisien," or ride-hailing apps like Bolt, Uber, or G7).
- Never accept rides from people offering taxi services at the airport. They are unlicensed drivers, often overcharge, and can be unsafe.

### Local Currency

- Withdraw or exchange euros for immediate expenses.

### SIM Card / Internet

- For mobile internet, get a tourist SIM card like Orange or Free.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi networks.

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## 5. Sightseeing & Activities Checklist for Paris

### Top Landmarks

- Eiffel Tower, Louvre, Tuileries Garden, Notre-Dame, Montmartre, and Versailles.

### Hidden Gems

- Le Marais, Latin Quarter, Arènes de Lutèce, Shakespeare & Co. bookstore.

### Paris Tours

- Book an engaging walking tour with a local guide to discover the best spots and experience the culture.

### Gastronomic Experiences

- Croissants, baguettes, French pastries, profiteroles, crème brûlée, crêpes, cheese, French onion soup, foie gras, escargots, duck confit, coq au vin, macarons, éclairs, ice cream from Berthillon on Île Saint-Louis, wine, and champagne.

### Restaurants & Cafés

- Reserve tables at iconic restaurants or visit cafés with authentic local cuisine.
- Use TripAdvisor and Google Reviews to find the best places to eat.

### Museums

- Louvre, Musée d'Orsay, Musée de l'Orangerie, Centre Pompidou, Rodin Museum, Picasso Museum, Palace of Versailles.

### Shopping

- Galeries Lafayette, Printemps, Avenue Montaigne, Rue Saint-Honoré, La Vallée Village outlet.

### Entertainment

- Visit the Moulin Rouge cabaret or Disneyland Paris.



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## 6. Pre-Departure Checklist from Paris

### Souvenirs

- If purchasing food items (cheese, butter), antiques, or expensive jewelry, check export rules from France and import regulations in your home country.
- Liquid souvenirs (wine, perfumes) must be in checked luggage if over 100ml due to airline regulations.

### Flight Check-in & Boarding Pass

- Check your airline's policy—some airlines **require** online check-in **24-48 hours before departure** to avoid extra fees at the airport.
- Some budget airlines **require a printed boarding pass** (check their rules to avoid penalties). If needed, you can print it at your hotel's front desk.
- Save a digital copy of your boarding pass on your phone (in your airline's app or Apple/Google Wallet) as a backup.

### Tax Refund (If Eligible)

- If you spent over €100.01 in a single store and are not an EU resident, you may be eligible for a **VAT refund (Détaxe)**. Request the refund form at the store and validate it at the airport kiosk before checking in your luggage.

### Airport Transfer

- Confirm your flight time and book transportation to the airport.
- Allow extra travel time—Paris traffic and security lines can be unpredictable.

### Final Checks

- Double-check your luggage to ensure you haven't left anything behind.
- Check your accommodation thoroughly (outlets, bathroom, under the bed) for forgotten items like chargers, passports, or small valuables.

### Travel Documents & Mobile Readiness

- Keep your tickets, passport, and any necessary travel documents easily accessible.
- Download your airline's app for real-time flight updates and mobile boarding passes.
- If you used a French SIM card, make sure you understand how to cancel or recharge it for future use.

### Snacks & Water

- Bring snacks and a refillable water bottle for the airport—food prices at Charles de Gaulle and Orly can be high, and lines can be long.

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These checklists are designed to simplify your planning process and ensure you have a seamless Parisian adventure!

Make your Paris experience truly unforgettable with these exclusive, insider-led tours by Vadim Hedonist—local Parisian, travel blogger, and expert guide:

✨ [Best Private Walking Tour of Central Paris](#) – Discover world-famous landmarks and hidden gems with a personalized touch.

🎨 [Montmartre Walking Tour – Old Paris Charm](#) – Stroll through the artistic heart of Paris, where legends like Picasso and Van Gogh found inspiration.

📸 [Paris Photoshoot: Iconic Eiffel Tower Views](#) – Capture stunning memories with the Eiffel Tower as your breathtaking backdrop.

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