



Pre-China Checklist:

To complete between Travel Approval and the flight to China

1. Complete all paperwork required by adoption agency at this stage.
2. Book flights to China, remembering that you will fly either into Beijing or your child's province and fly OUT of Guangzhou following your Consulate appointment.
 - a. Adoption Air offered us tickets \$3,000 below the quote we received from other travel agencies for our team's travels to China.
 - b. Try searching for multi-city tickets AND one-way tickets. We were able to purchase two one-way tickets cheaper than one multi-city ticket this time around.
3. Apply for and obtain visas for China travel.
4. Review and approve bookings completed by adoption agency, including hotel bookings, inner-country flights, etc. Pay extra attention to the birth dates, passport numbers, name spellings of each traveler.
5. Take out cash needed for orphanage donation and in-province fees.
6. Notify bank of impending travel so that they don't place locks on your cards or accounts.
7. Call cell phone service provider and arrange for international minutes/plan during travel, if desired.
8. Purchase gifts for officials, nannies, foster families, etc. If desired, write a letter to a special nanny/foster family and get it translated to include in the package.
9. Officially apply for adoption/maternity/vacation leave with employers.
10. Notify any teachers, tutors, coaches or instructors of your upcoming absence or those of your children.
11. Complete any employer adoption reimbursement/financial incentive forms now, while you have two free hands and a full night's sleep.
 - a. The military offers a \$2,000 reimbursement on all adoption expenses. Complete form DD2675 and submit with official adoption decrees once adoption is finalized. Read more [HERE](#).
 - b. Check in with all employers to see if they offer an adoption reimbursement program, and start gathering the official paperwork to submit that now.
12. Download and start completing all forms to register your new child in your employer's healthcare plan. If military:
 - a. Prepare to register child in DEERS.
 - b. Prepare to register child in TRICARE.
 - c. Prepare to register child in EFMP program, if applicable.
13. Research providers accepted by your healthcare plan. Possibly even make an appointment with your PCM for the first two weeks you are home with your superhero. You will need referrals from your child's Primary Care Manager (PCM) in order to receive physical therapy, occupational therapy and any specialty services. Getting into a PCM early helps your child receive the care he/she needs in a timely manner.
14. Research re-adoption options if you want to readopt the child once you return from China. This is not required but will help you obtain a U.S. birth certificate and also legally change the child's name. Start completing any paperwork possible now.

15. Notarize required vaccine release from Consulate. This must be notarized and taken to China in order to maintain your Consulate appointment in Guangzhou.
16. Review any scholarships you've received throughout your fundraising season and submit a copy of the Travel Approval if needed to release the funds.
17. Update will with new child's information.
18. During school year, gather all assignments other superheroes may miss during their travels.
19. During the summer, put together travel binders for your other superheroes to learn about the people and places they are visiting. Make it an educational experience for the entire family.
20. Make list of items to purchase in China (including pearls or jade, if desired, gifts for your child's next 18 birthdays, a special item from his/her province, etc.).
21. Update your address book now. If sending adoption announcements once home, print up mailing labels so they are ready to adhere to envelopes.
22. Attend all medical appointments possible before traveling. Once home, cocooning may prevent you from leaving your child with another caretaker for any period of time to attend one yourself. Consider knocking these off your annual exam list now:
 - a. Eye appointments
 - b. Dental appointments
 - c. Annual exams
23. Attend any personal grooming appointments before travel (barber, hair stylist, nail salon, etc.).
24. Schedule one-month post-placement homestudy visit with your social worker.
25. If you want to keep your superhero's language, research a Chinese tutor and set up lessons/visits with that tutor now. Children lose their language very quickly if it's not maintained.
26. Practice Chinese. Download free Chinese learning apps you can use on the plane to get your Xie Xie on.
27. Research the province where your superhero lives. (Bonus: Assign your other children to research the province for you and give a presentation on the top sights, attractions, foods and exciting history from that province.)
28. Hold mail.
29. Arrange care for pets.
30. Arrange care for house plants or other items you don't want to die while you are away.
31. Arrange a ride to the airport or book remote airport parking to save money.
32. Return all library books and loaned items.
33. Make menu for the week of return and corresponding grocery list. Cut/download coupons for these items now. This way, you can quickly run to the store when you return without having to sit down to make a list.
34. Purchase a VPN and download it to your computer, phone or other devices. You will need one to access social media, Gmail or blog sites while in China.
35. Download the WeChat app, and ask friends and family you want to communicate with to do the same. WeChat is a messaging and video calling app that works well inside China. This will allow you to maintain contact with friends and family back home.
36. Charge all cameras, electronics and devices for plane. Put new batteries in applicable devices.
37. Clean vehicles on inside and out and install car seat for new child, if applicable.
38. Complete oil changes and maintenance items on all vehicles now.
39. Clean the house.
40. Wash and iron all the laundry. (You'll need an open washer when you return.)
41. Write and send all birthday/anniversary/special occasion cards for the time you will be out of the country. (Consider writing next month's, too, while you are still well rested.)

42. **Pack. Remember that all items must fit inside one checked 44-pound suitcase and one 10-pound carry-on per person for inner-country flights.**
43. **Gather all documents needed for travels. Take copies of homestudy reports, passports, taxes, Travel Approval and all U.S.C.I.S. forms.**
44. **Gather all medications may need in China, including lice shampoo for child, allergy medications, probiotics/anti-antidiarrheal, Motrin/Tylenol and melatonin as a sleep aid, etc.**
45. **Update blogs, Facebook pages and social media with travel schedule, if desired.**
46. **Update all biography pages with the *new* number of superheroes on your team.**
 - a. **Social media bios**
 - b. **Website bios**
 - c. **Professional bios**
 - d. **Other bios**
47. **Make a welcome kit for the child upon return home and place it on his/her bed. (This is what we put in ours.)**
 - a. **New bedtime book**
 - b. **Children's Bible**
 - c. **Flashlight**
 - d. **New PJs**
 - e. **Stuffed animal**
 - f. **Superhero cape**
 - g. **Room filled with latex balloons on the ground**
48. **Write a letter to the new child.**
49. **Journal.**
50. **Set aside time to honor the superheroes already in your home. Soon, life will largely revolve around bonding, transition and attachment, as well as a whole lot of medical appointments. Set your team up for success by spending quality time together valuing each individual member now.**

MORNING OF TRAVELS

51. **Pack phone cords, chargers and charged devices.**
52. **Pack last-minute toiletry/makeup/hair items.**
53. **Place vacation messages on email accounts.**
54. **Add an out-of-area or vacation message to voicemail on cell phone.**
55. **Clean out fridge and freezer. Throw away any food that will expire while you're away.**
56. **Turn off air conditioning/heat.**
57. **Unplug unnecessary appliances.**
58. **Lock all doors.**
59. **Pull all blinds.**
60. **Empty all trash cans (and take trash to dump to prevent the garage from smelling like death before you return).**
61. **Triple check for passports and ID for each traveler.**
62. **Triple check all adoption documents needed, including notarized vaccine form for Consulate.**
63. **PRAY! For your superhero's heart and yours. You're about to embark on the greatest adventure of your life.**