Lights. Camera. Packing?

Audio Visual production professionals often travel with gear that could be considered DANGEROUS GOODS and HAVE RESTRICTIONS for air travel. Before packing, check the PackSafe chart and your products’ Safety Data Sheets to see what you can and cannot bring as carry-on or checked baggage onboard an aircraft. Below is a summary of gear and how to pack it.

A passenger may not transport a hazardous material (dangerous good) in checked or carry-on baggage unless the material meets one of the exceptions in Code of Federal Regulations Title 49 part 175.10.

• LARGE BATTERIES OF 25 WATT HOURS (WH) AND HIGHER:
  • Limitations:
    - Lithium-ion (rechargeable) batteries are limited to a rating of 100 Wh per battery. No quantity limits. Pack in carry-on bag.
    - With airline approval, passengers may also carry up to two spare larger lithium-ion batteries (101-160 Wh) in their carry-on bag.
    - Batteries with a rating HIGHER THAN 160 WH ARE PROHIBITED on aircraft regardless of quantity or bag location.
  • Identify your battery strength:
    - Most cameras take large batteries with watts anywhere from 30 Wh – 250 Wh.
    - Many newer batteries have Wh listed on the battery itself. If not, you can calculate the Wh: WH = VOLTS (V) X AMPERE HOURS (AH).
  • Store and protect batteries from damage and short circuit:
    - Battery PROTECTION COULD INCLUDE covering terminals with tape, storing each battery in a separate bag, or keeping them in original packaging.
    - External chargers, power banks, and other spare, uninstalled or detached lithium-ion and lithium metal batteries, MUST BE PACKED IN CARRY-ON BAGGAGE ONLY. When a bag is checked at the gate or at planeside, keep all spare lithium batteries with you in the aircraft cabin.
    - All battery-powered devices are recommended to be in carry-on bags.
    - When devices containing lithium metal or lithium-ion batteries (laptops, cameras, smartphones, tablets, etc.) must be packed in checked baggage, they should be TURNED COMPLETELY OFF, protected from accidental activation, and packed so they are protected from damage.
• SMALL CONSUMER BATTERIES / AA, AAA, ETC.:
  - Dry alkaline/rechargeable battery terminals should always be protected.
  - Lithium-ion/metal batteries have limits (check the PackSafe chart), should always be protected, and spares cannot be in checked bags.

• DRONES:
  - Check with airlines on their policies and restrictions as each airline’s policies may differ.
  - Battery size limitations apply (see above and/or the PackSafe chart).
  - Ensure drone is off and protected from activation.
  - Spare batteries should be protected and in carry-on bags.

• LARGE TRIPODS, STANDS, CASES, ETC.:
  - Special check-in procedures for oversized items and very heavy items over 50 lbs. may apply. Check with your airline.

• LENS CLEANER WIPES:
  - These are allowed in both checked and carry-on bags.

• LENS CLEANER FLUID:
  - If it contains alcohol, check the transportation section of the manufacturer’s Safety Data Sheet.
  - Most are not regulated. However, TSA’s liquid limitations of 3.4 ounces for carry-on bags do apply.

• LENS/EQUIPMENT CLEANER – COMpressed AIR:
  - Checked bag only
  - The total aggregate quantity per person cannot exceed 2 kg (70 ounces) or 2 L (68 fluid ounces). The capacity of each container must not exceed 0.5 kg (18 ounces) or 500 ml (17 fluid ounces).

• MULTI-TOOLS:
  - Small knives or scissors for cutting must be checked.

• LIGHT BULBS:
  - Some types may be regulated if they contain mercury; check with the manufacturer’s Safety Data Sheet.

• FIND MORE AT faa.gov/go/packsafe