

Family & Parenting

Traveling With Your Nanny

Five tips for vacationing with a caregiver

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Rating: 5.0 (based on 2 reviews)

What an ideal situation—vacationing with a nanny you trust and depend on. It means more down time for you and your spouse and the comfort in knowing your kids are safe and accounted for. It's perfect! Before you throw a trip together, involving both the kids and the nanny, make sure you evaluate the needs and interests of all the parties involved: the parents, the children, and the nanny. It's easy to overlook the fact that the nanny is not on vacation, but working. It's a lot more than providing a free trip to a new and exciting place. While your nanny might appreciate this opportunity, she may encounter some difficulties on her trip. Communication about expectations can drastically help in maintaining a healthy and positive relationship with your nanny before and after the trip.

A lot of nannies and babysitters enjoy taking vacations with families. Although it's quite possible that they will be flexible with compensation because you're paying for the plane ticket and hotel room, never assume and make sure you communicate all expectations beforehand.

When discussing the trip, specific details and criteria must be addressed.

- **Be clear of the time commitment and pay.** If you tell your nanny she is in charge from 9-5 and given a certain addition to her salary, make sure you honor this. Don't assume that she is free to provide her childcare services 24/7. If circumstances arise and she must devote more time and effort than previously decided, first ask if she is willing and if so, provide the extra compensation. Furthermore, it should be clear on what the nanny is responsible for paying on her own. Will she pay for one meal a day or all meals?
- **Be consistent with discipline.** Because the parent is naturally the greater authority, the nanny will leave it up to you to discipline the kids accordingly if you are present. If you decide not to give out consequences for bad behavior, the child may assume the rules don't apply on vacation. This will only make it more difficult for the nanny to control your children and enforce
- **Plan a schedule of activities.** It is extremely hard for a nanny to keep your child entertained and safe especially in an unfamiliar environment. Provide her a list of possible activities that will be enjoyable for both her and your children. The whole day at the hotel arcade and watching HBO movies is not only mundane, but does not take full advantage of all the destination has to offer!
- **Give your nanny time off.** Also, make sure you provide your nanny with the means to enjoy her time off. Give her the keys to your rental or provide monetary compensation and let her explore the city. Allotting her time to relax and enjoy her stay will motivate her to take better care of your children and be eager to accompany the family on future vacations!
- **Reward your nanny.** Whether this involves monetary compensation or a free scuba diving lesson on the trip, make sure your nanny knows you appreciate her work and efforts. A simple gift or hand-written card can convey the same message. It ends the trip on a positive note and leaves your nanny open to future vacations!

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