



MICHIGAN'S PREMIER MOTORCOACH CONNECTION
BETWEEN EAST LANSING, ANN ARBOR
& DETROIT METRO AIRPORT



e-news

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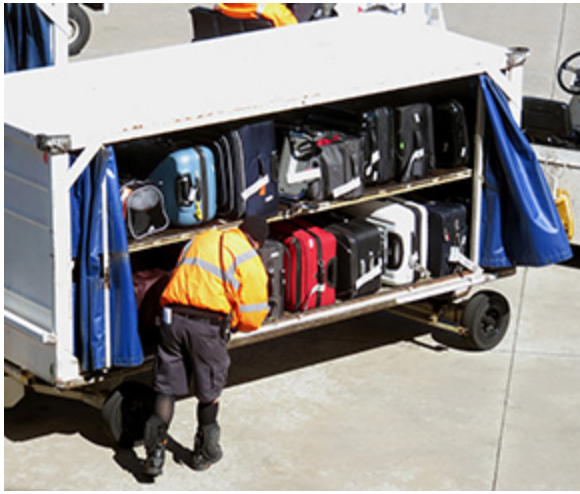
How to Not Become a Big Luggage Loser

Whenever you travel, there's a small—but still very real—chance that your luggage will be lost or stolen.

For example, according to U.S. Dept. of Transportation [statistics for April 2019](#), the major airlines mishandled only 5.4 checked bags out of every 1,000. But to put it another way, 221,032 bags were lost, damaged, delayed or pilfered out of 40,897,703 carried on airplanes that month.

The mode of transportation isn't particularly important. Baggage can disappear whether you're traveling by plane, train, bus, or cruise ship. What's important is knowing how to prevent or minimize a luggage loss, and what to do if it goes missing anyway.

Consider the true story of a woman who bought a roundtrip ticket for a bus ride to a big family event in another state. As she boarded the coach, she checked her suitcase with an attendant. He set it down on the sidewalk nearby and continued loading luggage into the cargo hold. On the way to her destination, the bus stopped in three cities to pick up and discharge other passengers and their luggage. When she finally arrived, she was elated by the warm welcome from family members—but then dismayed to learn that her suitcase was gone, along with \$6,000 in jewelry packed inside.



Was her bag stolen from the curb at the start of her trip, or mistakenly unloaded along the way? There was no telling for sure, just as there probably wouldn't be if your suitcase doesn't show up on the airline's baggage carousel, or if a porter puts it on the wrong train.

In any case, when the bus company failed to find and return the woman's bag after several days, she had a lawyer threaten to sue for \$150,000 to compensate for the actual loss plus her related emotional distress. Unfortunately, the bus company's terms and conditions of service clearly stated that "Liability for lost or damaged interstate checked baggage is limited to the actual value not to exceed \$250 per adult ticket or \$125

per child ticket." So, unless the woman had purchased additional insurance for her luggage (which she had not), she was out of luck for any reimbursement over \$250.

Here are some tips to spare you from lost luggage grief:



1. Know your carrier's luggage liability limits.

Legally speaking, you accept these terms when you become a passenger. For bus companies like Michigan Flyer, Indian Trails, and Greyhound, the maximum liability for all baggage checked on one ticket is typically \$250. Amtrak limits its per-bag liability to \$50 for luggage handled by its Red Cap service, and \$500 per ticketed passenger for checked bags. The luggage liability of U.S. airlines for a lost, damaged or delayed bag is capped at \$3,500 by federal regulation on domestic flights, and at \$1,600 by the Montreal

Convention on most international flights. Of course, damage or loss value must be proven.

2. Don't pack anything valuable in checked bags. That includes things whose monetary value exceeds the carrier's liability limits (such as an expensive watch, jewelry, designer clothing, camera, cash, iPad, laptop computer, smartphone, etc.), as well as irreplaceable documents, heirloom items, or medications you need. Keep your valuables either at home, on your person, or in your carry-on bags (and don't let the latter out of your sight, even when you get to your hotel or other destination.)

3. Take photos of the luggage you plan to check. In the event your bag or other checked luggage is lost or damaged in transit, you'll need to prove its worth in order to get reimbursed. In addition to receipts, photos may be needed to show that your belongings were in fine shape before you handed them over to the carrier. This is especially true for special items such as golf clubs, skis, or an assistive device like a motorized wheelchair.

4. Ensure that you have baggage insurance. If you buy your airplane, bus, train or cruise tickets with a credit card, baggage coverage may well be one of the card's extra benefits. For instance, the basic card might include an insurance plan that will pay up to \$1,250 of the replacement cost of one person's carry-on baggage—or \$500 for checked baggage—per trip, but a maximum of \$250 for "high risk" items like jewelry, sporting equipment, cameras, electronics, and wearable technology. Covered amounts are often higher with "gold" and "platinum" credit cards. In addition, your homeowner or renter insurance policy may cover losses that occur outside the home. Or you could buy a standalone [travel insurance policy](#) that covers lost luggage as well as trip interruptions, flight cancellations, unforeseen medical expenses, and more.

5. Tag all your bags, including carry-ons. Besides your name, include a destination address and cell phone number or email address. Put this information and your itinerary inside each bag, too. That way, if a bag is lost and later recovered, the carrier or hotel can contact you quickly. Also, because many bags look alike, put a special marker of some sort on the outside of yours—a colorful piece of yarn or Day-Glo stickers or tape, for example—so a fellow passenger doesn't walk off with yours by mistake.



6. Don't leave your bags unattended. Airports announce this constantly over their public address systems, and for good reason. Some people do it anyway, only to be sorry later. So, carry your carry-ons with you, keep an eye on your checked luggage until it's loaded onto the bus, and get to the baggage claim area promptly after your flight lands.

7. Get a baggage claim receipt for each checked bag. Not all carriers offer these (shuttle buses, for instance), but the airlines do. In the event of loss or theft, the receipt is proof that the carrier had the bag in

its possession, and indicates where it should have been sent.

8. If your bag is lost or delayed, file a claim promptly. This will start a paper trail that preserves your rights and helps in filing an insurance claim, if need be. Airlines in particular must cover "all reasonable, actual and verifiable expenses related to baggage loss, damage or delay," so be sure to keep your receipts for items you must buy during your trip to replace things that were lost.

9. Be patient and reasonable about compensation. It could take anywhere from a few hours to a month for a carrier to recover your luggage (if it's not lost forever), and longer to reimburse you. At most, you're entitled to the depreciated cost of what you can prove you lost, within the liability limits. Impatience—or worse, anger—is apt to backfire. For example, having a lawyer send them a demand letter will just bump your claim from the carrier's customer service department to its legal counsel. By staying cool, calm, and collected, you can politely negotiate for such things as a refund of your checked baggage fee, free delivery of any luggage that is recovered, cash to cover your trip necessities until then, and perhaps even a voucher for free travel in the future.



Corunna High School 2019 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals team

Kudos to—and from—Odyssey of the Mind

All hail the Corunna High School 2019 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals team! They took first place on Problem #1 (a vehicle challenge) in their division (9th-12th grades or ages 15-18)! The town of Corunna, Mich., rightfully [celebrated their amazing victory with a parade](#), and the team was also honored in local Memorial Day parades.

As [noted last month](#), more than 20,000 students, teachers, parents and volunteers from around the globe had descended upon Michigan State University

for the 40th annual OTM World Finals—an elite, educational problem-solving competition. Among the 894

seven-member teams from 32 states, Africa, and 13 foreign countries, there were about two dozen teams from Michigan grade schools, middle schools, and high schools.

All teams had won coveted invitations to compete in the World Finals by having reached the championship level in state competitions (or the equivalent in other nations.) You can see a list of the [teams from Michigan schools here](#), including how they ranked in problem-solving relative to their peers. The scores and rankings for all participating teams can be found [here](#).



Sparty with Omer, the raccoon mascot of Odyssey of the Mind

Indian Trails and our Michigan Flyer division played a key role in the success of this enormous educational event. We provided dozens of buses to transport thousands of participants from Detroit Metro Airport to East Lansing, all around campus during the event, and then back to DTW when it was over. For that we received an “Omer’s Award” (Omer is OTM’s raccoon mascot) from the event organizers that read as follows:

“The Indian Trails bus drivers went above and beyond to make Odyssey teams and supporters feel at home while on the MSU campus. Their cheerful willingness to

help others showed true Odyssey spirit. They made kids from all over the world feel welcome in a new place and helped ease the stress of travel and competing. They weren’t just drivers with passengers; they became tour guides, cheerleaders, and friends. Thank you Indian Trails!”

Truly, though, it was our privilege and pleasure to be of service.



[5K and Mile Fun Run](#), followed by the annual Jaycees Fourth of July Parade. To see what times we will be stopping at the BTC on Independence Day, use the “Book a Trip” feature on [our website](#).

Travel Alerts

Firecracker 5K on July 4 in Ann Arbor

Michigan Flyer-AirRide will be operating a full schedule on Thursday, July 4. But if you’re heading to Ann Arbor that day, please be aware that some of our coaches will bypass the Blake Transit Center (BTC) downtown and proceed instead to the Kensington Court Hotel. That’s because of morning road closures for the [Firecracker](#)

Trams at DTW’s McNamara Terminal Working Again

Great news for passengers trying to get from point A to point B in the nearly mile-long McNamara Terminal: The driverless, elevated Express Trams, which were down for eight months for \$13 million in repairs and upgrades, are now back in service. The cars operate 21 feet above the A Concourse, ride on an air cushion, and stop at three locations along the 3,700-foot-long track.



Top Coming Events—We Can Get You There

East Lansing



 [Common Ground Music Festival](#), four days of music from Thursday, June 27, through Sunday, June 30, at Adado Riverfront Park in downtown Lansing. This 20th annual festival will feature performances from national, regional, and local acts on two stages. [Tickets](#): including fees, one-day tickets start at around \$60; a full-festival general admission pass at about \$100. Here's the [lineup of performers](#).

The Capital Area Transportation Authority's Route #1 can get you from our location at the East Lansing

Marriott to the Common Ground Festival in about 30 minutes for \$1.25. Find [CATA's Trip Planner here](#).

Note that our schedules make it easy for East Lansing residents to attend events in Ann Arbor, and then return with us the same evening. But for Ann Arbor residents going to evening events in the Lansing area, there's more involved. Our last eastbound run of the day leaves the East Lansing Marriott at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, and at 5:30 p.m. Sunday through Friday. So, folks from A2 would need to stay overnight in East Lansing or arrange alternate transportation home.

Find more local coming events with the Greater Lansing Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar: <http://www.lansing.org/events>

Ann Arbor

 [Ann Arbor Summer Festival](#) continues through July 7 six nights each week starting at 5 p.m. It attracts thousands of people to indoor and outdoor venues across the U-M campus and downtown. The indoor Mainstage series includes ticketed performances of world-class music, dance, theater, and comedy. The outdoor program—Top of the Park—is held along a beautiful campus green and offers free concerts, movies under the stars, open-air spectacles, and family attractions. The vast majority of events are FREE. Indoors, Melissa Etheridge headlines the paid Main Stage program on Wednesday, July 3, at 8 p.m. at U-M's Power Center. Tickets start at \$48.50. See the [full calendar of events here](#).



 [The Ann Arbor Art Fair](#) is one of the largest outdoor art fairs in the nation. From Thursday, July 18 to Sunday, July 21, the streets of Ann Arbor will transform into an art lover's paradise where you can experience and enjoy original works of art, street performances, culinary treats and a variety of sidewalk sales. See the [official guide here](#).

Check the Ann Arbor Area Convention & Visitors Bureau calendar for more local events: <https://www.visitannarbor.org/splash/events>



Help Wanted: Customer Service Agent

The Michigan Flyer Team is looking for a part-time customer service rep to assist in providing excellent service for our large passenger base. The successful candidate will be responsible for making individual and group reservations, answering email and phone inquiries, monitoring the progress of our buses to their destinations, and assisting drivers with passenger check-in and luggage loading during busy travel periods. This person should be a positive self-starter who has the ability to:

- ✍ Work efficiently and effectively in a self-supervised environment
- ✍ Offer a seamless service experience to ensure customer satisfaction
- ✍ Work collaboratively with co-workers in a family-run operation

Based mainly at our headquarters in the East Lansing Marriott, the customer service agent may occasionally be asked to work at our other locations or on the MSU campus. This position, which may be ideal for a college student, offers 15-20 hours per week at \$11.50/hr. during training and \$12/hr. thereafter. Please email resumes to sales@michiganflyer.com by June 28, 2019.



Four Tips for Smarter Travel

- ✍ [Know How to Find us at DTW's McNamara Terminal.](#)
- ✍ [Download Our Free Smartphone App to Track Your Bus in Real Time.](#)
- ✍ [Change Your Own Reservations Online, Sometimes.](#)
- ✍ [Buy an Affordable Travel Insurance Policy.](#)

Help Others by Reviewing Us Online

Please use the review sites below to let others know about your Michigan Flyer-AirRide experience and help them to understand how our service might improve their travels.





Happy 243rd Birthday, America!

On July 4, 1776, America's original 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence drafted by Thomas Jefferson. Ever since, this day has been celebrated with fireworks, parades, picnics and concerts as the birth of our free nation.

Why Drive?

Booking is easy, [click here](#) to view schedules on



Michigan Flyer
333 Albert Street - Suite 214 | East Lansing, MI 48823

www.michiganflyer.com



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