



## Traveling by Air with Your Metal Detector (s)

The question that frequently comes up is: can I take a metal detector on an airplane? Yes you can but you should follow some basic steps and guidelines.

One thing to keep in mind is that the electronics on any device whether it is a metal detector or some other electronic device is very delicate and must be treated with great care. I usually travel with three detectors and all the related detecting gear. We do both competition and beach detecting with different detectors and equipment required for each detecting situations.

The following guidelines have been very successful for me so they should work for anyone.

The first thing I do is breakdown all the detectors into the greatest number of components as possible – this means if possible all electronics are removed from the handle assemblies. All the handles are broken down into three sections with the coils removed. I also gather up all the associated tools that will be needed such as headphones (always carry a spare), target recovery tools (scoops, probes, a knife), recovery pouch, gloves, knee pads, search coils (2 different size coils for one of the detectors) and batteries. **(NOTE: If batteries are removed from equipment, black electric tape the ends over per TAS requirements).**

Next select the carry on luggage that you will use to house the detector electronics, the most expensive and delicate part of the metal detector. My primary piece of luggage for this purpose is a 20"x13"x8" soft expandable carry on with rollers (see **airline guidelines** at the end of the article). You can usually get up to five sets of electronics in this luggage size plus a couple of coils and a headset or two. Wrap the electronics in light towel-like material and pack with care so as not to cause damage to any detector display during transportation. If by chance you should be required to check the luggage it should be packed to handle the beating it will get by the airlines. **(NOTE: No tools, metal probes or other sharp objects in the carry on, I suggest leaving out the handle assembly.)**

The next step is to select a piece of luggage for all the related metal detecting gear. This gear will consist of coils, headphones, handle assemblies, recovery tools, batteries, etc. You must keep in mind the weight factor (50lbs per check in piece of luggage) and the cost of checking luggage these days. Here, I use 28"x18"x10" expandable piece of soft luggage. This should easily handle all the associated detecting gear and provide room for personal items.

My recommendation is to also provide a sheet of paper or two in each piece of luggage explaining to the TSA agent who may check the luggage what this strange looking gear (pictures on the paper explain a lot) is all about. However, the TSA agents are becoming accustomed to seeing such gear pass through their X-ray equipment so this may not be necessary. Recently, I started to carry the detector owner's manual in the carry on luggage just in case I need to explain what the gear is to the TSA agent.

By following these steps and guidelines you should get your metal detectors safely to your destination without any problems.



**Airline guidelines:** Carry on luggage guidelines for flights on most US Domestic Flights, Transatlantic Flights, Flights within Europe, Asia &

South Pacific, And International South American Flights. The guidelines for one carry-on bag is (L"+W"+H") which must equal 45 inches total, and the luggage measurements are 22"+14"+9"=45" and the bag must weigh less than 40 lbs. Some US Discount Airlines require carry on luggage under 41" (20"+13"+8") and weigh less than 40 lbs.



**TSA Battery Suggestion:** Keep batteries and equipment with you or in carry-on baggage - not in your checked baggage! In the cabin, flight crew can better monitor conditions, and have access to the batteries or device if a fire does occur.