



**INTERNATIONAL
AIR TRAVEL**



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PRE-FLIGHT PREPARATIONS

Flight Confirmations (1-2 Weeks before flight)

- Call airline to confirm ticket along with details of flight timings, stopovers (transit airport, duration of halt) etc.
- Try to get seat allotted (in non-smoking economy-class) at aisle/window as per your preference.
 - * Better to prefer Aisle (passage-side) seat for easy movement to bathrooms, leg-stretch room etc., even though Window seat is visually more entertaining.
 - * Sometimes seats may be allotted at time of check-in
- Confirm your food preferences—‘Asian Vegetarian meal’
- Confirm requirement for “Wheelchair service with Attendant”

1-2 Days before flight

- Take as much rest as possible. The journey can be tedious!
- Make sure all documents and tickets are in order; and address labels inside and out all baggage.
- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration/tiredness.
- Eat well.
- Make final phone calls/ other arrangements (complete flight details to us and Sethu Uncle).
- Re-Read and get familiar with all the following instructions.

DAY OF FLIGHT

How to Dress for Flight

- Chennai will be hot, so wear a full-sleeved *cotton* shirt (you can keep your sleeves rolled up till the time you get on the plane)
- Keep your sweater/jacket and muffler within easy reach in your carry-on bag—you may require it on the flight or in the transit or destination airport where it *may* be cooler.
 - * Blankets will be provided on the flight and you can always ask for extra blankets if required.
- Wear socks and shoes as these are most comfortable.
 - * Sandals/Chappals are okay but you may feel cold in the transit / destination airports. The long hours of sitting may cause swollen feet in which case, you may take off the shoes during the flight.

Before Leaving for Airport

- Double check all documents, baggage etc.
- Use the bathroom! (You may not see a clean bathroom till you board the plane!) ☺

At the Airport

A. Check-In & Baggage Procedure

1. Be at the airport atleast 3 hours before flight departure.
2. As you reach the airport you will see the boards indicating airline terminals. Locate and go to your airline's terminal
 - * International airports are usually divided into 2 sections **top floor** for departures and ground floor for arrivals.
 - * Departures might be divided into different sections for each type of airline. If necessary, check with an airport official which terminal you should go to.
3. Get a luggage trolley and seek help to load your bags.
 - * Once you go inside, you cannot come out. So, if you reach very early, spend some time outside with person(s) accompanying you to airport.

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1. Show your **Tickets** and **Passport** to Security personnel and Go in with your luggage trolley.
2. Your bags will be passed through the X-ray machine.
 - * DO NOT lift the bags yourself. Get help! (Keep some cash handy—in small change—for tips, if required.)
 - * Your bags may be sealed with a tape at this point.
3. Reload the bags in the trolley and move to the airline counter for Check-in.
 - * Keep Tickets and Passport handy.
4. While you wait in line, prepare the address labels that you get at the counter.
 - * You will need one address label for each piece of baggage (including hand baggage).

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1. At the check-in counter, you will need to submit your **Tickets** and **Passport**.
2. After checking your Tickets and Passport, your bags will be weighed; destination stickers put on, and sent in for cargo loading.
 - * This is the last you see of your big suitcases till you land in San Francisco!
 - * You may be asked two questions "Did you pack the bags yourself? (Answer is "Yes"). Did anyone give you anything to carry? (Answer is "No").
 - * Tell them again about your Wheelchair requirement, window/aisle seat in non-smoking area, and vegetarian food.
 - * Double check with them if your baggage will be automatically transferred directly to San Francisco on the same airline flights that you will be flying.

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1. You will be given back:
 - * **Tickets and Passport**
 - * **Boarding Pass with Baggage Identification tags/stickers**

Keep these documents safely.

1. You will be told the *Gate Number* which will be mentioned on your Boarding Pass too (“Gate” is where plane is ‘parked’—similar to “Platform” in Railway Station!).

You should also get an

- * **Embarkation form** which looks like this:

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA EMBARKATION CARD (Please use capital letters only)	
Name Mr./Ms./Mrs.	_____
Surname	_____
Other Names	_____
Date of Birth (D/M/Y):	_____
Place and country of Birth.	_____
Nationality:	_____
Passport No.:	_____
Place of Issue:	_____
Date of Issue (D/M/Y)	_____
Address in India:	_____
Port of Disembarkation:	_____
Flight No.:	_____
Immigration Stamp	
Signature of Passenger	

10. Ask which way to go next / **Get Wheelchair assistance.**
 - * At this point, you may get Rupees exchanged to Dollars from the *Foreign Exchange Counter*. (Ask

where) Collect \$50 or \$100 at the airport (part of it in \$1). Carry Rs.1000 per head along with you.

- * Keep your tickets, Passport, boarding pass and Embarkation card carefully.

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B. Immigration Check

1. With your hand baggage and other documents kept safely, go to “ Immigration Check” counter
2. Give your Passport along with any other documents you are asked for (Embarkation Card?)
 - * Keep your handbag near your (in wheelchair/on lap).
3. You will be questioned about the purpose of your journey.
 - * Answer clearly and to the point.
4. Ask which way to go next.

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C. Customs Check

6. Next you will go for CUSTOMS Check. You will be asked if you have anything to declare. Just tell them you have only Clothes and miscellaneous personal belongings.
7. Ask which way to go next.

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D. Boarding the Flight

8. Proceed towards the Gate indicated on the Boarding Pass.
 - * All departure flight gates are on lower level.

You might have lot of time before flight takes off. There are places to sit while waiting. You may also take a look at the shops. If feeling very sleepy/tired, tell a co-passenger or wheelchair assistant to wake you up at boarding time.

- * Keep Passport and important documents safely.

- * From now till you land in San Francisco you will need to keep only your BOARDING PASSES handy.

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8. When it is time to board the plane, you will go in for SECURITY CHECK.
 - * Here they will scan every person (gents and ladies separate) and X-ray your hand baggage.
9. Then you have to wait in a hall till they make announcement for Boarding.
 - * Normally people are allowed to go in the airplane in following order: Handicapped, First Class, Last rows, Middle Rows, and Front Rows. If you are in Wheelchair, you will be one of the first to go in.
10. Keep your Boarding Pass handy to check for seat number as you enter the plane.
 - * You may give a 'tip' to the Wheelchair assistant if he leaves at this point.
11. Airhostess will help you locate your seat, if not, ask.
 - * Put your hand-baggage in overhead compartment (under seat in worst case).

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8. As the other passengers are being seated, get your bearings and enjoy the comforts!
 - * If you need anything, just ask the air hostess/flight attendant. They are very helpful and you should not have any problem at all. Find out where the "restrooms" (bathrooms) are if required.

D. Take Off

- Secure your seat belt and keep it on till the plane has reached required altitude. (Look for 'seat belt on' indicator light—usually overhead)
- Due to atmospheric pressure difference your ears will feel blocked and you may experience motion sickness.

- * Keep the lemon handy and yawn, swallow or suck on any candies etc provided by airhostess to clear the ears.
- Pray for a safe flight!! (I always do!) ☺

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DURING THE FLIGHT

General Tips

- Relax and Enjoy!! If very tired or sleepy, rest and get as much sleep as possible.
- All the announcements are in English and also in the official language of the country of the airline. If you don't understand anything ask flight attendant or co-passenger.
- Anytime you need the flight attendant you can press the relevant button in your seat controls (usually on arm rest—on top or side)
- Keep applying moisturizing lotion on exposed portions of skin as the low atmospheric pressure causes dehydration.

Food

- Food will be provided every few hours (starting shortly after take off).
- You don't have to finish everything. Just eat what you like.
- You can always ask for something to eat or drink whenever you are very hungry or thirsty.
- Make sure you have Vegetarian food in your tray, especially if you are very particular!
- Drink plenty of fruit juice as you are likely to get dehydrated. Food and drinks are free and you can ask for them whenever you need to.

Restrooms (Bathrooms)

- 3-6 restrooms are provided in each section of the airplane (business class, smoking & non-smoking economy class).
- Airplane restrooms tend to be very small. If you feel too cramped, look for the restroom with the handicapped sign as this may be little bigger.
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- To operate the sink tap push down on top of handle or just place your hands in the sink to activate the 'sensor'!
- Your flights may have following supplies in the bathroom (no guarantees): Moisturizing lotion, soap, facial tissues, paper hand towels, toilet paper/tissue, toilet seat covers, toothpaste-toothbrush, cologne etc.

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- Before sitting on potty (toilet) it is advisable to cover the seat with the disposable (paper) toilet seat cover that is provided somewhere on the wall behind the potty (commode).
 - You will have to get used to using a toilet paper for cleaning yourself.

TIP: Pull out about half-an-arm's length of paper, fold it repeatedly to a useful size, wet it slightly under the sink tap and then use it like a wet towel to wipe yourself.

- To flush toilet look for lever handle or a button anywhere near the potty. Some potty's have 'sensors' that automatically flush when you get up from the seat!
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- Toward later part of flight the bathrooms tend to become dirty and supplies may run out and may not be replenished. So, try to use restrooms more during earlier part of flight.

Keeping Occupied

- Get familiar with your co-passenger(s).
- During portions of the long flight, the lights may be turned off and windows closed to encourage sleep. Try to sleep!
- To prevent swollen feet walk around the plane whenever you can
- Watch in-flight movies or listen to music (headphones are provided).
- Read in-flight magazine or a book of your own.
- Be Happy! ☺

TRANSIT AIRPORT

There will be at least one international stop on your way to the U.S.

Before Landing

- Generally passengers are required to get down at the transit airport, whether for Security checkup or for cleaning the airplane.
 - * You may continue in the same airplane with different flight number or (more likely) change the airplane entirely.
- Listen to the in-flight announcements made before the international halt.
 - * Ask co-passenger/air hostess if you do not understand anything.
- Request/remind flight attendant for “Wheel chair service with Attendant” for the flight change.

In the Airport

- Take your hand baggage with you when you get down.
- Look for TV monitors giving information about your next flight’s departure time, gate number etc.
 - * Normally the halt is for a few hours. This information also may be on the boarding pass. Airport or airline staff can also help you find out your Terminal and Gate number for the next flight.
- Locate the Terminal and Gate for your next flight.
 - * International airports are usually very large but they normally have good directions/maps.
 - * Locating the Terminal and Gate for your next flight might take a long time. In some cases you may need to take an *Inter Terminal Rail* for transfer to another Terminal and/or Gate.
 - * Your Wheelchair assistant should be able to help you with the transfer, otherwise you can also ask airport staff about how to go to the gate.

- Once you locate the gate, if you have more than 1 hour time before boarding the next flight, you may spend some time looking around the shops in the airport or freshen up in the restrooms.
 - * Be sure to keep track of time! Plan your activities keeping time of next flight in mind.
 - * Unless halt time is too long, you *may not* need to eat anything as you get enough to eat on the flight.

Make sure you reach the Gate of your next flight at least **45 mins. to one hour before take-off** as they may require to check your tickets etc.

Be sure to consider only the *local time at the airport - Adjust your watch* to show the time of the transit country.

- In case of any emergency, ask for help and /or try to contact us!

Boarding your next (Connecting) Flight

- You have to go through Metal Detectors and X-ray your hand-baggage again.
- Once you get in, you are all set to take off for the final destination!
 - * This could be the most tedious phase of the journey. Try to humor yourself and keep occupied with the tips given earlier (see “Keeping Occupied”)
 - * Try to sleep towards last part of journey (it will help you to get over faster the jet lag that you will experience once you are here!)

ARRIVAL IN THE US

Before Landing

- Keep your watch in sync with current US time zone.
- Before landing in US port-of-entry (the international airport where you first land in US—San Francisco in your case), you will be given two forms on the flight well ahead of landing in the US:
 - * **I-94 Arrival-Departure Record**
 - * **Customs Form** (see enclosed samples.)
- Fill these forms in capital letters. (TYPE or PRINT means ‘write in capital letters’.) Ask co-passenger/ flight attendant for any help if required.
- Request/remind flight attendant for “Wheel chair service with Attendant” for the flight change.

How to Proceed

- Take all your belongings including hand-baggage and start walking towards Immigration Check. Follow the signs for “Non-Immigrants”.
- Keep the two filled forms and Passport ready. Also keep all other papers ready in case required (our Green Cards, Invitation letter, etc)

A. Immigration

- When asked for, give you **Passport** and **I-94** form.
- You may be asked some simple questions such as : *How long you will stay? What is the purpose of your trip? Where will you stay?* Keep you answers simple and absolutely to the point such as *"6 months", "Visiting my daughter's family", "with my daughter's family"*.
- Your passport will be stamped giving you permission to stay for six-months (for visitor visa holders).
- The bottom part of the I-94 (Departure Record) will be stapled in your passport.
 - * It will be stamped with the date of your last permitted day of stay in the US. Your stay after that

day in US is illegal. Be very careful not to lose the I-94!

Many people who come here on Nonimmigrant Visa are confused regarding the duration for which they can stay legally in the United States. The Visa is used just to enter the United States. You can enter United States at any period during the validity of the visa. (Whether you enter once or multiple times depends on whether your Visa is 'single entry' or 'multiple entry'.) At the port of entry, the immigration officer determines the duration for which you can stay in the United States. And that is the legal period for which you can stay. So if you are coming on a Visitor Visa that is expiring next month and the immigration officer grants you a six-month stay, then you can stay here for six months!

A. Baggage Claim

- Try to acquire some 25-cent coins (called "quarters"), which you may need for getting a trolley cart for your baggage and also for making telephone calls etc.
- Thereafter move toward the baggage claim carousel assigned to your flight, simply following the signs directing you to the place.
- Collect your luggage and look for signs directing you to customs clearance.

A. Customs Check

- Push your trolley towards customs.
- Customs officer may enquire about the contents of your baggage.
 - * Give a simple and clear reply that you are carrying only clothes and personal belongings.

NOTE: California is very strict about not allowing foodstuffs that may have potential to grow into plants. If you are carrying any fruits please throw them away before going for the customs check or just declare them to the customs officer. Cooked or preserved foods (such as snacks, pickles) are okay but declare them anyway.

- If asked to open the bag for a security check/verification, just co-operate. They are mainly looking for drugs etc.

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- The officer will clear you by stamping on your Customs form and *keep it with him*.
- Come out of nearest door with your baggage trolley. And say to yourself "WELCOME TO USA".

We will be there eagerly looking for you! ☺

In case of any delay on our part, seek help to make a call!

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

AIRPORT SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

			
Wheelchair access	Restrooms	Stairs	No Smoking
			
Directions	Elevator	Exit	Emergency Exit

US CURRENCY

100 Cents/Pennies = 1 Dollar

25 Cents/Pennies = 1 Quarter

10 Cents/Pennies = 1 Dime

5 Cents/Pennies = 1 Nickel

MAP of SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**REACHING US** *(in case of unforeseen circumstances)***To make call from Airport, Dial:**

1-xxx-xxx-xxxx for Ramesh & Tejashree Uppala

Emergency Contact:

1-xxx-xxx-xxxx for Rajesh & Rupali Bansal

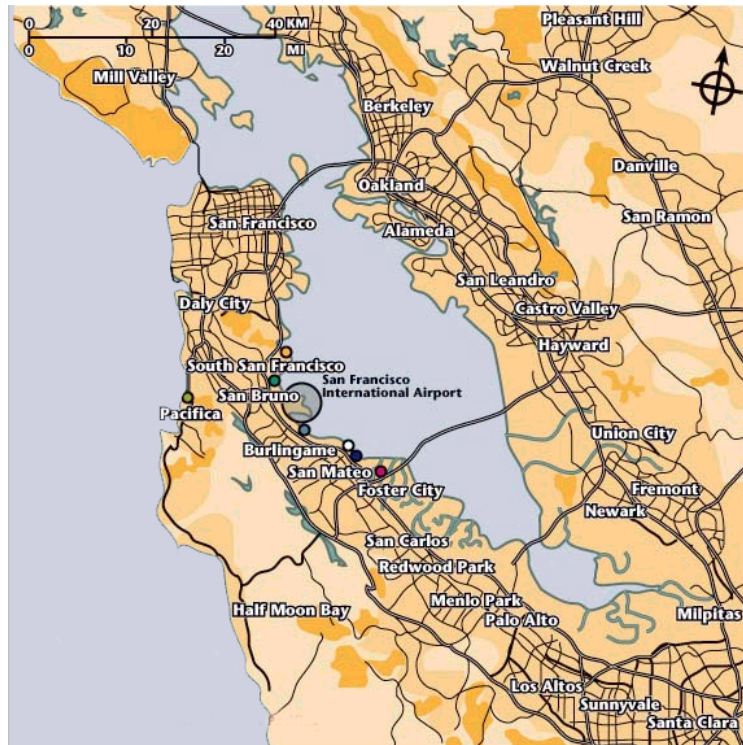
Our Address:

Ramesh & Tejashree Uppala
 35739, Ballantine Place
 Fremont
 CA-94536

Driving Home:

Seek help from Airport authorities to arrange an 'Airport Shuttle Service' (These are vans which will drop you at our place for free). Alternately, you may ask for Cab (taxi) service (for which you will need to pay.)

DRIVING DIRECTIONS



1. Take the US-101 S ramp towards SAN JOSE.
2. Merge onto US-101 S.
3. Take the MARSH RD exit towards ATHERTON.
4. Turn LEFT onto MARSH RD.
5. Turn RIGHT onto BAYFRONT EXWY.
6. BAYFRONT EXWY becomes CA-84 E.
7. Stay straight to go onto DECOTO RD.
8. Turn RIGHT onto PASEO PADRE PKWY.
9. Turn RIGHT onto TAMAYO ST.
10. Turn LEFT onto BALLANTINE PL.

Total Estimated Time: 36 minutes

Total Distance: 28.58 miles

QUESTIONS

What should I do if my plane is late in arriving and this causes me to miss a connecting flight?

- If you've already missed your flight, go first to the personnel of the Airline that caused you to miss your flight.
- They should help you get rebooked with a new ticket.
- They may also help with some of the extra expense and/or provide you with a meal or hotel voucher if necessary.

Will the Airline always help me if a late plane caused me to miss my next flight?

- Hopefully, for good customer service, they will at least assist you. But if you have booked your flights too close together, within an hour or two, you might find you have created your own problem and the Airlines won't cover your costs.
- You'll need to check with the individual Airlines about the minimum check-in time to connect to another flight.

What health information should I carry with me?

- Complete and take with you a personal medical history. Your doctor should be able to help you complete the history. It should include:
- Your Insurance Company's name and address.
- Trip Insurance contact information.
- Contact person in case of emergency.
- Your blood type.
- A copy of your eyeglass prescription.
- A list of current medications with their generic names, brand names can vary in foreign countries.
- A list of allergies, including any known food or drug allergies.
- A list of immunizations with their dates.
- A basic description of your past and present medical condition, including past hospitalizations and any current problems.

