

# B E C O M E N O M A D

*Resources for Those Choosing  
a Nomadic Lifestyle*

*by*

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# Table of Contents

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<i>Getting Started</i> .....	3
Getting Started .....	3
Necessary nomad skills .....	5
Necessary steps before switching to nomad .....	7
<i>Nomad Revenue Sources</i> .....	9
How to become a Nomad entrepreneur .....	9
Digital Nomad Jobs .....	13
<i>How to Travel Cheap</i> .....	15
Long term travel on the cheap .....	15
Ways of getting cheap flights .....	18
Staying Longer Saves Money .....	21
Avoid getting overcharged as a tourist .....	22
<i>Nomad Social Life</i> .....	24
Best travel destinations to meet people .....	24
How to Meet Tourists While Travelling .....	26
Meeting Locals While Traveling .....	28
Choosing the right companions while traveling alone .....	30
Having a Relationship While Being on the Move: Is it Possible? .....	32
<i>Explore Where You Are</i> .....	33
Improving orientation in new places .....	33
Getting to Know the Place .....	35
<i>Nomad Philosophy</i> .....	37
What is lifestyle design? .....	37
Disadvantages of a Nomadic Lifestyle .....	39
Nomad quotes .....	42
Yom Kippur spirituality and nomad philosophy .....	44
Advantages of a Nomad Lifestyle .....	46
Different Types of Nomads .....	48
Avoiding Attachment: The Only Way To Be Free .....	50
Nomad Historical Figures .....	52
Freedom from Being Defined by Others (and Yourself) .....	54

Spiritual and Cultural Exposure While Traveling.....	56
How Often Should I Move? .....	58
Can You Be Nomad While Staying in the Same Place? .....	59
<i>Nomad Tips</i> .....	61
How to choose the next travel destination .....	61
Going Back to the Same Place, or Going to a New Place?.....	63
Sleeping in the Car.....	64
Tips for Staying Sane On-The-Move .....	65
Living a Nomadic Lifestyle .....	67
Digital Nomad Lifestyle .....	69
<i>Security and Belongings</i> .....	70
Risks of Travelling.....	70
Securing Your Belongings .....	72
<i>Nomad Interviews</i> .....	74
Boat hitchhiking and nomadic life .....	74
Earl Baron- More than 5,000 days on the road .....	75
<i>Community post</i> .....	77
Digital nomad case study .....	77
Most influential travel blog posts.....	81
What does a Nomad need?.....	81
<i>Freelancing</i> .....	84
Disadvantages of Coworking .....	84
Different Coworking Types .....	86
Advantages of Coworking .....	88

# Getting Started

## Getting Started

Spending time on preparation for travel will greatly increase the chances of fully enjoying traveling while avoiding those scary Oops moments of “I really wish I would have taken care of this while at home”. Here’s a to do list of preparation for travel in order to have a much smoother travelling experience:

- **Passports.** When reviewing your passport, check the expiry date. Some countries won’t let you in if your passport expires in six months, so make sure it’s valid for longer than your scheduled return, and if not, renew it. Check there’s enough blank pages for all the stamps and visas. Check it’s in good shape, too – if it looks suspiciously old, you might have problems at the borders.
- **Visas.** Check the regulations at your destination countries. Visa requirements and conditions will probably affect your travel itinerary (due to the limitation for the length of stay and expiry dates), so it is well worth the time to research before traveling. Sometimes you can only get a visa in embassies in your own country, so you have to arrange it at home, and not while on the move.
- **Credit cards.** This is the safest and most comfortable method to get money so it’s essential to keep credit cards checked. Know their expiry dates. If they’re almost out, take the opportunity to change them and try getting some extra benefits in the meantime (negotiate less commissions for ATM withdrawal, currency conversion, and monthly fixed fees). Check that your credit card will be usable wherever you’re looking to go (Visa and Mastercard are most commonly accepted). Check the shape your card’s in too, you don’t want it to fall apart in a cash machine. Consider carrying a backup card, and make sure you have enough actual credit too for your travelling budget.
- **Travel insurance.** Usually you can only sort this out when you’re at home, insurance companies won’t often consider insuring you while already travelling. Travelling insurance is well worth the expense. Read the fine print, know what it covers and what it doesn’t. Does it cover your belongings? Does it cover riding on a motorbike? Choose a good plan that’ll cover wherever you’re looking to go, and whatever you’re looking to do.
- **Flights.** Pick a good one in advance, take your time to browse for a wider variety of quality and prices. Don’t wait for the last moment, as good prices usually appear when you are flexible with dates and locations.
- **Bureaucracy.** Sort out bank pending issues, sign necessary papers, arrange your taxes, social insurance, paid subscriptions and cancellations. Also, read all your mail that you received while you’ve been away and check how to switch from receiving physical mail to emails from banks and other companies.

- **Equipment.** Take the time to check the specific characteristics of your next stop (like health issues and weather), to make sure you have the necessary equipment relevant for your destinations.
- **Backup your data.** Constantly making backups for your data while on the move is critical and you can do so by using the cloud services and external drives. However, when at home, take advantage of finally having a secured physical location, and backup your important information and files on physical copies that should be left at home before leaving. (DVD, external drive, your PC)
- **Health issues.** It's cheaper and simpler to get all your health matters sorted at home. Doing it abroad is riskier and there are more barriers (money, language, culture, etc). Don't delay, and don't leave it for the future when you're out of your comfort zone. Take your relevant vaccinations, make sure you're stocked up on necessary medicines. We already talked about the risks of getting medicine abroad, it's a lot better to sort this out while at home.
- **Family and Friends maintenance.** Nomads don't usually spend much time in their home base, so use the time wisely. Catch up with your friends, spend time with close family. Since time is limited, and friends are sometimes plentiful, organizing meetings with various people will save you time and make you a nomad social star. Staying with your parents or close family in the short period you are at home might be the best way to go if you can keep your sanity while doing so (it saves you money and allows you to spend more time with them).
- **Revenue sources.** Sometimes you'll have to stay a little longer and save up – you already know people and have the right contacts to work a bit and stock up on cash. Make sure you have enough for your next round of travelling.
- **Travelling at home.** Usually, we nomads don't regard our homes as a travel base, but why not? You'll probably be able to borrow a car, go camping, set out and explore the corners of your own country that you perhaps haven't seen before.

So that's your crucial preparation for travel checklist. Us nomads always get itchy feet – but coming home is important emotionally and administratively. Just don't forget to get back on the road when the time is right!

## Necessary nomad skills

Discussing the necessary skills a nomad needs in order to maintain a happy and balanced lifestyle is important since this lifestyle is probably not the best option for most of us. You should probably consider to pursue a nomadic path if you have a critical mass of the specific skills and character outlined here:

- **Good intuition and decision making.** You will need to have good intuition in order to make the best decisions about situations and people while being in a new environment and not having all the information you need. Fixing bad decisions and getting in trouble is harder when on the road, so this skill is very valuable to keep you safe and happy.
- **Taking quick decisions.** After understanding that good decision making is an essential nomad skill, we can switch to the skill of making quick calls. As a nomad, you will need to be able to make a decision fast and often without having all the information needed. If you can't make fast calls in an uncertain situation, you will get stuck and frustrated quite often.
- **Taking the time to prepare and plan.** Even if you can make good quick decisions, gathering information is a critical ingredient to make sure you get it right most of the times. In example, even if you are street wise and make fast calls, exchanging foreign currency without checking the official exchange rate in advance is simply wrong and can cost you. Gathering information is relevant to all aspects of nomadic life, including accommodation, orientation in the place you are at and much more. A nomad has to accept the fact that prior preparation is crucial and is worth dedicating the time to. If you are not the type of person to take the time and gain information in advance, you will deeper pockets and more time to get results.
- **Non Attachment** – We usually get attached to things and to other people. As a nomad you constantly change places leaving behind everything you “have built” in your last destination, including daily routines, places you loved and people you connected with. If you are getting attached easily and find it hard to leave things behind, this lifestyle might prove a too difficult for you.
- **Enduring loneliness** - A nomadic lifestyle has loneliness engrained to it, and a nomad needs to accept and live with that. You change places and start from scratch all the time, losing the social cycle you accumulated. Acquiring new friends takes time, skill but also luck and good timing. A nomad needs to be able to be happy even when alone, and not to take loneliness so seriously. (for some of us, this is impossible)
- **Positive mindset and love for people** - If you don't have a positive general mindset, staying at home is the best way to go. Nomadic lifestyle in an ever-changing environment includes many surprises, and the ability to take even the bad ones with a smile is important. If you are not the type, this lifestyle is will only end up in a lot of frustration. Not to mention the fact that a positive attitude allows you to quickly

create a social cycle that will save you from dreaded loneliness. Being positive will also bring new opportunities for fun and learning.

- **Accepting failure** - Making decisions in an environment that doesn't offer information will surely bring failures, even if you are the smartest person around. Things will always go wrong. The ability to take the failures with a smile and learn from them is critical.
- **Discipline** - Nomads don't travel, they live a challenging life while sustaining themselves on the move; therefore, discipline is important when the changing environment around you can get you very distracted, or even disconnected. You need self-motivation and discipline to fix your goals early and work hard (Usually adopting a daily routine) to achieve them.
- **Know thyself** - In an environment of change, things can get confusing. It is important to know in advance the "anchors" in life that keep you happy no matter where you are, and push to get them in each nomadic base you are at. In example, by now I understood I need a swimming pool, and co-working place in order to be balanced. You need to know your list of necessities and fight hard to get them as soon as possible (you don't have much time, you are leaving soon, remember
- **Curiosity and thirst of learning** - If you are generally into fun, and not that much into learning new things, then traveling is the best solution for you. A nomad lifestyle includes the ambition to understand the world yourself through change, that's the glory of it. In addition to that, curiosity and accumulating knowledge (culture, language etc.) will allow you to make better calls, and have more friends quickly.
- **Proactiveness** - Since you are staying such a limited time in each base, you can't count on things to fall into place alone and will have to peruse what you need, while being proactive. Nomads can't afford to be shy and have to push forward in order to achieve their goals (doing so in a non-aggressive friendly way, of course)
- **Low Ego and Frugality**- A nomadic lifestyle is not give you an amazing ego boost. It is not financially rewarding, and people you know won't probably understand it, or even accept it. If it is important to you that people you care about around you will view you as a success story or if you need to maintain high level of spending to keep happy, think twice about taking this path.

## Necessary steps before switching to nomad

### So you've made the decision that a nomadic lifestyle is right for you – now what?

Like every other big decision in life, it's best not to jump into deep water without prior preparation. And yes, changing your life constantly is pretty deep water. Preparing yourself for all different aspects of becoming a nomad will increase your chances of having a successful and happy [nomad lifestyle](#).

### Let's discuss the major decisions one should make before beginning the journey:

- **Quitting Your Job**

It might be tempting to quit your job *right away* and embark on your journey as soon as possible. However, acting out of emotion without taking into account some important factors will result in a less successful transition. The first thing to consider is your financial situation. A nomad usually spends more money than he earns in the first phase of her/his journey. Therefore, you need a sufficient amount of funds to get started. Make a calculation of the amount of money that will be enough to sustain you and your nomadic lifestyle and hang in there until you reach this amount. On top of that, try not to burn bridges – just in case your nomad experiment doesn't go well, it's nice to have the option of returning to your old job later (in case you actually *like* your job). An interesting option to take into consideration is to come up with some kind of an agreement with your employer that will allow you to earn money while on the move. This requires creativity (and a very flexible boss), but if you've placed yourself in an indispensable position and offered the company a solid solution, working remotely can be the perfect solution.

- **Capping your Financial Obligations**

We often commit to our major obligations for extended periods of time. For example, we usually take on yearly rent contracts or commit to other subscriptions such as gym membership and insurance for extended amounts of time. *Planning* to embark on a nomadic journey will require you to make all your obligations end in the same month, plan ahead.

- **Dependencies**

The fact is – nomads can't have others be dependent on them. Map out who depends on you and come up with solutions that will allow you to gradually break away from these dependencies and avoid future obligations that will interfere with your plan or leave you feeling guilty. For example, if you have a pet, try to think well in advance who you can ask to take care of the pet. If you have a friend or family member that is dependent on you, slowly find ways to disconnect from this dependency.

- **Prepare to Make a Living in Advance**

The first phase of being a nomad is quite turbulent, and you don't want to face with the thought of how to sustain yourself only when the journey already began and all the pressure is on you. Take advantage of the time you have while still living in a stable place to find and begin exploring new career paths that will allow you to

generate revenue in the future. Try brainstorming some ideas with friends and family, do research. This usually involves acquiring a new skill and purchasing equipment like a laptop.

The path is not easy, and in order to increase your chances of success, you will need discipline and proper planning. The benefits for a successful nomad are huge, and are well worth the sacrifice and effort needed. A nomadic lifestyle, although appearing relaxed and carefree does require a lot of preparation. If you go off the beaten track, get a map and tools to help you survive there.

# *Nomad Revenue Sources*

## **How to become a Nomad entrepreneur**

There are many ways to sustain yourself as a nomad, and I personally think the most fascinating one is building your own Startup, or in other words, creating a product or service (usually online) that didn't exist before. It should be noted however that if you are interested in a nomadic lifestyle that involves complete disconnection and freedom, a startup will not be the best option for you. Just like a child, building a startup creates an attachment (a nomadic lifestyle enemy), but then again, if it works and you manage to later disconnect yourself from it, you can either get "free" by generating passive income or by selling it. Not to mention the powerful effect of creating something new that makes a "dent" in the world and gives you a real goal in life other than just switching from a place to another. The concept of building a startup while living a nomadic lifestyle is of course possible thanks to the internet that allows us to be location free while working on projects.

As the founder of a startup, you will experience an emotional roller coaster from happiness to despair, even in the same day. It's a huge challenge even for non nomads. But, creating a startup while travelling is even an additional challenge since your lifestyle a nomad is less stable by definition; therefore, you should really be prepared if you decide to take the dip and become a nomad entrepreneur. So, if you are still motivated to go for it after this short disclaimer, here are some tips on how to build a startup while on the move that are based on my experience (for more startup related tips, visit my blog [StartupAlready.com](http://StartupAlready.com)):

- **Don't do it alone.** Find a partner or co-founder. When you travel you're exposed to unstable uncertainties, and it is critical to have a backup of a partner who is also dedicated to the success of the startup. I can't even begin to tell how many times my own partner took the reins and saved our business while I was changing locations and needed backup. The first rule for a good partnership is to choose someone you get along well with and who has your total trust (In a way, partnership resembles a marriage, especially when you are traveling and need cover). When you discuss a potential partner, explain to them that you wish to be location free, but assure them that your lifestyle doesn't imply that you are not fully dedicated to the success of the startup.
- **Build your startup at home.** The initial process of the development of an initial business model and a prototype, validating it (touching with the market), and legally registering your startup is better done where you are physically with your co-founding team at your home base. Only when all the infrastructure and bureaucracy is dealt with, should you leave your home base and continue to work on it while being on the move. I waited for five months (it was supposed to be two, but it always takes longer) setting up my startup ([Online language school](http://OnlineLanguageSchool.com)) before I went to India. It's a sacrifice, but dealing from logistics when you are far from your home base is nearly impossible.

- **Total commitment.** A startup can't be successful without huge amount of commitment of the co-founders. This means you will have to dedicate great amount of time and effort to make it succeed. I have found the dreams of a 4 hours workweek while building a viable business as unrealistic, so the commitment and passion factors are crucial. Nomadic entrepreneurs even have to dedicate more time to their startup since our lifestyle is costly on time and money. It takes time to find your next wi-fi spot, finding good places to work from, and moving between locations so this time has to be made up for by putting more of your available time on your startup. The dream of nomad disconnection has to be put by the wayside until your startup is "ready" and creates profits, which usually takes years.
- **Make sure the idea/business model is not adversely affected by your nomadic lifestyle.** The best way to make sure your startup won't tie you to the same place, is to create an online business, which will allow you to work wherever you are. However, even some online businesses require staying in a stable base to manage inventory or important meetings, and that's a position you don't want to be in (unless your partner can fill in the gap). Create a business model that benefits from you being on the move.
- **Don't count on cash flow at the beginning.** The first two years will probably generate losses, since a startup requires investment (unlike freelancing). If you don't have enough oxygen (money) at the beginning, it'll be stressful and will make you give up even if the idea can work on the long run. The key here would be to prepare yourself in advance that your startup will lose money on the first two years, and start committing to it only when you have some savings, or an alternative stream of revenue while working on your startut (I have been freelancing in the first 3 years of my nomad entrepreneur career to get the cash needed).
- **Adjusting your nomadic lifestyle to your startup.** While you develop a startup, you can no longer be a free spirit. Feel like a few months trip to Cambodia's islands? It might not work since you will have no internet. Did you always dream of living in Yemen? problematic as well, especially if you need to make necessary connections with fellow entrepreneurs and potential clients. In a nutshell, you can still be a nomad, but a less "wild" one. You will have to pick the locations with stable internet connection, and avoid places that are unstable such as crime issue and bad infrastructure (those "bad surprises" are interesting while traveling, but your business needs stability). I am addicted to the concept of using [co-working](#) spaces while on the move to increase effectiveness, but those places are mostly available only in modern cities. This means I have to avoid long stays in villages and small towns, although those are usually the most interesting locations. That's the sacrifice you make as a nomad entrepreneur and you should be aware of it before you choose the nomadic entrepreneur path.
- **Use your nomadic lifestyle to leverage your startup.** Being on the move can also have advantages for your startup. You're meeting new people and being exposed to new markets which can get you new clients, suppliers and potential partnerships. Networking and understanding of markets can be a huge boost for your startup and are worth investing time in. While traveling, I recommend connecting with local entrepreneurs and getting to know startup enthusiasts and entrepreneurs, instead of just

hanging out with the ordinary fun people. Check out relevant events in each country, and search for relevant meetups on [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com).

- **Don't aim for investors.** This is important for all startups in their initial phase, but even more crucial for nomad entrepreneurs. I'm a great believer in creating a minimum viable product (Lean startup approach) which means that you can no longer have only a dream (idea) and look for investors, but you have to take it a few steps further. Before approaching investors, do your best to "touch the market/users" as soon as possible before trying to raise money. That means that after deciding on an idea/business model, you have to validate demand for your idea by creating a prototype and only then when you have proof of demand (people using or purchasing your service/product), can you go to investors. This is even more critical for nomad entrepreneurs for the following reason: investors are giving their money not merely for an idea, but mainly for a talented and dedicated team that can execute. When you tell investors about your nomadic lifestyle, most of them will not accept it (They will appreciate it, but not to the point of funding it). The solution? Prove your dedication by building something that is much more advanced and compelling than an idea, and then, even as a nomad entrepreneur, you will get their attention. It goes without saying that if your idea can generate income and profit from clients, just keep on building it by using the money generated from sales. The best investor is a paying client.
- **Love your startup.** It's crucial to love and to be passionate about your startup. The process of building a startup is consuming on many fronts (Time, money, effort, emotions). When we do things we love, we increase the chances for success. If you're investing all this effort in something you are not passionate about, it will probably make you quit along the way in one of the "low" points, even if it can be successful on the long run. Just like a nomadic lifestyle can't be sustainable if you are not happy and passionate about changing locations. Working on a project you don't like will also affect your traveling and will make you grumpy on the road, hence losing on both fronts, being miserable with what you do and frustrated with your lifestyle. If it comes to that, wouldn't it be better to just stay on the same place and get a boss (or get married)? The key here is to pick and develop an idea that you are passionate about. A happy founder of a startup is also a happy nomad.
- **Don't go for it full time before you become an avid nomad.** If you're a newbie nomad, you'll make mistakes that'll consume time and money. Try to delay entering the full startup gear until after you're completely comfortable with the way you travel, and making sure you have developed the basic [skills a nomad needs](#). The good news is that once you have developed the necessary nomad skills (decision making, being street wise, negotiating, taking quick calls), you will find that those skills are parallel to the necessary management skills needed from an entrepreneur. If you are just starting your nomad adventure, focus more on small cash flow streams (freelancing) that will teach you necessary skills and take the real full time startup jump when you are a stable nomad.

In conclusion, startup owners and nomads have a lot in common, so if you already discovered that you have a nomad spirit that is addicted to changes, what can be more suitable than becoming a nomad entrepreneur? Just remember that this path is

challenging for a nomad, so go for it and create your “thing” only if you are willing to pay the price and adjust your lifestyle accordingly.

## Digital Nomad Jobs

This article will discuss one of the best [digital nomads](#) jobs channels available to us, which is making a living by using main online platforms (freelancing sites) as a tool to get customers and getting paid.

There are many sites with vast offering of jobs for digital nomad, but from my experience, I would recommend the following two: (I will later explain why, and how to get started with them)

[Elance](#)

[Odesk](#)

### Advantages of working with freelancing sites to get digital nomad jobs

Without those sites, you would need to create an infrastructure that is reachable by clients (usually by constructing your own website), and do a lot of marketing. Making money would when you are not using them requires a good amount of time and money spending, in addition to a lot of patience since businesses usually start slowly and it is hard to get noticed.

Those freelancing sites allow us to get closer to clients with minimum investment. The platform is already there, clients already use it and look for contractors (for you) that can contact them directly, and it's only about persuading them that you are the right match for the job. In addition to that, using those sites actually allows a lot of freedom because you are working by the project. When you finish a project, you can disconnect and travel, unlike a business operated by you that requires our full attention for year in order to succeed. Perfect for us digital nomads no?

### Disadvantages of working with freelancing sites

A freelancer on those sites runs a cash flow operation. When you work, you get paid. When you stop working, there is no passive income. You are the one providing the service, and every project requires effort from your side.

One more thing to consider is that your clients expect you to be connected, receive instructions and update them; therefore, a stable internet connection and being readily available to communicate with the client during a project is a must.

Most importantly, starting working on those sites will require a mind-set change from your side. Or in other words, you will have to start very low.

In addition to that, the sites usually charge a fee, either by taking a small cut of the job (less than 10%) or by pushing contractors to purchase a monthly subscription in order to bid freely. Those costs are quite unsubstantial considering the marketing and infrastructure costs those sites save you.

### Getting started

In a nutshell, we need to register with the website (\*Once you figured out what is your core skill that can be of demand), invest time in arming an impressive profile and then bid

for jobs. With time (and some luck) you will get hired by the first client and build your reputation from there.

Most contractors from developed countries actually give up before even completing 2 jobs because the low wages despair them. You are competing against hundreds of people who have profiles like yours that are willing to work for low hourly rates since they are from developing countries and their costs are lower. But don't despair, quality does pay off, but it requires the patience to prove yourself and signal your excellence before you can increase your rate. That is why when you bid for your first jobs, I would recommend starting with very low bid. In addition, for us nomads, I would suggest starting experimenting with those platforms while you are still in your day job at home (as absurd the pay is) since that allows you to build a reputation that would later on allow you to get jobs at a reasonable rate and make a good living while traveling. Think of the initial stages as investment, you are trying to build a reputation (when jobs are complete, the clients give you elaborate ratings for it which is the real boost for signalling yourself as a premium freelancer).

### **Specific site recommendations**

The first site I recommend is [Elance](#). From my experience, that's where freelancers earn most on the long term as clients there are more willing to spend for quality. It also seems Elance is less saturated with low hourly contractors from developing countries because in the long term if you really want to gain a presence there, you have to pay a monthly membership that most contractors from developing countries can't afford in the beginning.

The second site I recommend (registering to the both of them is the best way to go) is [Odesk](#). Some jobs there are very low paying, but it is a great place to start. They don't charge you membership fees, which mean there is less pressure on you to get your first client but also a lot of competition.

Once registered, invest a lot of time in building your profile and make it impressive. Then, just start bidding for jobs. When you have enough reviews, then you can receive a premium for your services as people see that you have a proven track record.

### **Concluding remarks**

For us nomads, as we live with constant change, those sites offer a perfect opportunity to make cash on the move, without the attachment of scaling a business and committing to constant care of clients.

I also recommend my non-nomad friends to use those sites, as a game, just to see what they can do to make money, or in other words, those sites really allow you to understand your core skills, which is a wonderful discovery by itself.

Enjoy work...

# How to Travel Cheap

## Long term travel on the cheap

Knowing the basics of long term travel on the cheap is crucial for a simple reason: The less we spend, the more time we can travel. Knowing how to travel on a budget also allows us to reduce our workload and have more free time since we can sustain ourselves with less revenue. Listed below are the most substantial tips to make you a guru of long term travel on the cheap, combining a healthy mindset with practical advice.

- **Spending on value and not comfort.** Finding the difference between perks and necessities is the first essential practical tip. Avoid spending on things which have higher cost than benefit. Do you really need it? Will it make you happy? Usually the expenses you can cut are related to comfort and ego which you can do without. Spend instead on the things that really matter: Health, friends, learning, safety, real experiences. And yet there's a thin line – don't get too obsessed with saving that you miss out on value. As an example, I used to pick the cheapest night buses (to avoid a night at a hotel), and it worked out perfectly. Today however, I don't choose to sacrifice that good night's sleep, because the work I can do when I sleep well is more valuable than what I save. There is no right or wrong here, its only about making the best decision based on your specific circumstances.
- **Be local from day one.** You want to avoid being a tourist since tourists pay a large premium for their lack of information and need to fully maximize the short their short vacation. If you're a nomad/long term traveler on a budget, you have to act like a local, and make appropriate concessions. A cheaper restaurant. Budget accommodation. Public transport.
- **Staying longer.** [We've explained how staying longer saves money before](#), but nutshelling it, staying longer saves you money. You can get monthly passes for public transport, long-term accommodation discounts, gain more information for the cheaper places in your locale, and you save money on transport since you don't travel this much. In addition to saving money, you'll get to know the place better and make a larger circle of friends, too.
- **Travel as a couple or in group.** A double room in a hostel/shared apartment is often quoted the same price just as a private room (that's what keeps many marriages together, the living cost per person are lower living together). Groups also get good discounts in some activities, as you have more bargaining power.
- **Have no ego.** When something's expensive and of little real value, ignore your ego and say No. To do that, you ought to [choose travel companions](#) and a social circle that doesn't value splurging.
- **Be curious and conscious.** If you're curious in nature/habit and have your eyes open, you will be much more informed about the good value options and

opportunities out there. In addition to saving money, curiosity will get you some new friends and increased awareness will make you happier and better oriented.

- **Map the cheap places.** Since you are staying longer, work on upgrading your list of cheap providers. Good options for cheap healthy food, barber shop, supermarket, 1\$ Shops, cheap transport, economical laundry places. If something is missing, or overpriced, actively seek for solutions.
- **Research.** Take time to research on big spending items. Long term accommodation, flights, transportation- spend a some time on comparing, gathering information and choosing the best value option.
- **Choose cheaper destinations for long term travel (off-season is also better).** If your revenue is generated outside of the place to which you're traveling, it makes sense to choose a destination with low cost of life. Your quality of life will greatly increase while you can maintain the same amount of expense in expensive countries. It is also recommended to travel off season to get better deals on accommodation and avoid the masses. Unfortunately, low cost places (Asia, South America etc.) usually involve more expensive flights and might not be as cost-effective per day if you are not staying for a few months.
- **Free and discounted events.** There are always free city tours, [meet-ups](#) and worthwhile events if you're looking to really get to know a place. Groupon and LivingSocial give you great deals and discounts too.
- **Befriend locals.** Local friends know the "hacks" and information that will help you decrease spending, and can even offer you free accommodation. They also tend to have the same schedule (which allows you to work during the day and socialize at the evenings). Locals also usually spend less than tourists when going out. Conclusion: Get local friends.
- **Keep flexible and say yes.** If you're flexible, you can say yes to opportunities all the time. Try to [avoid longer term attachments](#) (Rent, projects, jobs), and take advantage of all the opportunities around you.
- **Cook for yourself.** This is a great way to save costs. If you don't have a lot of time, preparing a only quick healthy breakfast will really save money on the long run. If you can't cook, locate the cheap and healthy lunch and dinner options, that you can keep on returning to. One of the best places to start with are the buffets in Supermarkets that offer great value on cooked food to go. On that note, carrying a water bottle with you (preferably aluminum if you have electronics in your bag) will keep you healthy reduce your expenses.
- **Cheap transport.** [Try finding ways of getting cheap flights.](#) Walk when you can instead of paying for a ticket (its also healthier). Go for public transport and avoid taxis. If it's safe enough (I personally don't take the risk), hitchhike or rideshare.
- **Accommodation.** If you're alone, a dorm bed is the cheapest option there is (and you will also not be alone anymore). If you need space, look around for the monthly deals on AirBnB and other short term accommodation sites (Monthly search will get you

far better rates per day). Use free accommodation options like [Couchsurfing](#), WWOOFing (free accommodation for work), [house-sitting](#).

- **Learn from mistakes.** Since you are constantly changing to new locations, mistakes that increase your expenses are bound to happen. Instead of being frustrated from mistakes, consider them as learning opportunities to improve your nomadic skills. Make sure you understand what needs to be changed in the future to avoid similar mistakes.
- **Keep track of your finances.** Track and sum your monthly expenses, understand if you're balancing your costs or not, and address anything which needs reducing. Analyze your monthly spending and check what items there can you save on, without reducing much your happiness and quality of travel.
- **Bargaining.** Bargaining is especially effective and expected in developing countries. However, even in developed countries, asking for a discount (or deals if you feel uncomfortable to bargain) on the higher price tag expenses such as long term accommodation and transport is well worth it. If you have a student card, always ask if there are price/deals for students.
- **Minimalism.** On the road, less is more. If you carry less, you spend less on purchasing "Stuff" and replacing your stuff ([Securing your things](#) will also prevent spending in case you lose them). [A lot of stuff](#) also has increased costs in storage and extra luggage while traveling. But more than costs, having less stuff makes you lean, mean and free.

## Ways of getting cheap flights

Flights are one of the most expensive items while traveling. However, there are some ways of reducing the amount of budget that flight tickets gobble up. Even if you're like me (I prefer to travel by land when possible, so I can see more of the land and scenery), sometimes, you've just got to bite the bullet and get up in the air. Listed below are some ways to get you started flying on the cheap.

- **Flexibility** - Your chances of getting a cheap flight are much higher if you're flexible on your flight dates and destination. Flexibility allows you to be more creative while searching, and to take advantage of the many sales and discounts out there since flight prices vary enormously and any parameter change will make an impact. Rigidity costs money since it narrows your playground. If you change your mind-set and become more flexible on dates, days and destinations, it will save you money. Other than changing the timing of the flight and its destination, it is also worthwhile to examine flights to secondary accessible airports that are close to your destination for better prices.
- **Book in advance** - Statistically, the best timing to book a cheap flight is three weeks before the departure. Searching around for flights around two months beforehand gives you enough information on the options out there to make the best decision when good opportunity arrives. Booking in advance is especially important when you're less flexible, since last moment flight purchases can get extremely expensive. In case you are less flexible, try booking a fully refundable flight in advance, and if something better comes up later, make the switch.
- **Invest time in searching** - Flights are going to take a big chunk out of your travel budget, so you should allocate time and energy to the search. The process can be tedious, but it is well worth it. That said, spending too much time can get you stuck without being able to close the purchase in the right time. So, when you find something that feels right after enough research, snap it up.
- **Use site aggregators as a principal tool** - Flight aggregators are a powerful tool to gain information and should be used extensively. The ones I recommend are - [Kayak](#), [ITAsoftware](#), [SkyScanner](#) and [Vayama](#). I use them to get a general idea about prices, and more importantly, to know which company flies where. Personally, after receiving this information, I go directly to the specific airline's sites, and book through them. For me, it feels safer to avoid the middleman, and some of the airlines offer even cheaper flights on their sites.
- **Use social media** - Some flight hackers recommend following airlines social media (Facebook, twitter) for deals and promotions. Registering on airlines newsletters is also a good way to receive good deals that are not available to the general public.
- **Low-cost airlines** - Some companies like RyanAir, EasyJet, and Pegasus offer cheaper flights. It's a good strategy by definition to always check their sites when they have routes to your destination, they are much cheaper than the standard.

- **Be creative** - assume nothing when it comes to airlines prices, experiment and try various options. For example, even if you need a one way ticket, searching for a return ticket will probably get you a better price. RTW (Round the world) tickets are also worth considering if you are planning covering few continents in a limited scope of time. Open Jaw ticket (allowing you to take the next flight from a different origin than your first destination) can also make your trip more flexible and cheap, just like breaking destinations. You just need to keep on trying options creatively until you unlock a magic price.
- **Break up the destinations** - Instead of booking the entire trip through one company, it might be cheaper to purchase two separate tickets. In example, if you were going from Hungary to the US, purchasing a Budapest- London Ticket and another London- New York ticket might prove to be more economical (especially if one route is covered by a low cost company). However, be careful as you're not necessarily covered for delays for the second flight, so allow enough time to make the connections.
- **Flight prices change according to day and hour** - If you're a nomad, it means you can probably travel whenever you want, so it is good to be aware of the cheaper options. Generally, weekend flights are more expensive than weekdays, and Tuesdays, "red-eye" flights (that take off early morning without allowing you good night sleep) are statistically the cheapest.
- **Travel agents and direct calls to airlines** - Out-dated, sure, but travel agents are still exposed to deals that you can't easily find on the internet. If you can't find a low cost flight, pay them a visit and see what they can offer, you might be surprised. An additional option that constantly gets good results is calling the airline itself before closing a deal on their site and see if they might have an additional special discount for you.
- **Use your contacts** - If you have a friend working in an airline company, they're a shoe-in for special deals and prices. Just buy them a nice meal, and drop a compliment every once in a while... Seriously though, it'll save you crazy money if you get those guys on your side. Read more about it in Gustav's article about [airline patrons](#).
- **Everywhere inspiration tools** - Those tools are amazing for the flexible travellers and basically provide you a map that shows the cheapest flights for specific dates. The best ones I have seen so far are: 1) [Kayak explore map](#) 2) [EasyJet Inspire me map](#) 3) [Skyscanner](#), where you can feed "Everywhere" in the destination field and get flights sorted by price.
- **Student discounts** - [STATravel](#) and [StudentUniverse](#) has amazing deals for students, if you're lucky enough to be that young.
- **Flyers Miles** - There are regular travellers that save a huge amount through frequent flyer miles, bought through points from airlines or credit card spending. Check out [Chris Guillebeau](#) for more tips on the subject. If you are a frequent flyer (and

not a slow traveler like myself) ,you can rack up miles and the discounts that result from them.

Lastly, as nomads, the best way to save on flights is actually spending more time in a location instead of switching destinations frequently. If you have another method of saving money on flights, please share it in the comments. Happy journey!

## Staying Longer Saves Money

As much as nomads enjoy change and always think of the next destination, staying longer in a place does have its advantages. Other than the obvious advantages for staying longer which permits getting to know the place better, increase your chances of [having local friends](#) and establishing daily routines, staying longer in one place will also have a positive financial impact. First of all, it will greatly reduce your costs for reasons soon to be discussed. In addition to that, it will also increase your potential revenue.

Why does staying longer mean spending less? Well, basically it all has to do with you becoming less of a tourist (being a tourist is expensive) and more of a local, for the following reasons:

- Information gap is narrowed. Us nomads pay a big premium on lack of information. It takes time to figure out where this good value eat-away place is, how to get the most suitable public transportation combo, and where is the cheapest place to shop.
- As you know more locals with time, nice opportunities appear. One can have a cheap apartment that you can rent, others are connected and can help you get the things you need in a cheap way, and above all, the advice you are getting on various subjects is critical and allows you to expand your field of play. [Meeting locals while traveling](#) usually takes some time, so staying longer in a place will increase chances of that happening.
- More time gets you deals- Especially on accommodation, but not only. If you want to rent a place, you will get a much better price if you stay for a month. You can get a monthly pass for the train which costs less, you can book your co-working place for a month thus saving per day and so on.
- You save on transportation and moving around. It goes without saying, staying longer is saving more because you avoid fervent traveling, covering long distances costs money.

Staying longer in a place might also create more revenue because:

- Staying longer means having more certainty, and less surprises. You will figure out where can you get great internet, you will probably have a good night sleep- this all contributes to your focus and effectiveness.
- Staying longer allows you to create a stable net of connections. In the future, especially, if you will keep being location free, those connections can either be your clients or partners.
- Usually when you stay longer in a place you have a more stable daily routine (for example, you may find a co-working place that you become used to and that allows you to become more efficient and goal-oriented because the constant changes cost you money).

So, just stay longer...

## Avoid getting overcharged as a tourist

Overcharging is a phenomenon that all those who have been on the road for a while will inevitably encounter, sometimes without even noticing. What makes overcharging common is its presence in the grey zone between a non legal scam and the right of a vendor to set their price as they wish. This allows culprits to usually get away with nothing but bad karma. In a nutshell, overcharging is when you pay a hefty premium over and beyond the normal price a local would pay, purely because you stand out as a tourist. Let's talk about "Why" is overcharging common before we switch to some practical steps you can take to avoid it.

It's ok to overcharge. Some locals, mostly in developing countries, consider all tourists rich and will overcharge them to "correct" an inequality. Nothing boosts a crime more than a sense of justification combined with personal gain. The lack of solidarity and perception of separation between locals robbed by fictional world powers, and tourists from the same countries makes the phenomenon quite common. With that said, if you somehow manage to befriend a vendor that has this twisted perception, they might give you a fair price. Don't count on it though.

Vulnerability. As a tourist, you're vulnerable since you don't have all the necessary information at hand. Being a tourist puts you in increased risk, just like going to a garage and being billed on something you can not really compare or validate.

Misunderstandings and Language gaps. Language gaps create misunderstandings which sometimes end up with you paying more on a product you didn't really want or need. In this scenario, the responsibility falls on you to research and interact wisely to avoid this situation.

How can you avoid getting overcharged as a tourist?

- **Ask for the price in advance.** This will eradicate almost all of the risk. By not asking for the price of something in advance before you consume (usually in services such as taxi rides and tour guides), you're putting yourself in a position of great weakness. Buyer beware, and all that.
- **Go for visible fixed prices.** If everything's up front, for example, the price is tagged on the product or the place has a price list, you're (almost) guaranteed to be getting local prices.
- **Bargaining.** By haggling, you can counter being overcharged, but only when it's done before a deal is made, otherwise, it becomes whining. It is also important to know where to bargain. In a Middle Eastern bazaar? Definitely. In a German shopping mall? *No*. Unless you are on low budget, don't bargain for the small stuff, and focus on the big things that make a difference, like monthly accommodation or an expensive product. When possible, it's wise to use your friends and contacts to help you out in the interaction with the vendor.
- **Look local.** Don't stand out as a tourist with the funny flip flops. When at risk, try avoiding conversation to make the vendor perceive you as a local, and

pay directly with a bill that should cover it. If you need to interact, try to speak a bit of the local language, as a signal that you have been around for a while and know the price range.

- **Avoid touristy spots.** Not only they are more expensive to begin with, touristic locations have much higher frequency of touts who regard tourists as walking wallets. If you shop out of tourist hangouts, your chances of getting overcharged are diminished considerably. It is also important to trust your intuition. Does your vendor look like he will overcharge you, does the interaction with them feel honest and friendly?
- **Shop around:** If you are buying a relatively expensive item isn't urgent, try comparing prices between two vendors. It is very unlikely you will get overcharged by two different vendors.
- **Spend time on market research.** As we've said, information is power. Using Google, forums, and advice from local friends will help you avoid getting ripped off.
- **Decide your price in advance.** If you're planning a purchase, figure out your maximum in advance and avoid being manipulated when the pressure's on.
- **Document the deal.** Keeping price offers accessible with you (e.g. in case you have booked by internet and pay upon arrival) will help you avoid any unexpected 'inflation' scams once it is time to pay.
- **Consume where your opinion matters.** Many tourist services, such as accommodation, tour guides give you the option to rate the vendor. That brings power to you, and greatly reduces chances of overcharging due to the consequences a bad review has on the vendor's reputation and future sales.
- **Avoid mediators.** Try to avoid using mediators, and close the deal directly with the vendor. This will also give you better results while bargaining, since there is no commission to a third party that lowers the vendor's margins.

Specific scenarios where you're more at risk:

**Taxis.** Notorious for overcharging. If you have no idea about the expected price, ask the driver to activate the meter, and use Google Maps to make sure you're not being taken for a ride (figuratively speaking).

**Menus.** Although rare, you might be handed the 'tourist' menu, and you could end up paying several times the normal price.

**Currency exchanges.** Only change your money at places with very small differences between the buy and sell rate. Aim for a maximum of around 3% from the current exchange rate which have to find out in advance.

While you should *always* be a savvy customer, you will sometimes lose and get overcharged. In order to maintain your sanity, you just have to let some things go. Small sums aren't worth getting worked up over; Take the necessary steps to avoid overcharging, but don't fall to a constant paranoia that the world is out to get you.

# *Nomad Social Life*

## **Best travel destinations to meet people**

Where are the best travel destinations to meet new people? Taking the time to think if your next destination is in line with the [travel companions](#) suitable for you is important in order to establish vibrant social life while traveling. Therefore, in addition to applying the \*traveling mindset that will bring you most interactions with other people, picking the right travel location will greatly increase chances of success. Each location you choose to travel to, is unique and offers different challenges and opportunities in the process of building a social life, and here are some elements you should have in mind while choosing your next travel destination:

Should you pick a village or a city? The advantages of villages and small towns are considerable in many ways (nature, quiet, prices etc.), however, as far as social life is concerned, cities are usually much better. Firstly, there are more people in cities and many more meeting places to establish the first contact. We have discussed the tools we can use to [meet locals while traveling](#) and unfortunately, many of those tools (like [coworking](#), or social sites like couchsurfing.org and meetup.com) are unavailable or very limited in villages and small towns. In addition to that, city folks tend to be more open minded than people in towns which allows you to fit in the crowd. In a village or a town, everyone knows each other, so getting in their circle is more difficult, and locals who form a strong friendship with you will probably get people talking about them (starting a relationship there with the most beautiful girl in the village will also be difficult for the same reason).

Should you go to touristic destinations? Here, the answer is a bit more complicated. On the one hand, many tourists in the same location increase your chances of [meeting tourists while traveling](#). However, touristic places may make the contact with the locals more difficult. Not only that the locals in touristic locations may be a bit weary of the influx of tourists (some people say it happens in Paris), they also regard tourists as a source of revenue (especially in developing countries). I saw the difference in the mindset of locals when while traveling in touristic Vietnam and Cambodia in comparison to non-touristic towns in Myanmar where people invite you to food in their homes and help out without accepting money just because they are interested in your company and are not used to look at you as a potential revenue source or as a disturbance to their lifestyle.

Are you picking a place that has the character or mindset that fits in to your reality? Let's make it simple: try defining the social characteristic of a place in few words. In example, if you are interested in checking out Tobago, an amazing Caribbean island, after research you will see that most of the tourists who go there are actually couples in honeymoon. In addition to that, most of the locals there are people who cater for those tourists. This is a lethal combination that should be avoided for a solo traveler looking for company.

Is there a language barrier? If you know the local lingo it will greatly improve your chances of meeting and interacting with locals. One more thing that might offset the disadvantage of not speaking the local language will be if most locals speak your language well. So making the research if the locals are speaking your language before traveling, or taking the time to learn the destination language in my [language school](#) (blunt publicity, forgive me) will increase your chances of interaction.

In conclusion, making the “social” research on your destination is well worth doing. However, don’t forget that there are always exceptions in life. Your next best friends might be locals in an honeymoon from a small village that don’t speak your language, so if you keep calm and smile good things will surely come.

## How to Meet Tourists While Travelling

The ability to meet people and quickly make contacts is essential, and this connects to the basic notion of avoiding loneliness when you're changing places. Although [getting to know locals might be preferable](#), tourists are easier to meet and fun to communicate with. In some places, especially if you don't know the local language, your only contacts might be tourists, digital nomads, ex-pats, and those travellers in the vacationing mind-set. So, it's important to first figure out the profile of the people you're looking to meet based on age, gender, and character in order to build the [best social life mix while on the move](#).

Here are some of the best meeting points and activities where you can meet tourists:

- **Hostels** - Picking the right hostel is really important, as they're great for meeting fellow travellers. Does it have a lobby, or a place for people to connect? If it doesn't create the basic conditions for an encounter or provide a fun place where people can start talking, it's not going to happen. A hostel is a great common ground for starting conversations and interacting, and even more so if you're staying in dorms. When you share a room, by definition you *have to* talk (it's not polite otherwise). And they're cheaper.
- **Location** - The nature of the place you are staying in is also important. Staying alone in a romantic Greek island where only couples go to might be challenging for meeting tourists, while going to fun cities that have many solo travellers will probably prove to be easier.
- **Do tours** - Tourists are into exploration. If you stay by yourself (even if you can do it cheaper), take a tour if your aim is to meet people. It creates interaction between participants, and is a great way of meeting people.
- **Use the internet** - Use travelling forums to see who is where and how to contact them. Couchsurfing is a great way to meet locals or get hosted, but you can also use it to meet fellow travellers on the road. Meet up for coffee or a beer. And if you rent a place where you are, it's a good option to become a host on Couchsurfing and other such sites as a great way to meet tourists on your extended stay.
- **Tourist hangouts** - Find the places that create the right atmosphere for speaking to new people. There are some, though not that many. You'll need spots where it's quite natural to talk, interact, and make connections.
- **Be proactive** - In regular life, we respect people's private space. Usually, you wouldn't talk to people out of the blue. But while on the move, something has to change; be less shy, change your attitude, and identify win-win situations where the other person is also looking for interaction. Identify good opportunities and go for it. Don't be pushy and aggressive, but you can afford to be less concerned about private space in comparison to back home.

You'll need a changed mindset in combination with the execution of these tools in order to extend your social cycle with many other tourists. Some prior preparation is needed too - looking up places to stay, finding the online sites, picking out the right tours,

etc. Above all, tourists are really fun, they're open-minded and are there to explore. So sometimes, befriending them is the best option.

## Meeting Locals While Traveling

*M*eeting locals while traveling has huge benefits, and will make your stay in any place a very rewarding experience, so knowing some major tools to make it happen is important.

Before we begin, let's just mention the special ingredient that will increase your chances to have local friends: Be friendly and approachable. Locals have a tendency to help and communicate with foreigners since meeting foreigners for them can be a refreshing break and everyone wants to leave a good impression of their country by helping out. So, smile, ask questions, show interest in their life/culture, don't be shy, and the magic will happen (I also carry some small gifts and coins from my country for people who have been great with me). So, while you are being the charming person you are, here are some steps you can take to interact with locals:

- **Register to tours** - As surprising as it might be most tours participants will be locals on vacation. Joining tours and being communicative and approachable can get you long lasting local friends.
- **Establish a daily routine** - I am a nomad, but a great fan of routines (being a ultra-nomad with constant change wore me down). If you establish daily routines in your temporary location, such as same places to have coffee or lunch, go swimming etc. you will see the same faces again (clients or owners), therefore increase chances of interaction.
- **Courses** - Register for a course given in a language you understand, and it will be impossible to go through them without interaction with the locals that also participate. Not to mention, it will also teach you a new skill. Just use google, read billboards on the street, and register to daily deal sites like Groupon to get some courses at affordable rates.
- **Volunteer** - A perfect way of getting to know the local population and fellow volunteers. Do a quick Google search on volunteering at the place you are at. As a bonus, it will also make you feel great. I now started volunteering as a teacher. Teaching and giving lectures is an effective way to meet locals.
- **Do Language exchange and participate in language courses** - Let me start with an important advice, no matter where you are, know the basic lingo such as hello and thanks since locals will appreciate you taking the effort to do so. Also, many locals want to do language exchange sessions and you can find them both in daily interactions or on internet classified ads sites such as [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com). This adds an additional boost to the contact with the locals and will probably increase the frequency you will meet your local friends. Also, doing language courses in the place you are at will expose you to a new circle of friends during the course and more importantly, will greatly increase your chances of successfully interacting with the locals.

- **Co-working or just work** - This one is an amazing way of getting to know locals, since work is a place people spend a long time doing. If you are a classical nomad, working on the move as a chef or selling stuff in the street, just interact. If you are a digital nomad, the situation is more complicated, but fear not, just find a cool coworking place (\*read more about coworking [here](#)). If you are a traveller, go for the volunteering option.
- **Facebook and LinkedIn** - The first trick on Facebook would be to put the name of the city you are at on the search, and search for Events. This is a nice tool to show you many activities where you are at. Also, in Facebook and LinkedIn you can segment your connections by locations. You might be surprised to know some of your connections are currently living where you are. When I was in London, I discovered 8 friends that aren't English that are currently in London this way.
- **Couchsurfing.org and other sites** - Couchsurfing is probably the easiest and most effective site to meet locals while traveling, as a bonus you can stay in their homes and save on accommodation. In addition to couchsurfing, there are some other useful sites. I personally recommend Bizpora.com as a great way to meet entrepreneurs who want to meet travelers and create business connections. (I switch to it after getting too drunk with my couchsurfing friends). Another great site to use, is meetup.com, where you can assist meetings organized by locals. (Just make sure the meetings will be in a language you understand)

In this article we introduced a mix of tools to make contacts with locals. The rewards are great, and the variety of both offline and online methods to make it happen give you no excuse not to take some easy steps and upgrade your stay in a place and make lots of local connections.

## Choosing the right companions while traveling alone

One of the challenges of a nomad is to constantly make an effort to have a social life while traveling in order to avoid loneliness (Happiness is true when shared).

Before we move on to the actual ways of meeting people while traveling, a wise thing to do would be to first understand, who is it that you want to meet. Just like a business, if you don't know the client, you may spend a lot of time trying to befriend the wrong profile of people that will not really make you happy.

Generally, there are two major groups of people you can meet while traveling: Tourists, and [Locals](#). (There are some other unique groups, such as expats, that are basically a mix of those two groups all together)

Here are some major factors to think about when you decide how to build your social life while on the move:

- **How long do you plan to stay in the current location?** If you stay a few months, befriending tourists will be exhaustive as they will keep on disappearing on you (they usually around quite a lot). Having local friends in this case will be a stable and rewarding experience, and you will be the one quitting on them at the end..
- **Are you into fun and exploration or you are interested in assimilating in a place?** A nomad is usually someone that aims to fit in the place they are at, and disconnect from the tourist mentality. Therefore, investing time in building a social life that focuses on locals will make you fit right in, while having a tourist circle of friends will probably not allow you to assimilate.
- **Are you working, or do have a lot of free time?** Nomads usually work to sustain themselves, therefore, the need their social cycle to have the same availability hours as they do. Needless to say, tourists are focused on 24 hours exploration and fun, so keeping up at their pace for a working nomad is almost impossible. However, if you have the entire day while staying in a place dedicated to leisure, befriend tourists, as locals will only be available after work.
- **Are you on a tight budget?** If so, befriend locals. Vacations in general are expensive no matter where you are, since it is an expensive mindset. In many cases, tourists pay since they are into exploring and fun (trying new things costs money that is well spent if you only stay a few days in a place and can't be bothered about saving money), and they are also being charged a hefty premium to reflect that. Not to mention that tourists have an information gap on information (they just got to a place they don't know and will choose the easiest options for everything which are more pricey), while locals can give you valuable information to save money since they know a place and they will probably be a lot more sensitive to costs than tourists. This goes around, if your budget is extended, locals might find it hard to keep with your tourist pace on spending money, so in that case hanging out with tourists will be best.

- **Do you really want to know the place, or just have fun?** If you are into culture, history, politics, there is no question about the advantages of spending time with locals. In your conversations with them, they will share a wealth of information you will not be getting from tourists that are as much as clueless as you are about the country.
- **Do you know the local language, or wish to learn it?** If so, it goes without saying that spending time with locals will allow you get speed to your goal. However, if you have no interest to learn the local language, and the local population find it hard to speak English, then you are left with no real choice other than hanging out with tourists.

So, who should you go for? This basically depends on who you are. I would say this in a nutshell, if you are a traveller, focus on \*meeting fellow tourists, and if you are a nomad that actually stays in a place and works for a while, focus on [meeting locals](#).

# **Having a Relationship While Being on the Move: Is it Possible?**

No.

# Explore Where You Are

## Improving orientation in new places

Nomads are travelling constantly, and it can get confusing when your entire environment is always changing. By improving your orientation, you're more likely to feel at home at your new location. Good orientation will also save you valuable time, and is especially helpful in places that aren't that safe where you don't want to be wandering around clueless (check this link for more details on [risks of travelling](#)). We're always going to be a bit lost in a new place, but with these following steps, you'll be able to get to grips much more easily.

- **Use repeated landmarks** - A mountain range, rivers, boulevards, monuments. Using those landmarks will help you position yourself relatively in the place you are at. The trick is to pick those central landmarks which you can spot from a long way away and are evident from many different points.
- **Walking** - Try walking more – the more you walk, the more your orientation will improve. Walking will make you more conscious in comparison to using another method of transport, since it gets you in touch with the road and your surroundings – and besides, it's great for your health.
- **The path less travelled** - Choosing the unorthodox path will do your orientation good. If you know your general direction, find new roads to get there instead of just going in the same path you always use. Not only will it improve your orientation in new places, but it will also help you explore and know more of the place you are at.
- **Consciousness** - Drifting off when you walk is easy. But when you walk *consciously*, really thinking about what you're seeing around you instead of thinking about nothing, you'll start remembering street names, hidden shops, buildings and noises. Those little clues will help you with improving orientation since you are bound to run into one of the things you memorized when you are lost and magically understand where you are at. Being conscious will also make your life so much easier at your location since you will know it better.
- **Reverse engineering process** - When you leave your location (e.g. your hostel), you're obviously not lost. The problem starts later, when you can't remember how to get back. With the reverse engineering process – knowing and remembering the turns you have taken- you'll be leaving a breadcrumb trail to always lead you back home. Always look back, see your path from different angles so you can memorize how your return trip will look like on the way back.
- **The sun** - It sets in the east and rises in the west, and with this knowledge can help you reach your destination if you more or less know where is the direction of your destination. If you are the outdoor type, star knowledge is invaluable.

- **Documentation** - Always know the address of your hostel, or the important places you're going to. Keep them written down, not just in your memory.
- **Maps** - Taking the time to learn the general look of the city map will help you connect the dots and understand how the city is divided. Use printed or online maps to navigate. Just don't forget that a printed map never runs out of battery, although it can't tell you your current location.
- **Marking maps** - Before arriving to any new city, I download its offline google map and take a screenshot of the locations I need to go to on google maps with the exact address.
- **Technology** - With GPS tracking on a smart phone, you're never lost, and you can even have your routes plotted out for you. A compass is also a valuable tool to help you out if you can't get online.
- **Follow others** - If you're lost, and need to arrive to a main location, you can always gamble and follow the traffic (cars or people). Chances are that if you are driving and looking for the city exit, or if you are walking and looking for the train station, following a stream of people will more likely get you there.
- **Don't be shy** - Ask questions. Especially as a traveler, people will want to help you, and it is also an amazing way to make local friends in the process.

Unless you're blessed with perfect, innate orientation skills, using the above tips will save you time and trouble, and will help improving orientation in new places. Just remember – being lost in new places sometimes brings the best moments.

## Getting to Know the Place

When you arrive to your temporary base, it can be quite exciting. But we nomads have to adapt fast, so after a few days we already feel more or less like we are home. However, we can easily fall into the trap of feeling like a “local” too fast without exploring the location’s sights and culture. In this article, we will discuss a few ways to push yourself into exploring the city you’re at so that once you leave, you will really feel like you have gotten to know the place you were at.

ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO GET TO KNOW A PLACE IS TO DESIGNATE A SPECIFIC AMOUNT OF TIME TO TRAVELING IN WHICH YOU CHANGE YOUR MINDSET AND **FOCUS ON HAVING FUN** WHILE YOU EXPLORE YOUR SURROUNDINGS.

This is especially effective for nomads that are working, who are fixed in a daily routine and need to find a way to escape from it. The most recommended way to make this happen is to designate two days per week (usually the weekend) to ‘get away from it all’ and travel. In my experience, just these two days will replenish your energy for the rest of the week and make you not only more efficient but also **happier** while performing your daily routines of the weekdays. My basic rule is to push myself into a commitment of traveling during the weekend. Since my self-discipline suffers, I’ve found three different ways to enforce this commitment. These ways help me avoid weekends in which I do nothing and later feel bad when the weekend is over. Any one of these three will do to make you go through with your commitment.

- **The first way : Check out**

I force myself to check out of my accommodation (i.e. hostel) the day I want to travel. I simply pay in advance and then, magically, the motivation to travel elsewhere skyrockets the day I have to leave!

- **The second way: Buy a ticket**

Once you’ve spent the money on a train or bus ticket, chances are you’re going to push yourself into making the journey even if you’re feeling a bit lazy by the time the weekend rolls around. Buying that ticket in advance, therefore, is a great way to push yourself into keeping your plans.

- **The third way: Committing to travel with someone else**

Once you’ve made plans with friends or family, it’s hard to back out. If one of you starts to feel lazy, chances are the other will push you to follow through with the your promise.

YOU DON’T HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE WEEKEND TO **HIT THE TOWN**. THERE’S ALWAYS TIME TO DO SMALLER THINGS AROUND TOWN THAT YOU CAN COMMIT TO AND MAKE A ROUTINE OF. AND WITH TIME, YOU’LL FEEL MORE LIKE A LOCAL AND BE MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE CITY’S SIGHTS.

- One way to do this is to **walk as much as possible**. I always try to walk around unfamiliar places in my spare time, or even just to any place I need to go, since walking really brings you into the reality of the place and gives you the chance to notice the smaller details. Walking provides to you better memory of the area reorient yourself with; you will feel much more comfortable in your location once you know your way around. As a bonus, you'll be able to get to the places you want to get to without getting lost on the way (ordinarily wasting time doing so).
- Another way to do this is to **use public transportation** whenever you have some free time. Try taking a bus to the other side of town and pay close attention to the streets and major attractions; you'd be surprised at how valuable the memory of those streets can be to you in the future. I actually love to purchase a monthly pass (in big cities like Berlin or London), that allows me to travel extensively without thinking of the cost. Every day, I make a commitment to myself to arrive to a new station and walk from there to home and work. It's a great place to know your location better.
- **Using maps** provides a fantastic way to orient yourself before you set out (or even on your way). Modern technology allows you to use a GPS while walking. The combination of seeing your surroundings while at the same time being aware of your location on a map can be quite helpful.
- We usually avoid saying yes to invitations or meetings if those are scheduled in unfamiliar places. Try to avoid asking to change the meeting place to somewhere you are familiar with (ex. city center). Instead, **say yes to, and even be happy for**, each opportunity to that comes your way. It is, however, important not to forget to take into consideration the extra time you'll spend getting lost on the way (looking for the place).
- As we discussed in our article about [getting to know locals](#), **spending time with locals** can be very beneficial. For instance, a local can take you to many different places you'd never go to on your own, allowing you to get a better feel for the area. They also probably know their way around better than you do (so there's less of a chance of getting lost).

A very valuable way of getting to know a place is, in my experience, **to make a list of places** you'd like to explore and finding ways of getting there whenever you have free time. I divide my list of places into two categories. One consists of places that can be reached easily when I have only a small amount of free time and that can be easily combined with my daily activities. The second consists of places that are farther away and usually need a day or two to explore. I try to take note each time someone mentions to me a place that is worthwhile to visit, then I add it to my list and *commit* myself to venturing there over the weekend.

You never know when you'll return to the place you're currently at. Following the above mentioned steps will allow you to fully explore the area and get a feel for where you're staying. That way, when you decide to finally leave, you will *honestly* be able to say to yourself that you really got to know it (it's also fun to meet people that live there later on and be able to surprise them with your knowledge of their town).

# Nomad Philosophy

## What is lifestyle design?

A first glance, the term “lifestyle design” might sound like spiritual new-age mumbo-jumbo. But for me, it’s a very simple concept: The understanding that a person can design their own lifestyle to become more happy. The hype around this term started with Tim Ferriss’ inspirational book, *Four Hour Work Week* that focused on location independent lifestyle. However, lifestyle design is relevant to each of us, and does not necessarily relate to nomadic living. Here are some important elements that will make the concept of lifestyle design more clear:

- **The “normal” or “template” lifestyle** - 9-5 job. Family, kids, spouse. Home. Although we run a nomadic blog, we do not look down on the “normal lifestyle”. Since it is so common, we also agree that for some, the peace and happiness it brings makes it the best lifestyle out there. However, for many of us, there are other lifestyles that are more suitable and can bring more happiness than the normal lifestyle.
- **Alternatives to the “normal” lifestyle** - The options here are numerous to choose from, as there are many “root lifestyles”, that can be defined in one word. Among the common alternatives for a lifestyle are: Religious lifestyle (whatever religion you choose), Rural (living in the nature and focusing on agriculture), Entrepreneur, [Nomadic lifestyle](#) and more. Sometimes you can combine these root lifestyles together, for example, I define myself as a [nomad entrepreneur](#). If you are creative and courageous enough, you can also create a unique lifestyle that is customized to you only.
- **The variety within the root lifestyle** - Now that we have defined our root lifestyle, let’s go deeper and see what kind of layers within the lifestyle can we design? Do you volunteer, ski, are you unorthodox or orthodox, mainstream culture or counterculture and so on. As you can see, the variety is endless. You can have a lifestyle that’s normal, nomadic or religious, but within the limitations, design your lifestyle according to your preferences and unique self.
- **Active/Passive mindset** - As you can see by now, every one of us has a lifestyle even if we didn’t pick one. Sadly, many of us have our lives designed for us. The design was made by events that happened to us along the way. Did you play a conscious part in defining your own lifestyle, or has it been simply a result of going with the flow? Lifestyle design requires you to think and actively pursue the lifestyle of your choice.
- **Constraints and attachments** - These are the circumstances that allow or prohibit us from designing our own lives. Kids, family, health, money, pets, assets, careers, addictions, weaknesses. All of these things create constraints, and [the freer you are](#)

from these, the more easily and flexibly you can design your life. Now, it is important to say that attachments *can also* be the sources of happiness. However, if your current attachments are not making you happy and hold you back from change, it might be time to see how you can get “unstuck”. It is ironic that some lifestyles choices result in “built in” attachments, reducing the degrees of freedom you have to keep on designing your life in the future. That’s why we love the nomadic lifestyle/location free lifestyle so much, since it allows us the flexibility for future change, once we decide it is time to change to something new.

So, how do we start designing our own lifestyle?

- **Contemplation** - Take the time to ask yourself if you’re actually happy in your current situation. Are you in the life you wanted? It goes without saying that you can’t design your life unless you know exactly what you want, yet, many of us have not taken the time to think about what really makes us happy. What do you want to be?
- **Planning** - Once you know what you want, it is time to plan the steps that will get you there. Some of the steps will probably require new skills, preparations and taking a risk. But between you and me, not taking the risk is probably the biggest risk you can take.
- **Action** - Make it happen.

In conclusion, Lifestyle design is something that would greatly benefit all of us, should we take the time to look at our lives squarely in the eye, and execute a plan towards happiness.

## Disadvantages of a Nomadic Lifestyle

We've already gone through the [advantages of a nomadic lifestyle](#), and now it's time to paint the full picture and discuss the disadvantages of a nomadic lifestyle. Life, in general, puts a cost on every decision we make. If the nomadic lifestyle were purely advantageous, everyone would be doing it. And most people don't. Here's our list of the disadvantages of a nomadic lifestyle that might explain why nomads are a minority:

- **Loneliness** - Usually, a nomadic lifestyle forces you to take a lot of leaps by yourself, as the chances are that it wouldn't be easy to find a constant companion that follows you everywhere you go. Loneliness is a powerful and scorching feeling, that you can't escape as a nomad. Avoiding loneliness is easy for those who are settled down by entering a stable relationship, meeting family members, or developing our circle of friends. For nomads, it is more challenging, but fear not, there are still some great ways to [create a social life on the move](#). However, you should be accept the fact that as a nomad, you will sometimes feel lonely even if your social skills are outstanding.
- **Constant ups and downs** - Since the nomadic lifestyle doesn't offer the guaranteed stability a regular lifestyle does, you'll meet with both good and bad surprises on a daily basis. Since everything is new, and you lack information, the happenings of a nomadic lifestyle constantly trigger a lot of emotional ups and downs. If you take life too seriously, it can be a problem; a nomad needs to know how to ride through the ups and downs, because both are guaranteed.
- **Lack of private space** - Most people feel the need to be able to say, "*this is home*" – a place to feel comfortable and secure, store all your stuff, and create your design. Constantly changing locations means you don't always have that private home-base, and although occasionally you'll find *something more stable for a few months, it will never be home, since you know you will leave it soon*.
- **Excitement levels** - Travelling too much can dull you to new things. After a year of being stuck in the pressure of work, a week's vacation in India is eye-opening. But when you're constantly moving around (especially if you're focused in one region, e.g. Europe), your excitement levels aren't quite what they were. *Yet another snow-capped mountain, just one more lava field*. The *wow* element gets turned down, and even the most jaw-droopingly spectacular can seem boring and mundane.
- **Money** - There's a certain illusion (steamed books such as the 4 hours' workweek contributed to it), that a location free lifestyle actually holds greater riches than being a corporate slave doing a 9 to 5 job. From my experience, in the majority of cases, you would be much better off financially staying in the same place. In general, your finances are held up by the two pillars: revenue and expense. As for expenses, it's true that you can save money by choosing to stay in low cost countries, although due to information gaps, you will probably spend more than a local. The real problem comes down to actually earning money while changing locations. Since money is so important, this hit on revenue is easily one of the notable disadvantages of a nomadic

lifestyle. Even in today's global and internet connected world, it's hard to form a real connection with clients when you can't attend physical meetings with them; it's also hard to be fully committed and focused on a revenue stream while changing locations constantly; time's wasted. Instead of holding up the dream that the nomadic lifestyle will be improve your financials, realize that it has its costs. But then again, for nomads, happiness comes first.

- **Losing everything, again and again** - It's like birth, death and rebirth, and while we're on this philosophical tangent, why are we so afraid of death? Maybe it's because we're scared of losing what we've worked so hard to attain, and what we know. The nomadic lifestyle is similar; every time you move, you are losing your home, your favorite "known" places, your social circles, all to be recreated time after time.
- **Reaction of your non-nomadic environment** - There are typically two reactions you will encounter when you reveal your nomadic identity. Envy is the first, and with envy come all the questions that are trying to prove your model wrong (you have to be wrong, or they are wrong). The second reaction is from people thinking that you've totally lost it. Neither of these reactions are good but you should be prepared for both. Some nomads actually thrive when receiving the envy reaction ("you have an amazing life"), but when you get addicted to envy, you will later on need to hide or lie about the disadvantages, in order to keep the dream alive. Worse, you will be at a risk of lying to yourself about how happy you are. [As explored in other articles](#), ego doesn't fit with the lifestyle.
- **Missing out** - As your family grows older, and your friends start having kids, you're not there to accompany them in those moments, and maybe you're going to regret missing the precious moments in the future. *I wish I spent more time with...* we tend to think that only *our* lives are changing, but even the people we leave behind change, grow and die, and you have to learn how to accept and mitigate it. If it's important to spend quality time with your parents, don't go away for years at a time. Come home every six months. Find solutions.
- **Not meeting your perfect match** - When it comes to jobs, the nomadic lifestyle can be disadvantageous for the perfect career, too. The period spent travelling can look like a black hole on a resume, and can be difficult to explain to a potential employer. Although [fulfilling work](#) can happen for you while you're moving around, you're worse off than if you stayed at home. This disadvantage of the nomadic lifestyle doesn't just apply to your perfect job with its perfect salary, but the perfect special someone, too. Since you're travelling and most other people aren't, it dramatically reduces your chance of finding your better half, and it's something to be taken into account. Your pool of potential applicants is reduced, and your chances drop. However, if you do find someone on the move, they're probably amazing, and great candidates with whom to share your life. But stop and think: if your nomadic lifestyle is important to you, can you imagine sacrificing it all? While travelling, hooking up with the right person means completely changing your lifestyle. And who knows, it'll probably be that much stronger because of it.

- **Attachments** - For a nomad, attachments are very negative. There are so many that you simply can't maintain as a nomad. Then again, they can be sweet and addictive. An amazing relationship, a great place, the right job. You have to keep on moving, and you have to give them up, if you want to continue in your nomadic lifestyle.

Always take into account the advantages and the disadvantages of a nomadic lifestyle, before you decide whether this is worth the trouble of the undertaking.

## Nomad quotes

Here are inspiring nomad quotes, words to give you motivation and show you the way forward on your nomad's journey. The stronger you connect to these quotes, the more you likely you are to connect to the nomadic lifestyle we are trying to introduce in this blog. The next step is to make those quotes a reality, and embark on your own journey. Without further ado...

**" Things you own, end up owning you (Fight Club)**

Although not nomadic at first glance, this quote is all about the logic behind a nomadic lifestyle. We usually become slaves to our attachments, to what we have. Nomads are about breaking free, being flexible, starting from scratch time after time.

**" A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent on arriving (Lao Tzu)**

Probably the most famous nomad quote ever. This lifestyle is not about arriving anywhere, nor is it about fixed goals. The journey itself is the goal, and being happy while travelling is the way.

**" My religion is to live and die without regret (Milarepa)**

A very powerful quote, a whole philosophy in a few words. You'd have to admit that most of the things we regret are the things we *haven't* done or missed out on doing – it's pretty uncommon to meet someone who regrets travelling too much. When the end comes, following Milarepa's way will ensure you are at peace.

**" In a world full of people, only some want to fly. Isn't that crazy? (Seal)**

Nomads fly.

**" They told me to grow roots, instead I grew wings (Lou)**

Our relatives want the best for us, so they try to push us to a safe place, where uncertainty and risks are reduced. However, for some of us wings and not roots is the way to live a happy life.

**" Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma, which is living with the results of someone else's thinking (Steve Jobs)**

Nomadic lifestyles aren't the mainstream. If we would live in a way that's considered normal, we'd be living someone else's life. Live your own life, pursue your own way. Don't put up an entire show that doesn't serve anyone, let alone you yourself.

**" I've been waiting for tomorrow all my life (Matt Johnson)**

Tomorrow never comes, it's all about living in the *now*. Being too preoccupied about the future and the consequences of your current actions disconnects you from "Now". There is never another time than the present, and if you're not making the most of now, then what's the point? As one Jewish rabbi said, *If not now, when?*

**" Not all those who wander are lost (JRR Tolkien)**

Perception can actually mislead us, don't assume that the normal "acceptable" path brings more happiness than being on a constant journey.

**" One friend of God is travelling** (*Sufism*)

The list of the *friends of God* in the Sufi religion are residing in specific locations and have a strong connection with god. It might give hope to the spiritual among us that "One" friend of god on this list is constantly travelling without a need of a fixed place of worship. The path is enough to connect.

**" What you seek is seeking you** (*Rumi*)

A call for being active in this life, if you are really after pursuing your dream. If you're not going to actively seek out then you won't find it, and it's probably not going to come out and find you. Waiting won't bring you any closer to your goals.

**" The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance** (*Alan Watts*)

Alan Watts was one of the greatest advocates of change and a great fighter of fear and that which holds us back. Change will awaken you, so just let go and leap into it. If something feels right, make it happen.

**" Home is the here and now** (*Buddhism*)

Home doesn't have to be a physical location; it can be wherever you are, so long as you're happy, content and satisfied with your current reality.

**" The moments you have experienced are the only possession that nobody can take away from you** (*Unknown*)

Everything is temporal in life; The only thing you really own are the moments you have experienced. Those are yours to keep, and more importantly, to collect.

**" Change is home** (*Yours truly!*)

We all need some kind of home, we all seek love and happiness. Why not make change itself your home?

Do you have any quotes or inspirational sayings that motivate you? Feel free to add them and raise your voice on the blog!

## Yom Kippur spirituality and nomad philosophy

In our search for insights about a nomad lifestyle, we will now turn to Judaism's holiest day, Yom Kippur. It appears that the mindset and some of the rituals performed in Yom Kippur have strong elements that can help us reflect on our lives as nomads. So, what is Yom Kippur all about? In Hebrew, Yom Kippur means *Day of Repentance*. For the twenty-five hours it lasts, you can't eat, drink or use electricity among other prohibitions. Yom Kippur is a day in which the "yearly book of life" closes, and as such pushes you into action just like a deadline you can't miss. Granted, my interpretation of Yom Kippur is not necessarily the mainstream Jewish interpretation, as some of the ideas here are based on my own understanding of this special day.

Here are some of the elements of Yom Kippur that I find relevant to our nomadic theme:

**Asking for forgiveness.** Just before the beginning of Yom Kippur, you are supposed to take the time to reflect and map out all the people you have hurt or offended in the last year, and then contact them and ask for their forgiveness. How does this connect to nomadic lifestyle? *Ego*. Not only that asking for forgiveness allows you a fresh start and has good Karma in it, but it also makes you feel humbled, smaller thus training you to control the ego. Ego is, after all, our own preoccupation with what other people think of us.

Nomads can hardly afford to have ego. We're not looked upon by society as the normal success story, and we need to accept that, instead of making lies to society and to ourselves about our lifestyle. Also, nomadic life involves living on a budget. In most of the cases, you will probably be less financially wealthy than you might have been with a regular lifestyle. Living on a budget and signaling that we can't always afford to spend is also connected to our ability to control our ego, and Yom Kippur's forgiveness ritual is a great start.

**Redefine yourself.** Yom Kippur is full with prohibitions, but also offers a unique gift. The first prayer of Yom Kippur is called Kol Nidrei (All vows), and as the name hints, it is giving you the right to null all the vows you have made in the last year to yourself and to god (not to other people). We hardly make vows anymore, so you might think that this is not really a big deal. But thinking about it, our life is all about the promises we make to ourselves, and the way we define ourselves. This is who we are, this is our game. Yom Kippur is a reset button where you can take the time with yourself and decide who you are from this moment on, and also to forgive yourself on past mistakes allowing you to redefine who you are from now on. It's amazing to me that a major religion supports this option where, after a day of hard thinking, you can say "I'm not *that anymore*". Even though the world sees you as an economist/mother/social worker/depressed, you can start from scratch and redefine yourself to become something new (a nomad maybe?). The nomadic connection is obvious – we're constant movers, reborn from place to place. Staying in one place creates expectations from our society and family; new places offer freedom for new identity. As above, the biggest obstacle and attachment all of us face is the ego, the way we self-define and the expectations that follow – and even the hardest

nomad ought to occasionally stop and ask themselves once in a while, how much do we really change, and are we still growing? If we switch from place to place, do we also change something in ourselves? If you're the *exact* same person in Istanbul and Buenos Aires, aren't you missing out on something? Click the reset button from time to time, reinvent yourself.

**Disconnection and Reflection.** Yom Kippur allows you to disconnect from modern life. You can't drive or walk a lot, as you don't want to expend a lot of energy and if you take it seriously, you are spending most of the day thinking and contemplating. You're completely disconnected from modern life. In Israel, roads are totally blocked, it's a total reality change. Hustle and bussle becomes a freeze. You get time to think about the vows in your life, and the changes you are promising yourself to pursue this year. The sacrifice you're making not eating or drinking is difficult, but on the other hand, you don't want the day to end, since it is a unique chance to think strategically about your life before going back to the "flow" of life with its white noise.

**Abstention.** As stated, Yom Kippur is a challenge of not eating or drinking. If you're more religious, there are even more things from which must abstain. This is good, as it reminds us how dependent and fragile we are, in our miserable state after only twenty-five hours. We are used to get our needs fulfilled in the modern world, and it is a glorious reminder of how little it takes to shake the system and create a situation in which you are fragile. On the other hand, it also shows you that can sustain yourself on nothing, and still survive. Our society is about consumption, we consume what we want immediately, and confuse between what we want and what we actually need. A day of abstention teaches you that we can get by and still be happy for some time even without fulfilling our basic needs. Saying *no* to things you only think you need is critical in order to sustain a nomad lifestyle and achieve freedom. The ability to only consume what we really need will increase your chances to keep up with this lifestyle without going bankrupt and Yom Kippur does allow us to learn this lesson with learning of frugality, diminished ego, and living on a budget.

In conclusion, I love Yom Kippur! If you think that those rituals and lessons can be relevant to you, I would even recommend giving it a try, no matter which religion (if any) you follow. All religions have their connection with happiness and god (however you define god), and connecting to those teaching and rituals can create happiness.

## Advantages of a Nomad Lifestyle

The decision to become a Nomad and roam the earth for an extended amount of time (or even for life) can be made for a variety of reasons. Regardless of the reason that may have brought you to consider making such a choice, there are some key advantages to making the world your home. Being a Nomad:

- **Is fun.** Social media sites such as Facebook are a prime example of how the average person narrows down their public posts to the elite experience of their life – the fun moments, the times where unique experiences were had. But how many of those moments do most of us have? The lifestyle of a Nomad is generally an endless stream of constant change that bring you from one experience to the next, enriching your life, making you feel alive..
- **Awakens you.** This is not in reference to a religious awakening, but related to breaking free of the every day mundane. There was a time when I had a life with a job where I took the same bus every day at the same time with the same people on that bus. Each day looked exactly as the one before and at no point was my life enriched by the people that I saw on that bus to and from work every day. Being a nomad changed that. The lifestyle of a Nomad is one of a constant spark, freeing you from the confines of regularity.
- **Gains you knowledge.** The knowledge you gain from being a Nomad isn't the same as sitting in a University class and learning from a textbook. You get to see first hand how the history of a country shaped the culture of the people that live there. You have the opportunity to experience a variety of beliefs (religious or not) from all corners of the globe. You have the ability to pick up foreign languages and learn from people what they do and how they think.
- **Builds you.** By gaining knowledge through your experiences as a Nomad, this allows you to take the best of the people, cultures and countries around you in order to build yourself. However, being a Nomad isn't always easy. There are many challenges and problems you will face. Living in an environment of constant change where situations can be quite hectic at times can be tiring, but all of this also pushes you towards personal freedom. The very challenges that will try and bring you down are also the thing that will give you the opportunity to truly be free in who you are and the life you live. By not having a home in the traditional sense (more often than not, your bag becomes your home) and the basic understanding that nothing is yours and everything is temporary – you will reach freedom and learn to accept the hardships of life with ease. The notion of being a Nomad is the very definition of freedom in many cultures.
- **Gives you the freedom to redefine yourself.** The brilliant part of breaking from free from the constraints of a “normal life” is that it gives you that freedom to become who you want to be. No longer do you have expectations of people, society or even yourself limiting what you are able to be, achieve or choose to do in your life. As a Nomad you have the ability to travel the world and with each new location you get

to, you are able to redefine yourself and start from scratch. Try something new. Take a risk. Do something you never thought you would do – be you.

- **Creates a story.** Being a Nomad is a journey through life that can take you around the world and back again. With so many experiences jam packed into your every day, it's only natural that such a life would create an interesting story to share with others. Your entire life and every waking (and sometimes sleeping moment) has added value. People become attracted to that, whether in your business or personal life and as a result, the story of your life as a Nomad is definitely an advantage in itself, as it creates contacts and benefits.
- **Develops your connections.** Naturally, a life as a Nomad will bring you many encounters with people from all walks of life. These encounters will develop your relationships that will build your [network of contacts](#) without even trying. Whether you are keen to start your own business, aim to work on your career in different countries or otherwise, being a Nomad is a great way to fast-track your networks to a global scale. Sometimes it truly is more important who you know rather than what you know.
- **Allows you to “hack life.”** In this modern day, life is no longer restricted to the classic story of living your entire life in one place and taking over the family business. Internet has been one of the great tools to help the world connect on an international level, but also expand our idea of what a “normal life” looks like. The choice to be a Nomad allows you the opportunity to potentially find your own home somewhere around the world, but it doesn't restrict you to working from there as well. Part of the total freedom of being a Nomad is that you could live in a location where living expenses are incredibly low, but then [work for international companies](#) that pay well through the luxury of internet. Who says the world needs to exist in black and white perspectives? Being a Nomad is an opportunity to expand your mind on the other possibilities of a fully enriched lifestyle.

Overall, there will always be different perspectives on what it means to be a Nomad and how that is good or bad. Your choice to live this lifestyle will be made for a multitude of different reasons, but know that the benefits of that choice are not as simple as just getting the opportunity to see a different country. It's so much more than that. The benefits of being a Nomad may change the course of your life forever.

## Different Types of Nomads

Making the choice to live a nomadic lifestyle does not limit you to only one style of life. There are many different types of nomads that you can choose from. Listed below are some of the more common types of nomads that I have come across with people who are constantly exploring the world around them. If you are making the decision to become a nomad, hopefully this will help clarify some of the advantages and disadvantages to each type of this lifestyle.

### Digital Nomad

Is a person who constantly is moving and exploring new destinations, but is dependent on technology to continue working. I am a [digital nomad](#) and rely on technology for communication so that I can keep in touch with my clients. Usually this means that there is a regular work week with travelling done on the weekends, but it could also mean that travelling is done through work where one is constantly living in different countries for work purposes. This can be a very rewarding lifestyle.

### Spiritual Nomad

This is a nomad with a deeper purpose to their travels. As such they are generally focused on:

- Spirituality
- The meaning of life
- Understanding and investigating the world and self
- Gaining and passing knowledge
- Learning and teaching about life

A spiritual nomad uses their road in traveling as a source of inspiration and awakening and then passes on those insights to people they meet. In that sense, this type of nomad can be considered the top notch as a spiritual nomad can reach a greater understanding to how the world works. Some great examples of spiritual nomads are Buddha, Zen Monks and Indian Sadhus. The downside is that it is rare to achieve this type of nomad due to the intensity in which spirituality is the focus of life. For many, this can be too much.

### Quick Time Out Nomad

This type of nomad is one who is able to make an arrangement with their employer to have regular time off throughout the year to go travelling. My friend Lisa happened to do this by being able to have a week off work every two months to travel. Some advantages of this include:

- Have a reliable source of income
- Is a taste of being a nomad
- Allows a person the ability to see many different places of the world
- That all said, this type of nomad lifestyle can work for very few of us. Some of the disadvantages include:

- Not a complete nomad lifestyle
- Can be intense packing travel into short periods of time
- Have to come back to a job
- Not the most cost-effective

### **Corporate type Nomad**

This type of nomad is one who is able to be constantly on the move, while working on the same time for a big corporate. My friend Mirna is doing just that, since she has an agreement with her company that she doesn't need to physically be in an office, and can work from home. If your boss let's you do that, the road to defining "home" as the road is quite short. In a nutshell, this lifestyle is much more interesting than your daily office routine, but can also be exhausting since you are not really free while roaming the earth.

### **Half-Half Nomad**

This type of nomad resembles the short Time out Type Nomad, but is slightly more flexible and slower pace. It would mean that a person cycles between work and travel. Generally a person might work six months and then travel six months allowing you to focus on work and then travel separately. Many people are able to sustain this type of travel for years and can be an incredibly interesting way to live.

### **Offline Nomad**

This is the most classic type of nomad where a person travels from place to place, working at a job that sustains their life style no matter where they are. A common example of this would be an artisan that produces their art to sell in the street. The downside is that this type of nomad generally leads a poorer lifestyle as they are very dependent on the purchasing power of the local population. If you choose this path, you will have to be frugal with your finances, but rest in the knowledge that you will be freer than most nomads from the strain of modern society.

### **Rich Nomad**

Generally, this is the type of nomad many aspire to become, but only a few ever achieve. A rich nomad would be someone who has a lot of money – usually from the lottery, inheritance or from a very successful career. The brilliant part of this type of nomad is there is so much flexibility for how a person can travel, for how long or where they'd like to go. The down side is that sometimes this type can be "too easy" as there can be limited purpose to this type of lifestyle.

### **Home Nomad**

This type nomadic lifestyle is all about perception. People who succeed as this type of nomad are ones who are able to establish a life in one particular place, but still receive the benefits of being a nomad. The key is that every day feels like an adventure to awaken you – a lifestyle of which change feels constant and yet you are able to [remain living in one place](#). As such, this can be the luckiest type of nomad there is.

## Avoiding Attachment: The Only Way To Be Free

The basic reality of a nomad is to keep changing location. The first question that comes to mind when I think of being free:

**“Why don’t most of us spend at least some period of time in our lives as a nomad?”**

Upon further thought, the answer I find is that we can’t, and the reason we can’t is *attachment*. If we dig deep and take a thorough look into our lives, we will find that we all are attached to *something* in our lives that keeps us immobile. In this article, we will discuss major types of common attachments and the proper way to deal with them to become a nomad.

- **Sustaining Ourselves Financially** - We usually sustain ourselves by either receiving a salary from an employer or opening our own business. In each case, this classic money-making model requires staying in the same place and showing up each day of the week. For most of us, this standard has not changed, but there is some good news. Because of the changes Internet has made, I know people, living on decent salary, who work from home. That means they can really work from anywhere - it is all about picking a flexible job that allows you to do things in advance or openly discuss matters with your boss. If you open a business, try to pick a business idea that will not require you to actually be physically present in a specific location. Again, the Internet is a perfect solution since most start-ups and online businesses do not require your physical presence. So as we’ve discussed, due diligence and preparation will actually allow you to sustain yourself while on-the-move thus avoiding a physical business attachment that omits the ability to become a nomad.
- **An Attachment to Someone Else** - This is often an attachment to a family member but can also be an attachment to a pet. There are two common situations. One situation: we are too attached to a person and afraid of losing them because they will not accompany us in our nomadic way of life. This is usually true for a spouse or other intimate relationship we may have. The most obvious solution is to choose a spouse that accepts a nomadic lifestyle and would agree to accompany us on our journey. A nomad isn’t required by definition to travel alone, he just has to travel. If you find that special someone who is willing to accept this new lifestyle with you, you’ve probably found a gem. The second situation: we have someone that is dependent on us. The most common case would be having a child or pet (or in some cases, our parents or family – especially those who are medically disabled). This attachment to a dependent is much trickier than the first. In this case, we may have to give up our nomadic dream for a period of time and face the reality that sometimes we have to stay in one place. This is particularly true when a family member we care about is ill and needs us by their side. In this case, we can only wait for them to get better or kick the bucket (to be frank). Other than that, if you decide you want to be a nomad, it would be a smart decision to postpone having kids (since having kids will prevent you from traveling). Also, if we know that our top desire is to become a nomad, one of the worst things that we can do is to get a pet, because

they are also very hard to leave alone for a long period of time (or take with you). In conclusion, the major attachment of having someone be dependent on us is a challenge, but we can prepare ourselves to deal with it successfully.

- **Assets and Valuables** - Usually it's an amazing house that we don't want to abandon or even a fantastic car or any other valuable asset we can't take with us which holds us back from leaving. The only solution here is to understand that any asset that creates this type of attachment is actually a liability that we need to get rid of.
- **Dependency on Comfort and Security** - Most of us need a place that we can call home, that we can come back to and feel comfortable in. This is fine as long as we're happy. If we are unhappy, we must face the possibility that the comfort of home is only doing us damage. It is true that a nomad usually travels with one suitcase or bag that in some way is actually his home. Once you accept this, you will find only the most important things to put in this bag, and break away from the heap of unnecessary things.
- **Connected with all of the above mentioned** - Fear Most notably, the fear of change. We are afraid to leave our comfort zone and stable environment. The best way to conquer this fear is to understand that if we're unhappy, change is the best solution. The world is full of opportunity and the potential for happiness. Fearing a change that can get us to a happier reality is counterproductive and not fair to ourselves.

All in all, the attachments I've mentioned above are completely natural. Not being aware of them and preparing in advance makes for a lost battle though. The best way to take control and finally make the decision to become a nomad is to be conscious of what we want to do and prepare ourselves to not fall into the trap of attachment. As a side note, when I became a nomad, I was handed the opportunity. I was unhappy, yet I feared leaving my job and the risk of losing my girlfriend. However, life (*forcibly*) pushed me to disengage from my attachments when I was fired and my girlfriend left me. In this case, life itself – without any opposition on my part - has enabled me to break free from my attachments - but you can't necessarily count on that to happen to you. So, being aware and active can improve your chances of having less attachments in life if this is something you've decided can make you happy.

## Nomad Historical Figures

This article will discuss the major nomadic leaders who have also reached a high spiritual level by being nomadic. Although it is important to say that awakening and enlightenment do not necessarily have to have a religious aspect about them. In most cases, they have more to do with understanding more about ourselves and the world than religion.

With that said, some of the most well-known awakenings have been related to religious figures. We can learn a lot from these stories. The most striking common element of these, which is probably no coincidence, is the fact that the fathers of these many religions such as Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Muhammad, and Jesus did not simply encounter god in the comfort of their homes. Most of them, such as Abraham, were constantly on the move. This highlights the possibility that in order to achieve enlightenment, one must not be confined to a single place.

**Abraham** is a prime example, a person who had been ordered by God to leave his home and comfort zone and without being given a destination. Most of his contact with God happened on-the-road, which demonstrates the fact that the journey is much more important than the destination.

**Moses** journeyed to the top of Mount Sinai where he then spent forty days and forty nights transcribing the Torah from the words of God. Nobody knows exactly what happened during those forty days, or how he managed to survive them. But once again, the element of leaving a stable environment to throwing oneself into the unknown to achieve enlightenment is repeated. Jesus also traveled around constantly between Nazareth, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and various caves in the Dead Sea region and Muhammad received the Qu'ran while on the move. Sufists (a group of people belonging to a branch of Islam) believe that there are only a select few people on Earth that are truly considered to be "friends of God". One of those select few individuals is a nomad (or as they call it, a "traveling friend of God").

Maybe the best example would be Siddhartha Gautama (the **Buddha**), a rich prince that decided to leave home and his comfortable life to become a nomad without possessions. He felt that his palace life kept him away from the truth of the world, traveling in search of answers until attaining enlightenment in Bodh Gaya.

In a way, it is easy to understand why the path to enlightenment and awakening happens on the move. We know what it feels like to stay in one place and have a very stable and daily routine as opposed to traveling - where you become exposed to new experiences and tumultuous emotion. Many people use travel as an opportunity to make great changes in their lives. One of the most common actions of someone who is unhappy with his life is to put life on hold for a while and just travel to **become reconnected to himself** and take time to decide what needs to be changed. If you feel like your life is at a stop and has no real meaning, it is much more likely you will find a new taste and meaning for life by changing your environment and becoming a nomad for a period of time. Other than exposing yourself to new experiences and cultures, getting away from it all increases the

chances of an awakening and being able to reconnect to yourself by avoiding the usual traps we are usually surrounded with (ex. ego, materialistic lifestyles, social pressure).

## Freedom from Being Defined by Others (and Yourself)

### Nobody knows you when you are on the move.

One of the reactions you can expect to get from relatives and friends when you travel often is **envy**. The question is: *why is this reaction so common when people are well aware that a nomadic lifestyle is not always fun and easy?*

I think one of the many possible answers to that is envy of the **freedom** it allows you to have. One might say that we're all **free**, even if we stay in the same place, but there is some kind of spiritual freedom that can be achieved more easily while traveling.

THIS FREEDOM ACTUALLY HAS A LOT TO DO WITH JUST TWO MAJOR ELEMENTS: THE WAY YOU ARE DEFINED BY *YOURSELF* AND THE WAY YOU ARE DEFINED BY *YOUR ENVIRONMENT*.

If we ask a crowd of people to define themselves in a few words, we will probably hear the same thing over and over. For example, *"I'm just a guy... christian, an accountant, with two kids."* This definition is very comfortable and stable - though not very deep. Most of it is actually describing our stable environment and doesn't really describe who we are. We find it comfortable to have a clear and fixed definition of ourselves without often **challenging** it. Usually this definition is aligned with the way society or our environment defines us.

In a way, we are now trapped in a situation where these two major forces have established a **clear-cut** definition of who you are that is very hard to change. One of the reasons we avoid change, or find it so difficult, is having to explain it. We not only have difficulty explaining the change to those in our environment but to ourselves as well (often an even *bigger* challenge). We find a lot of comfort in our fixed definition and can be distressed when this definition changes.

### ...but this exact issue is one of the biggest advantages of being a nomad!

Since a nomad changes location so often, he is not binded to society's view of him - *because society keeps on changing*. In a way, a nomad can create a new definition for himself every time he changes location. This blesses you with a certain degree of freedom that people who stay in the same place can **never** get to experience.

### A nomad can be a spiritual beggar on the bank of an Indian river and later become a business man in London in a matter of a day.

In the Jewish tradition, the holiest day of the year is Yom Kippur. This day is filled with many rituals and messages but one of the most important themes of the day is that of having a **clean start**. This day allows you to **redefine** yourself and liberates you of all of the promises you've made to god in the past year. This allows you to establish a new idea for *who you are and who you want to be*.

BASICALLY, IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU NEED A FRESH START (AND YOU'RE UNABLE TO MAKE IT HAPPEN IN THE PLACE YOU LIVE BECAUSE OF THE WAY THE ENVIRONMENT DEFINES YOU AND THE WAY YOU DEFINE YOURSELF) THEN LIVING A NOMADIC LIFESTYLE FOR A PERIOD OF TIME

WILL ALLOW YOU TO EXPERIMENT WITH THE CHANGE AND REALLY  
CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

## Spiritual and Cultural Exposure While Traveling

One of the biggest advantages of being a nomad is having constant exposure to various lifestyles and beliefs. Most of us are brought up focusing on one belief and some of us don't even continue that belief (some of us become less religious). Being on the move allows you to be naturally exposed, as part of your new environment, to new religious beliefs and rituals. One example that comes to mind is the Zen monks who dedicated their lives to traveling and seeking answers to life's questions. Every time they heard about a prominent mentor that lives in a remote town, they decided to walk for many days in order to visit with him and ask him questions. Some of them stayed with the spiritual mentor for years and some only stayed for a few days, but they always kept on moving after they received their answers and learned all they could from him.

Spirituality has many forms, the most obvious being religious but other forms also exist. For example, yoga and meditation are not religious, yet offer a depth of spiritual tools. You may meet a person while on the road who may not be religious but instead may have a unique spiritual wisdom that cannot be ignored.

### **So what are the best ways to be exposed to new spiritual ways of life?**

The easiest way is to **simply be aware and curious** about the prevalent spiritual beliefs in the place you are at. For example, if you are in India, you can easily be exposed to the ideas and rituals of the Hindu religion. If you are in Israel, you can do the same for the Jewish religion and so on. The key is to be genuinely interested, ask questions, and make note of things that you like and connect to. Don't be too shy to go to a synagogue or Buddhist temple; observe the rituals and ask questions. Usually people attending those sermons are very receptive to foreigners who are interested in their spiritual path and even take it as a compliment. When you do so, it is advisable to check in advance for things that aren't permitted to avoid unintentionally causing insult (for example, going into a synagogue without a kipa or entering a mosque with shorts).

A great way would be to find local people who are interested in spirituality and set meetings with them to discuss their way of life. I've also found that a good way to supplement your spiritual knowledge is to read relevant books and publications while there. Many places also have events such as spiritual yoga sessions in India and special gatherings of various religious holidays which can be a great way to expose yourself as well.

An additional way to explore beliefs would be to follow the example of the Zen monks and actively **search for spiritual mentors**. Some of them are well-known and accept visitors. From my experience, some of the encounters can be very useful while others may be disappointing.

You can also connect to spirituality on your own without being exposed to other people by just getting a feel for the place; use nature's unique characteristics to find new insights about life. For example, one of the best ways to isolate yourself from the noise that the modern world emits is to go on a trek for a few days. You might find that walking in nature by yourself is a great way to reconnect to yourself and your deepest thoughts.

One additional thing to keep in mind is the place's history. Sadly, in many cases the historical residents of the place may have had a lot more wisdom and spirituality than the modern-day ones. Going into museums and asking questions about ancient inhabitants and their ways might offer a lot more insight than talking to the locals (who are usually very focused on the 'now' and urgent matters of today's mundane life). A good example would be Latin America, having many unique cultures such as the Incas and the Mayans in comparison to the modern way of life that does not offer many spiritual insights.

AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE ARE MANY EXCITING WAYS OF USING A NOMADIC LIFESTYLE TO GAIN MORE SPIRITUALITY IN YOUR LIFE. THE KEY IS TO BE **OPEN-MINDED, AWARE, AND RECEPTIVE** TO THE OPPORTUNITIES YOU ENCOUNTER ALONG THE WAY.

## How Often Should I Move?

*So you've chosen to become a nomad.*

One of the most important decisions that you're going to make is **how fast** you want to move around. One way of becoming a nomad is by constantly, and frequently, changing your location so you can explore more places and cultures in a given period of time. The contrasting way would be by taking your time and staying longer in each place you stop.

**So let's discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each option.**

If you're traveling with a definitive timeframe, you might want to consider moving frequently. For example, if you have only three months to spend in South America - and it will probably be your only chance to visit there - staying for a long time in a small city might not be reasonable. You might want to take advantage of being there and getting to know the major attractions. Make sure you constantly listen to yourself and don't wear yourself out, though. Traveling, although it seems passive (for example, spending hours on a bus), can be quite exhausting and energy draining. In the case of having a definitive timeframe, it is all about finding the *balance* between getting to know a place and having fun there, while enjoying it in the appropriate timeframe so you still have time to expose yourself to other places.

When I first started my nomadic journey, I was a big fan of constant, frequent change. Even if I really enjoyed a place, I would force myself to leave it as soon as possible so I could explore new places. As I said though, this is an exhausting way of life that does not allow you to really make the best of each place and will negatively affect your happiness.

In the case that you have a lot of time and no definitive timeframe, I suggest choosing the option of **taking it slow**. I'm not suggesting you lower your speed of life while in a place but instead take the time to really get to know it and, in a sense, feel like a local. Changing location too frequently can be a sign that you're running away from yourself. Being a nomad is exactly the opposite; it's about re-connecting to yourself. Therefore, spending more time in a place allows you to expose yourself to various situations, establish a real social circle, and new, healthy routines.

We cannot ignore the risk of moving too slowly, however. Moving slowly can be compared to water freezing into ice. Being a nomad is not about freezing into the same place. Therefore, it is important to avoid attachments that can halt your nomadic lifestyle while taking your time to get to know a place (read more about that [here](#)). It is also important to be brave enough to make the change the minute you feel you've exhausted a place. Some good indications that it's time to move on are feeling like you're bored, feeling that you don't learn a lot in the place you're at, feeling like you'd rather be seeing another place, and *most importantly* not feeling happy.

**To conclude** - as everything else in life, go about finding the right balance for you. Staying for a longer time can allow you to really get a feel for a place but don't overdo it; the world is full of exciting places to explore.

## Can You Be Nomad While Staying in the Same Place?

There is no doubt that a nomad, by definition, is someone who **changes from place to place**. However, before rejecting this way of life, we should take a deep look into what being a nomad really means. The major element of a nomadic lifestyle is change, but, more importantly, the *awareness and knowledge* the change brings.

**So now the question changes: can someone achieve a high degree of awareness and knowledge while staying in the same place?**

The answer to that is probably yes, although I've never managed to do it myself. In a way, the traveling and change of location of a nomadic lifestyle is like a drug. It allows you to break away from the monotonous routines we keep and confront situations that provoke increased awareness and expose us to new knowledge.

One of the key elements required in order to reap the benefits derived from a nomadic lifestyle while staying in the same place is having an **increased awareness**. This is by no means easy to come by. A nomad has it easy; he is exposed to a new environment and situations that require him to be receptive of his new environment. Someone who is self-aware can, theoretically, become aware of small details that allow him create the change even if they are in the same place. It is a combination of the way you look at the world and how curious you are in regard to the small details that make up the big picture (there is a saying in Hebrew that God is in the small details).

If you do want to be a nomad while not moving around, curiosity is key (and self-discipline is also quite important). Discipline, in this sense, means pushing yourself into quite subtle changes (since you're staying in the same place). You can do so by being aware of your environment and the "small details", asking questions, and avoiding an automatic lifestyle. Some things you can do are to :

- take new roads to get to places
- walk a lot
- get to know people and their thoughts
- maintain a high level of curiosity

Many people say that some of the best ways to travel are by reading books and, to a lesser extent, watching movies. There is a lot of exposure available to information nowadays and you can actually learn a lot about the world from the internet and other easily-accessible sources. One great way of tapping into this lifestyle without being a nomad is by meeting nomads that are traveling through your town. One example of a source you can use is couchsurfing.com, a site which allows you to meet and host travelers that are in your area. By doing so, you can live vicariously through their stories and experiences as nomads.

IN CONCLUSION, THE EASIEST WAY TO BECOME A NOMAD IS TO ACTUALLY BE A NOMAD, MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE. HOWEVER, FOR THOSE OF US THAT ARE ATTACHED AND UNABLE TO LEAVE, THERE IS

STILL A WAY TO TAP INTO SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF A NOMADIC LIFESTYLE BY FOLLOWING THE ABOVE ADVICE.

## How to choose the next travel destination

How to choose the next travel destination? Most of us are flexible when it comes to choosing our next travel destination, as this is part of the charm of having a nomadic lifestyle. However, it always pays off to invest time and thought into this decision, since it will greatly affect your happiness and overall experience while on the road. Here are some of the factors to take into consideration when you choose your next travel destination:

- **New travel destination.** For me, I always prefer to go to a country I have never been to before. If I have to go back to the same country, I do my best to stay in cities I don't know yet. We're naturally inclined to [go to places we have loved in the past](#), but plunging into the unknown always brings rewards.
- **Dream travel destinations.** If you've always had your heart set on going to Peru, for example, why not make it happen? Don't delay as you never know when the journey's going to end. Just be aware that dream destinations can sometimes disappoint you (this will even up with the surprising destinations that were not on top of your list and end up being your favorites).
- **Costs.** It goes without saying that if your travel destination is low cost, your quality of life gets better. The [more time you are going to stay in your destination](#), the better it is to choose a low cost location. This also helps [decrease the expenses of the flight](#) per day, since usually the most economical locations (Asia, South America) involve pricey flights.
- **Revenue.** This factor is usually ignored, as we always focus on the cost side of the financial equation. Although some locations may be expensive, going there might still make total financial sense. Does your next location offers a possibility of getting new clients? Connect to potential partners and smart people? Improve your skills? Nothing can replace the physical connection made with people who are relevant to what you do.
- **Connection to the next country.** Often, we travel for longer periods, thus choosing the initial destination also determines our next ones (usually neighboring countries). Just like in chess, planning more than one move in advance is a recommended nomadic skill. Making the same analysis on neighboring countries is also important when you choose your next destination.
- **Language.** Picking a destination where you speak the local language will greatly increase your enjoyment when staying there. Also, if you've always wanted to learn a language, it makes much more sense to travel and stay within a country that speaks that language.

- **Infrastructure.** For us nomads that make a living on the road, infrastructure is important. Make sure that your destination has easy Wi-Fi connectivity, and any other tools you use while working (might it be co-working places, quality café where you can use your laptop and so on).
- **Special events on the calendar.** There's always festivals, holidays, events and conferences that can interest you *somewhere* in the world. Take advantage of your flexibility and coordinate your travel plans with those events.
- **Geopolitics.** Checking in advance the current situation in the places you want to go to is always a good move (wars, health, crime etc.)
- **Visa.** Some countries require more bureaucracy than others, and some allow you to stay longer than others too. Choose wisely.
- **Friends.** Even nomads need friends. You don't necessarily need to start your social life from scratch, since some of the people you've previously met might currently be living in the destination you pick. Run a quick check of who is where, but don't dare being afraid of starting on your own.
- **Weather.** I'm now in Berlin in the height of winter, and I admit, I made a mistake! You *have* to take the weather into account when picking your next nomadic destination – avoid extreme hot and cold months, follow spring.
- **Tourist season.** Travelling in high (or low) touristic season can affect your trip. If you are flexible, it might be better to choose months with good weather in low season since prices in high season go up, and availability goes down.
- **Personal life.** Your choice of destination ought to coincide with your personal development. [If you're in a more spiritual phase](#), for example, going to a country renowned for spiritual practice (India?) would benefit you more than somewhere else. The same goes if you are currently working on your [nomadic startup](#), and then San Francisco Silicon valley will probably be a much better as your next destination.

Any other factors that you think are missing while choosing your next travel destination? (feel free to add them in the comments)

Happy travels!

## Going Back to the Same Place, or Going to a New Place?

**An important question to ask yourself: Should I travel to a new place or to a place I've really loved before?**

There are several advantages to visiting a new place. First of all, you've never been there before! You'll be exposed to a new culture and a new language (maybe a language you've been studying); there is a certain feeling you get from 'the first time' that cannot be replicated. Of course there are disadvantages as well. Maybe you don't know anyone there or you just might not like it. You have to create a temporary life in an unfamiliar place and take a risk!

An advantage of a familiar place: you can adjust to it more easily. No surprises – you already know that you like it and you also may already know some people there and have information about the place. As far as disadvantages goes, I've often found that the second time you visit a place you really love, it doesn't quite live up to your expectations. That first rush of adrenaline you get from discovering a new place is no longer there and some of the factors that used to exist may change. For example, friends you met may no longer live there or maybe the cost of living has become too expensive.

The first time I visited Buenos Aires was spectacular. I enjoyed it so much I came back a second time. This time though, I felt like I didn't connect to the city like I had before. My friends had left and I although I was working with a steady job, the city had become much more expensive than it was before. I wouldn't suggest returning to a place you've visited before – it can tarnish the precious moments you have of it. People make the place great more than the place does! It's disappointing to return to a completely different social environment. Truly an important thing to consider – it's usually not the scenery that ends up making your trip worthwhile, it's the people you meet.

Bottom line, sometimes we need a place that is comfortable and secure that we can easily adjust to. If you need to recharge and don't want to take a risk, go for a place you've been. But as long as you have the energy – be adventurous and head for a new place!

## Sleeping in the Car

**Sleeping in the car is not really a *recommended* option, but sometimes it's necessary.**

*F*irst of all, it's not very comfortable! You're not going to get a good night's sleep unless you are blessed with a super-luxurious car. Secondly, it's not that safe. If you aren't careful where you park it you are putting yourself at risk of theft and vandalism during the night. On top of that, make sure you aren't breaking any laws – it's illegal to park in some areas.

Let's admit – it's a bit embarrassing to tell people you're living in your car. Sometimes it's necessary though, especially when you're on the road. It's a great way of saving money (even if it means you have to wake up really early).

So let's talk about *the right way* to do this:

- **Park in an optimal spot:** somewhere safe – not in the middle of nowhere where you can't get help if you need it!
- **Find somewhere with a little bit of light:** this will decrease the chance of someone robbing you (and we don't want that!)
- **The Shout Rule:** park where someone can hear you if you shout (but make sure it's not so noisy that you can't sleep)
- **Traffic Danger:** don't park in a place with a lot of traffic – you'll regret it if you get hit by another car!
- **Comfort:** leg space, pillow, blanket; adjustable shades are handy to keep out light (and nosy observers)
- **Alarm Clocks:** put a bunch of alarm clocks around you (I always turn them off, it's better to have many) because you don't want to be sleeping in the car after the sun goes up
- **Crack a window:** open a window just a little because it will get hot and it's very important to do just incase you don't wake up (unless you *want* to have a heat stroke)

## Tips for Staying Sane On-The-Move

Traveling for a short time can be great and it can bring lots of balance to your life, but being a nomad has its consequences. You don't have a safe place or stable home. Everything is constantly **changing**, and it's really easy to fall into a bad place mentally. This could be a place where you feel really lonely, inefficient, or possibly disconnected from society entirely. Maybe you fall captive to the opposite extreme - a place where you lose sight of your priorities, have too much fun partying, or indulge in risky activities. Keeping a healthy mental balance is often more difficult for a nomad since a person's environment is often the main source of stability. Family, friends, career, and daily routine are constantly changing because we are constantly travelling so we have to find stability within our own conscience and discipline.

### Steps for how to keep your good mental health:

- **Avoid the Loneliness Trap** - Having a stable environment helps you create a circle of people around you that becomes your support system. Since a nomad's environment changes so often, they have to work much harder to keep this kind of interaction up! It is immensely important to work hard to spend time with good people that you enjoy spending time with. A general, important rule for keeping sanity, find people that actually make you happy. Refer to the [How To Meet New People](#) section for related articles.
- **Have a Goal** - As a nomad, the goal should not be *just* to 'wander'. Try to find something else that keeps you going. If the goal is only to simply explore and be exposed to new things constantly, it will become redundant and boring. You may feel like your adventure is becoming insufficient – that you need more out of it. Usually you have your family or career to give you a goal to work towards when you're living a sedentary lifestyle. When you're on the move, you have to be a lot more self-disciplined and goal-oriented. Nomadic wandering – without a purposeful goal - can actually result in more loss than gain monetarily.
- **Make a List** - Decide on a list of things you want to accomplish that make you happy. Spend a good chunk of your day working towards getting those things done because life isn't just about fun and thrill-seeking. It's about making goals to aspire towards and investing time to plan. The nomadic mindset is often set to 'no plan', which can be great. Most of us who are not nomads tend to focus a lot on either the past or future (or both), so living in the moment is a wonderful thing – but it's not *just* about living in the moment. It's about spending your moments working towards bigger and better things – helping your sanity and giving you a feeling of *purpose*.
- **Stay away from constant change** - One more thing that I feel is important to mention is the concept of constant change. When you are constantly changing location, it can get really tiresome. I've had first-hand experience with this. I did an experiment about this constant-change concept and gave myself only one rule: don't stay in the same place for more than one day. I can assure you that the constant fast-paced changing will rid you of peace and do bad things for your mental health. Take

your time and, in a way, create a home wherever you are (even if that doesn't *seem* so nomadic). Adopt a kind of mindset where "I know I'm going to leave, but I'm here right now so I'm going to enjoy it." Stay for a decent time (in a city, for example, I'd recommend two months to get to know it and establish daily routine). Every place is worth exploring and you have to stay a sufficient amount of time to really be able to say you've been there. As a bonus, when you stay in a place for longer it ends up cutting your costs (as you can read [here](#)).

- **Body and Mind** - There is a saying that states that your mind is healthy when your body is healthy. When you're on the move, it can seem more difficult to find the opportunity to exercise. In a way, you're already staying active by walking and such but the main problem I've come across as a nomad is finding a place to work out. Finding a gym, stadium, swimming pool, et cetera can be difficult. You might not have any information available to you, especially if there is a language barrier. Even if it's nearby, it might take you a long time to find it since you're in an unfamiliar area. Don't be discouraged though! From my experience, you'll feel a lot better and a lot more stable and happy if you keep an active lifestyle that involves sports. For me, swimming is what I go to to stay active but for you it might be soccer, tennis etc. It's definitely worth it to put forth the effort to find a place to meet your needs.

To sum it all up, since a nomadic lifestyle is challenging and requires above-average mental stability, we can't take things for granted. There are just two main keys to keep you sane: **consciousness and discipline**. Consciousness is all about knowing yourself and understanding the things you need. As far as discipline goes, it's not enough to just know or decide – you have to actually invest the time, energy, and money to pursue and accomplish your goals. Make things happen!

## Living a Nomadic Lifestyle

A nomadic lifestyle may seem like heaven to some of us, but it may seem unrewarding and bitter for others. Just like everything else in life, being a nomad has its advantages and disadvantages, so let's go over some of the major characteristics of a nomadic lifestyle.

- A nomad constantly changes locations, switching from one place to another. Most nomads have some kind of place that they can call home, which is usually where their family or childhood friends are located, but they wouldn't spend more than a few months a year there. Nor would they settle down in a new home, they just keep on changing a place, never feeling really at home, change is home. This actually might be tough since everybody needs some stability and a private *comfort zone from time to time*. Being a nomad, you never really have a feeling of a real home - something you've been upgrading, decorating, and designing. It always belongs to *someone else* (i.e. a hostel, short rental, a friend's place) and is always temporary.
- The nomadic lifestyle is more important than anything else, including career, relationship, or assets. Once this is not the case, it is not a sustainable lifestyle since it is quite hard to maintain. Once you have decided that your nomadic lifestyle comes first, you will figure a way to sort all other aspects of life accordingly. You can read more here about why would you like to take the decision and become nomad- [The advantages of becoming a nomad](#).
- Avoiding attachments- A nomad breaks away from her/his attachments before taking the journey, and stays away from attachments while realizing this unique lifestyle. So, what is an attachment? The answer is clear, anything that keeps you away from realizing a nomadic lifestyle. Let's make it even clearer, it is anything you have (or usually think you have) and can't give up on. The perfect job that you can never find again, the dog you love so much and can't leave behind, the amazing girlfriend that will not agree to join you traveling. A quick interesting insight- if you have those, and feel happy, don't give up on them. But if they are not perfect and don't really make you happy, say goodbye to all your fake attachments and either find better attachments, or choose the nomadic path instead.
- Nomads usually become quite smart, with fresh perspective (A consultant or a guru in a way). The reason for that is clear, they are exposed to many lifestyles, cultures and situations. This constant process of change is a great learning experience, and when you learn, you become smarter.
- Nomads don't take life very seriously. Think about it. If you keep on changing, and keep on losing everything you had in a prior place after you changed to a new place, then the basic understanding dawns on you: "everything is temporary and nothing is yours". After you understand that, you can't really take life too seriously, even if you tried... When I was younger, I had a big problem with accepting life's "little surprises" (*the negative ones*), since I was used to my routine, and things working out. Alas, even if you are not a nomad, everything is changing and some for the

worse. Every time there was just one thing that didn't go according to plan, I became very frustrated. Since I've become a nomad, life taught me that it was an illusion. In a way, this nomadic journey changes you from within and is recommended for people who have some kind of a problem accepting things the way they are (even though the journey may be difficult).

- Nomads travel light, your bag is your home, but since home is not that important, you better off be free and “things” are attachments as well (if you can't afford to lose an item in your bag, you can't leave it alone, thus you are not free).
- Nomads are respectful, smiley and above all curious. If this is not the case, why would you choose a path of a constant learning process? But even more than that, one of the greatest enemies nomads have is loneliness. Humans are social animals, which means that without company, we wither and become disconnected from ourselves. If you are not smiling, happy, and curious, by all probability, you will be lonely. Unlike most of us that are loved by our families no matter who we are, and by our friends that learn to appreciate us over time, a nomad has to “prove” themselves socially quite fast, since soon they will leave to the next location. You get the point, be happy,
- Nomads think and adjust fast. As a nomad, you are with an inherent lack of information problem - everything is always new. You don't know what's cheap, you probably can't speak the native language, you are most likely unaware of any special ways of saving money, and so on. It means that if you can't make quick calls in an environment of constant lack of knowledge, life will become quite expensive and unsafe. The good news is that experience shapes you up, and gives you learning tools to make you better at this. So, if you are scared of your own shadow and find it really hard deciding about anything, it might be quite a beneficial experiment for you to become a nomad for a while.

This was a brief review of the main characteristics of living a nomadic lifestyle, now it's time for you to decide if this is something that is worth the risk for you, and if so, just make it happen.

## Digital Nomad Lifestyle

**Digital Nomad Lifestyle**= Relying on the internet and portable technology (laptop) to sustain a nomadic lifestyle

Digital nomad lifestyle is becoming more common every day and reflects the modern technology of our time. I am a Digital Nomad and have met many nomads sustaining their lifestyle through similar means. The internet allows you to connect to anywhere in the world. As a result, most people who adopt a digital nomad lifestyle work in freelancing jobs such as coders, graphic design and freelance writing. There are some, including myself, that pursue the dream of starting a business as a Digital Nomad (or Nomad entrepreneurs). Keep in mind that being a nomad entrepreneur can be difficult to do, which is why [freelancing](#) is more common. There are a variety of similar characteristics shared by those who choose a digital nomad lifestyle and are as follows:

- **Style of travel** = Digital Nomads lifestyle tends to have a milder component of travel than other existing lifestyle of nomads. This is because Digital Nomads are dependent on a certain amount of infrastructure to sustain their lifestyle and, as a result, most Digital Nomads spend a few months in a place before relocating.
- **Location chosen** = Digital Nomads will generally chose locations that are big cities or capital cities. This is due to the infrastructure needed with a stable environment and good internet connection. As well, many Digital Nomads rely on co-working locations (offices) to do their work.
- **Routine** = Digital Nomads lifestyle usually pushes to a more stable routine than most other nomadic lifestyles and this is because of the focus on work online. Because of this, Digital Nomads will generally have a regular work week and do their travelling on the weekend. Even though their life may be more routine, do not underestimate the travelling done on weekends as this can be anywhere!
- **Local in disguise** = Because of the relative stability and routines associated to a Digital Nomads lifestyle, those adapting it generally become locals in disguise. A Digital Nomad's social circle usually encompasses more locals than other travellers because of their routine in a regular work week. In other words, digital nomads pick locals as friends or fellow digital nomads, and not tourists, since they work during the day and usually have the evening, and weekends free.

Overall a Digital Nomad lifestyle can be very rewarding as there is a certain amount of stability and certainty with how the lifestyle is sustained. There is also quite a bit of flexibility with how Digital Nomads choose to live that lifestyle and what works for one person may not work for another. Feel free to check out other styles of the nomadic life by visiting [HERE](#).

# *Security and Belongings*

## **Risks of Travelling**

*I*t goes without saying that traveling is riskier than staying at home. However, it's also super fun and those risks can be easily managed with some preparation and the right mindset. Traveling risks can be divided to two main types; physical risks that vary from location to location, and emotional risks. Keep the following in mind:

- **Theft.** Travelling involves carrying all your belongings with you, or leaving them in temporary location that you don't know well, which increases the chances of theft. The best advice to mitigate risk is to be minimalist, and take only what you need with you. Every valuable you carry that is not needed brings pressure and attachment – you'll always be thinking of how to secure it instead of just going to the beach and taking a swim. Not to mention that travelling light is also fun. Granted, digital nomads need some valuables they can't do without (laptop, camera, passport, etc.) and safeguarding those things is necessary. Find the right balance between not being paranoid and not being careless and over-trusting. This balance also depends on where you are since the level of risk changes in each country. Try gaining information on the level of risk and most common theft/scam methods where you are, prepare yourself accordingly.
- **Violent crime.** This is more severe and rarer than theft, and happens more in developing countries (developed countries are more prone to petty theft). The best advice if you are unlucky enough to be in a situation of violent crime is to understand that your life is worth a lot more than what you carry with you, so don't resist unless it's your only way out. Reduce risk by avoiding problematic locations (gain info beforehand on where is safe). Also, don't look clueless – signal that know where you're going, tourists (especially drunk ones) are considered easy and lucrative targets. It is also important not to flaunt your valuables, and use them only when necessary in safe locations. The most important advice here would be to trust your intuition. If a place doesn't feel good, spend money on taxi or new environment and get out. As the saying goes, "if you're looking for trouble, trouble will find you".
- **Health risk.** Usually we're only aware of our health when it deteriorates, and health issues away from home are more challenging since you are alone out of your comfort zone. Firstly, before traveling (especially if you're going to developing countries) visit your doctor, ask about your destination's specific health risks and get some emergency medicine for common scenarios. Developing countries often lack quality medications or circulate counterfeited medicine you don't want to use. Also, getting travel insurance will cover your treatment financially until you get to your country. It's inexpensive and worth the trouble, but be sure to read the small print to see that it covers most scenarios. When problems start, and if your health deteriorates, get some info about the best hospitals and clinics where you are. Some hospitals countries can

be of poor quality, so if you are covered with travel insurance, it's always worth choosing the best place.

- **Transportation.** Using transportation exposes us to the risk of accidents, especially in developing countries. If you're in a place with heightened risk (Peru, for an example, is known to have many deadly bus accidents), I recommend spending a bit more on a good bus company or airline. When the ride is long and risky, I try to sit in the middle of the bus on an aisle seat in the right side since those seats are proven to be the safest in case of an accident. Additionally, using motorcycles is a notorious risk; try to avoid them in places that have a lot of traffic.
- **Border controls and visa issues.** First, an aside about problematic possessions and drugs. If you ever have them, don't carry them while crossing a border. But even if you stay clear of problems, some border control can prove to be quite frustrating (I have had two incidents in Hungary and Bolivia that ended with deportation and long delay). If incidents happen, keep cool and don't lose your temper since this will only make things worse. It is important to check the visa laws applicable to your country before traveling, so invest time in research to avoid problems. Keep your passport safe and in good shape since neglected passport screams fake and a lost passport is truly a hassle that you want to avoid.
- **Problems at home.** There can be problems with family's health, bureaucracy and so on that are difficult to deal with when you are far away. Mitigate those risks by creating open channels of communication with home to make sure that if something happens, you'll get the news as soon as possible. It is also recommended to jump back to your homebase every now and then to sort your stuff out, before moving to the next destination.
- **Losing your sanity.** There are cases of people traveling for a long time that get disconnected from themselves and society. This usually happens when you change places not for the right reasons, killing time instead of exploring new places, or running away from something (or from yourself, which doesn't really work). Older travelers are more prone to this since they find it harder to meet and connect with other travelers and locals. My advice would be, don't disconnect. Investing time in meeting and interacting with people in addition to having clear goals to accomplish while travelling keeps you happy and sane.

Now, hit the road!

## Securing Your Belongings

While traveling, what we carry on our back is minimal and represents the most important things we decide to take with us. In a way, our bag and our belongings are the closest things we have to a concept of 'home'. Therefore, it can be upsetting if our bag or belongs get stolen or lost. In this article, we will cover some ways to **protect** our belongings while on the move.

I will start by saying that from my experience, the biggest risk to your belongings is **you**. In most cases, people lose or damage their belongings it is a result of negligence and could have been easily avoided with a little more attention. So the first step would probably be being well aware to the importance of your belongings not leaving them out of sight while traveling and securing them when you arrive.

As for the risk of having your belongings stolen, it does exist in various levels depending on the country in which you are traveling. For example, traveling in Lima, Peru requires a lot more attention than traveling in Oslo, Norway. That means that we have to be aware of where we are at and prepare our level of awareness in advance. There are many ways you can be robbed, and there are specific threats in each country. We will not cover those threats and the ways to avoid them here, but instead give a few rules that may prove helpful. First of all, prepare yourself in advance with information about how secure a place is, whether or not you can safely go out at night, and the best way to do so. Get this information from locals. Don't be ashamed to ask what areas should be avoided and any other safety recommendations they might be able to give you.

There are two ways of being robbed: violently and not violently (for example, the use of weapons vs. snatching your wallet). The most important thing if you are lucky enough to be robbed violently is to not object, since your life is more important than any possession you might have. In this case, just focus on removing yourself from the situation without any physical harm. As for the non-violent robberies, it is important to remember that most thieves select their victims in advance by two major factors which are how valuable your possessions are and how easily they can rob you. The best protection is to not flaunt your valuables. For example, not using your iPhone in crowded streets and not parading around other valuables. In addition to that, you should keep your items secure.

**Setting your iPhone or wallet on a desk or in an easily accessible pocket of your bag is like putting milk in front of a cat.**

One of the best pieces of advice I can give you when you start traveling would be to **take as little valuables as possible**. Valuables create worries and attachments and do not allow you to fully enjoy the freedom of traveling. The key here is to balance between how badly you need an item and the cost of losing it. It is important to mention that traveling greatly increases the chance of losing or damaging your possessions. Therefore, to take only the **bare necessities** is the best way to go.

**A few quick tips to properly secure your luggage while traveling:**

- If you stay in hostel dorms, choose ones that have **lockers** and secure your possessions with your own lock. If you have your own room and you know it's

going to be cleaned, secure your possessions in a safe place, ask for the room not to be cleaned, or even lock the door with your own lock if you leave your valuables there.

- Don't travel with a lot of cash. **Use credit cards** and keep your cash and passport close to you by using a money belt.
- Your risk of being robbed in a non-violent way increases greatly in crowded places such as metro stations and transportation hubs. The same goes for violent crimes in places that are deserted. Try to **avoid walking in deserted areas** even during the day. One great way to decrease the chance of a violent crime is to travel in a group. Also, try not to get drunk – it makes you an easy target as you are unable to defend yourself.
- Hiding some cash in your shoe, and using a money belt is good. Have some money available so if you are getting robbed violently, you can promptly offer the robbers money, instead of making them look for it in form of hidden credit cards and large sums. (Thanks for that Jess!)
- Make sure you know what the most valuable possessions you have and have a **clear strategy for defending** them. For example, if your iPhone is very important decide in advance where you are going to put it to be discreet and if you carry your passport and credit card in your wallet take extra care to secure it. The best way to understand what the most important items for you is to imagine actually losing them and how it would affect you. Once you know how important they are, you can prioritize and understand the effort you want to put into minimizing the risk of losing those items.

In conclusion, traveling is fun but does bear some risks. Most of those risks are avoidable and can be prevented by simply staying aware of your surroundings. Once again, traveling is all about freedom – and possessions are all about attachment - so taking the minimum of what you need will allow you to enjoy a stress-free journey.

# *Nomad Interviews*

## **Boat hitchhiking and nomadic life**

Our second nomad interview is with Aaron Freed, a true nomad. Aaron avoids traveling with airplanes (kind of ironic since he spent 12 years as a pilot in the US Air Force) and prefers motorcycling and hitchhiking sail boats (15 sail boats under his belt far).

Here are some insights Aaron shared with us:

Aaron is unique in his frequency of changing locations. Usually, digital nomads stay a few months before moving on to the next destination. When he isn't sailing, Aaron prefers to spend only one week in a place before moving on to the next one. After separating from the Air Force, Aaron turned to entrepreneurship and real estate investing, until the crash of 2008. He then spent three years wrestling with next steps, wondering if should pursue a new career at the age of 40, or go for a completely different lifestyle. He chose the latter and started his nomadic journey.

Aaron believes that once you make a decision to become a nomad, putting a start date on your calendar will greatly increase your chances of actually making it happen. Aaron chose the nomadic lifestyle as a way to run away from his previous life that was not working well personally, professionally, and financially. He originally intended to go only as far as Beirut, where he would start anew. However somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, he decided that nomadic life suited him and sought ways to sustain it.

Aaron finds boats by using a variety of boat hitching websites as well as dock walking (thus the title – “Boat hitchhiking and nomadic life”). He says that one doesn't necessarily need sailing experience (although it certainly helps), and it's only a matter of weeks if not days before a newbie can become a competent crew member. For those interested in boat hitching, he recommends that you start by reading about it on [hitchwiki](#) and joining one of the couchsurfing.org boat hitching groups.

When you're ready to make the plunge, he recommends putting together a sailing resume and posting your profile on as many sites as possible (such as [cruisersforum](#)). When dockwalking, he doesn't leave any stone unturned and has found boat maintainers to be one of the most effective ways of finding rides.

Aaron is a little jealous of non-digital nomads (nomads who don't use the internet to get money) He feels that they get to experience greater connection with local communities that the networked nomad who spends his time looking at a computer screen. The lives of non-digital nomads have an ingredient of uncertainty and dependency which makes their journey more interesting, or at least different in an enviable way. Aaron is actually experiencing this dependency every time he boat hitches. Asking for help or a favor from someone creates connection.

Aaron says “Moving” is a great proxy for “Doing”, until you figure it out. With time, he's learned to accomplish both simultaneously. When he felt stuck in his life, he was searching for a lifestyle that will create stories, and push to doing more. Interestingly, he is most happy when he gets to a place and feels at home, so the constant change is

actually out of his comfort zone. However, he still manages to keep it up due to the benefits those moves bring.

Aaron says that avoiding situations in which you have to be in a certain place at a certain time will improve your quality of life as a nomad. Every commitment you make reduces your flexibility to move faster, stay longer, and be free to explore spontaneous possibility. Impulsive one-way tickets (or one-way boat hitchhiking in Aaron's case) are the way to go. The skill Aaron is still trying to improve as a nomad is carrying less stuff. The less he has, the happier he is (and the less he looks like a tourist).

While on land, Aaron establishes weekly routines that help him organize his life. For instance, he strives to travel and grocery shop each Sunday, work and exercise Monday through Friday, sightsee and do laundry on Saturdays, and so on.. He finds that little routines and disciplines bring stability that is much needed when one keeps changing locations.

Check out [Aaron's website](http://www.aaronfreed.info) at [www.aaronfreed.info](http://www.aaronfreed.info)

## Earl Baron- More than 5,000 days on the road

*We* are honoured to have our first Nomad interview with Earl Baron, from the very popular and recommended travel blog [WanderingEarl](#). He has been on the road for more than 5,000 days, and shares his experiences and insights about the reality of constantly changing locations.

Here are some highlights Earl shared with us:

- **Mixing** - Nomadic lifestyle is not only about constant traveling. It combines studying, working, volunteering and doing many other things while constantly changing location. This mix of activities other than just full time traveling is what makes it a sustainable lifestyle.
- **Move slow** - Nomadic lifestyle is not necessarily moving around all the time in great frequency. Historically, nomads have stayed in locations for a while (a season or a few months) before changing and he thinks spending more time in places is the best way of doing it.
- **Variety of ways** - No nomadic lifestyle is similar to other. Each person finds her/his own way to make it happen. The nomadic lifestyle keeps on changing for me all the time, you keep on molding it, developing it.
- **Just try** - Don't think too much if you have the nomad spirit or not, just try it. You might "fail", and go home, nothing happened. I personally believe you owe it to yourself to try. (better try than regretting not trying later)
- **Use the information available** - Now is much easier to get information about this lifestyle. 14 years ago, very few people were digital nomads, it didn't even seem like an option.

- **Understanding and definition** - This lifestyle only became “official” when I understood I can fully sustain myself financially while being on the road. It took me 7 years to understand it is indeed possible, and the timing connects to the new possibilities the internet is giving nomads to earn money in the last years.
- **Stopping** - When you find a good attachment (Career, relationship etc.), don't be afraid to stop being nomadic if it makes you happier. Being a nomad is not a goal, being happy is.
- **Contemplation** - As a nomad, you have to constantly ask yourself if you are happy, what is important for you, and change things if it is needed.
- **Have a base** - I recommend nomads to find some kind of a base, where you can stay every year for a few months a. It makes you much more effective and relaxed.
- **Compromise** - There are compromises to this lifestyle, especially seeing less of your family and friends. But, when you find a good way to sustain yourself, you have the ability to visit them more often than when you start. You should also be aware that it's also sometimes exhausting to constantly change locations.
- **No 4 hours workweek** - People are shocked when I tell them how much time I am putting into work. If you want to sustain this lifestyle, you will probably have to work at least as hard as your friends back home.
- **Signals you should avoid it** - This lifestyle is not for you if you don't like being put in situations that are outside of your comfort zone. Also, if you are not a people person in general, and you don't enjoy the company of people, you will probably not enjoy this lifestyle, as the best experiences are connected to people you meet on the way.
- **Important skills** - You need to be determined and creative as well on the road. Without those skills, this lifestyle might be hard and can't last for long.
- **Options** - If you want a successful and happy nomadic lifestyle, make sure you have a way out. Work on projects that will allow you to smoothly exit one day if needed, so you are not locked in it. That way you are making sure that you are always free to stop if you wish.
- **Making money** - As for sustaining yourself, the first rule is: “Get started”. Planning and thinking is nice, but you need to make it happen. Move fast, say yes, just do your thing, whatever it is. Once you do get started, more ideas and opportunities will come to you, as you develop your knowledge and skills.

## Digital nomad case study

This article is personal, since it relates to specific rules I follow while living my nomadic life. In a way, those rules are the pillars of my own nomadic “religion” and allow me to put some order in what at first glance seems like an uncertain lifestyle. Most of the rules here will not be relevant to you, since sadly or fortunately, you and I are different. This is simply a digital nomad case study based on the years I spent on the road. I publish this article for the following reasons:

- 1) As my own ongoing resource which allows me to check my compliance to an ever changing list of rules that have proved to keep me happy and balanced over time.
- 2) As a digital nomad case study, some of those rules and personal insights might be relevant and helpful to you
- 3) The article demonstrates that every nomad has their own specific version of nomadic life. By publishing my own digital nomad case study, I hope to push you into writing your own, since you are special and different. If you ever write your own version, let me know and I would love to publish it, or you can just add your thoughts in the comments section.

### General Rules

Basic Nomadic rule- I always prefer to go to a new country. However, if I go back to a country I have stayed in before, I pick a new city.

Home base- My family is in Israel and since I want to spend time with them, I go back once to my home base every 6 months (maximum 9 if I am really far away). I stay for no more than 40 days in the home base before leaving.

Length of stay- The first limitation is the 3 months a tourist can usually stay per country. I stay 1 to 3 months in each location, ideally spending most of my time in 2 main locations in each country before leaving it. I decide to leave a location if I feel it is time for a change or if my tourist stay runs out. I prefer to move less frequently since constant change affects my work quality and doesn't allow me to really connect to a place. I continue moving, preferably by land, from country to country in each nomadic wave ( A nomadic wave is defined as the travel period between my departure and return to my home country)

Going back- I can spend a maximum of one week in a location where I have stayed more than one month in in the past (Excluding my home base). This keeps me from getting stuck in a comfortable place that I already know.

Weekends- I maintain the same weekend as in Israel, which is Friday and Saturday. Fridays are laid back days for me, with some light work and focus on meeting people. On Saturdays, I always go somewhere new, it is my holy day of connection and I totally avoid working on this day. When/if I am on a fixed rental, I usually avoid staying the night in other locations and spend Saturdays in day trips close to my base so I don't spend

twice on accommodation. While living in hostels, I always checkout either on Friday or Saturday (setting the checkout day helps me commit going somewhere else). I book one/two nights in a new location (I leave my suitcase at coworking locker, or in the hostel, so I can travel light). Since I don't count on making local friends on a short weekend stay, I prefer booking dorm bed in hostels so I can interact with tourists during my weekend trips, and also check out meetup events in the days I am there. On my weekend trips I care less about time, so I try to get lost intentionally. I go for that awkward camping site or hostel in the middle of nowhere that might not even be open. ((Future- Try couchsurfing with locals on weekend location))

Workdays- Since my coworking place is closed on Sundays, I usually spend them working at coffee shops in my weekend destination before heading back to my fixed location on Sunday evening. Since I can't spend time wondering around on Sunday and I am always edgy after long travel, I opt out of uncertainty on Sunday's accommodation, prepare in advance and make sure I know how to reach the accommodation fast, even if it means spending money, e.g. on taxi. I spend Monday to Friday in my regular base, mostly in coworking.

Locker- I prefer to have a safe place to leave my both my valuables ( passport, money, laptop, phone), and suitcase. I aim to get a locker in the coworking place (hopefully big enough for my suitcase as well). At minimum, this locker should allow me to leave my valuables and take swimming breaks at the afternoons (best time to swim for me). I also prefer to have a locker in the dorm hostel so I can leave stuff while going out at night. It is also good to have a hostel that allows leaving my suitcase there during checkout on weekends. If I am at a temp rental like airbnb, I love having a key so I can safeguard my stuff. Safe storage allows freedom.

Bases with Coworking- For me, working from home is suicidal, and working from coffee shops wears me down after a few days. I spend most of my nomadic wave in places with coworking. Usually, only main cities have coworking space (if I find a smaller city with coworking, I jump on the chance), and I guess I am drawn to cities also because making friends there is much more easy since people are open minded, and the element of "everyone knows everyone" doesn't exist. When I start a "nomadic wave", I try to pick a first base that has coworking so I have soft landing with work. The most important indication to how good of a fit is a specific coworking place for me is the ability to make Skype calls comfortably. If that is the case, the only factor of interest in the accommodation I pick is the sleep quality since I will hardly spend time there. If I can't make calls, I need my hostel to cover me with a comfortable place to get those calls done (preferably in a garden).

Bases without Coworking- Staying in smaller towns with nature (I feel better in non touristic locations) is a pure nomadic experience since the change in general, and from a long stay in big cities in particular, improves my consciousness and awareness. It is however destabilizing as well due to traveling and lack of fix office, so I currently limit my non coworking periods to two weeks (preferably in two different locations). I will always opt to a non coworking period between a move from one coworking city to another, or as a break from my coworking base if I stay there more than a month. I make the base switch over the weekend to allow relaxed adaptation without work pressure. My biggest threat in non coworking bases is staying isolated in my own

room since it makes me ineffective, and brings me to unimaginative down moments that don't really exist anywhere out of my mind. That makes the characteristics of the "home" I am staying in crucial, which requires research prior to arrival. There are two factors about my home I care about, the first critical, the second important.

- 1) **Work space-** Deprived of coworking, my home has to have a fun work unit where I will enjoy spending many many hours with stable internet, power outlet, and most importantly, outside of my 4 walls (in other words, a garden of sorts). I need the air, light and disconnection to my "private space" at home. Nature makes me happy. Getting this workspace right is critical since I will go crazy spending my days on coffee shop tours with lack of certainty. In addition to that, I will also need the option to make calls without interruptions, at least at my room if not in the garden.
- 2) **Accountability and social life-** I want to be able to interact with people since in small towns the home becomes the only source for social interaction. My connection with the owners is critical since they are always there and caring about them creates accountability. Meeting new people who stay in the hostel is a great bonus, although only can really happen in hostels. My favorite home would be a dorm hostel with amazing isolated garden to work in, in which I might take a private room if it is affordable. ((Question- Should those bases be in totally non touristic locations? Try a village in the middle of nowhere next time..))

**My base list-** I have compiled a template check list with to do items for each base. It includes about 30 items, of which the most relevant ones are finding a coworking place, swimming pool, and using tools to build a social circle. I kill the list during my stay, and outsource some of the items to virtual assistants.

### **Accommodation**

**Arrival-** I usually start with booking a dorm bed. However, if I arrive on a red eye flight/bus, I prefer to get a private room/airbnb so I can get some sleep upon arrival without being disturbed.

**Booking sites-** For hostels (mainly dorms), I currently use [hostelworld.com](http://hostelworld.com) and [hostelbookers.com](http://hostelbookers.com) as backup. For single rooms and double rooms, I found [Booking.com](http://Booking.com) to offer great value. For longer stays in apartments, nothing beats [airbnb.com](http://airbnb.com).

**Dorm beds or single rooms-** Dorms are without a doubt the best economical option for solo travelers. If I stay in a dorm, I aim to get a room with 4 beds or less. In low cost counties, I will often opt for a private room in a hostel, but only if it offers a lively common space to meet other travelers (I avoid isolated hotels at any cost if I stay longer than one night).

**Choosing a hostel-** I avoid fun hip party hostels since I am older, and focus on work during weekdays.

**Location of accommodation-** I always check if I can find accommodation in a village or in the outskirts of the city (where it ends and becomes green) from which I can travel daily to the "coworking city" as this proved to be the best option for me. If I can't find one, picking a hostel with good atmosphere away from the city center is also a good option.

Length of stay and hostel hopping- switching hostels frequently is a great way to know the city and creates a blessed change. However, the constant move also wears me down so I try not to change hostels during the work week, but before or after my weekend break. It is also better not to change hostels in case my coworking place is not good enough to make phone calls, and I have found a hostel that covers that need, or in case the hostel is “magical” and feels like home. In big cities, it is better to start hostel hopping after I know the city well enough so I don’t spend time on figuring out transportation and orientation.

Accommodation in apartment - Regardless of being expensive, I totally avoid renting a complete apartment for myself since I am in zombie mode when left alone. The only exception would be if I have a visitor coming for a long time, or if I am in a relationship. When I am tired of dorm beds and know I am staying longer in a location, I look for a room in a shared apartment. This is especially relevant while staying in relatively developed countries where booking a private room in a hostel is too expensive. As mentioned before, I only go for long term shared apartment when I have a coworking place.

Picking the right shared apartment- The most important aspect for me in an apartment is a sense of accountability. I need an apartment with constant interaction and good vibes with the other flat mates. If this is in doubt, I avoid renting. I use Airbnb to search rooms for a period of one month in order to get the best rates. I try to make sure beforehand to discuss all potential friction points with the owners. Those usually include bringing visitors, working in the common space, kitchen use, laundry, and assurance about the internet quality. In general, I try to make sure I will be treated me as a regular flat mate, and less as a guest. I avoid using my laptop or Ipad in my private room unless I have a Skype meeting (No screens without interaction when I am between 4 walls).

Off season- I avoid touristic locations in season since they get expensive and are more challenging to connecting with locals. If I can, I spend July/August either at home or in a non touristic location.

Made it so far? Now, get to the road.

## Most influential travel blog posts

This article will deal with specific and influential Travel blog posts that you consider as the best resource around for a specific topic relevant for travelers and nomads.

To be in the list, the posts need not only to be of great quality, but to have made an impact (comments, shares) on the travel and nomad community.

Do you know such posts? Please share them in the comments:

### General info and lifestyle:

[History of Digital Nomading by AlmostFearless](#) - This post by the renowned almost fearless life blog has not received enough attention in my opinion. The list includes the yearly chronology of how the trend of Digital nomad life started, and when did the tools allowing such a lifestyle appeared in our lives.

[Links to digital nomad projects](#)- James of NomadicNotes has prepared a great list, separated by the type of project. He starts with valuable resources, communities, blogs, podcast and everything that is trending in the digital nomad world.

[World travel resources](#)- Jodie of Legal Nomads has compiled a valuable list you should definitely check before hitting the road. Everything from packing, insurance, mindset and tech gadgets.

### Sustaining yourself on the move

[Making a living while being on the road by WanderingEarl](#)- Earl has been on the road for more than 14 years now, so his methods of generating revenue while traveling are valuable and are based on years long experience.

### Reducing your traveling costs

[Traveling on a budget by NomadicMatt](#)- Matt is a top pro in traveling on a budget. In this mini guide, he shares a comprehensive strategy that will help you travel cheap as well.

### Nomad Packing List

[Nomad packing list by Tynan](#)- Even for minimalists, getting the right equipment is important (and if you get it right, it actually allows you to stay a minimalist). This post has some great items you can choose from before hitting the road.

More to come soon..

## What does a Nomad need?

Written by Steven Baguley.

Like anything valuable in life, living the nomadic life takes a good amount of time and effort to make it work. It helps enormously if you're already a certain kind of person with a certain kind of outlook. Below we present a checklist, a quick guide to the skills and strengths required from the get-go. So, to be successful, a nomad needs:

- **Intuition.** Choosing the nomad's path means constantly moving around. You'll always be jumping from one environment to the next, without a whole lot of

information to go on. “Normality” becomes relative. Hone your intuition and learn to use it well. You’ll have to trust it more than usual. This comes with a lot of practice, and will be a lifelong lesson.

- **Don’t hesitate.** Once you’ve learned to trust your intuition, don’t hesitate in making decisions. You’ll rarely have all the information to make solid calls, and you’ll rarely be able to see the whole picture, so learn to jump in with both feet and know that “risk” is only the lack of information. Jump when you have to.
- **Preparation.** Obviously, it’s still vital to know that you’ll always need to read your situations and prepare for eventualities as much as possible. Be practical, but don’t ever expect to have much to go on. Gleaning information from your surroundings can be crucial. Living the nomad’s life is *not* a vacation, and your decisions carry a much larger resonance. Making the right calls in situations where information is hard to come by is invaluable for any nomad, and cannot be understated. Know your alternatives, dedicate time to knowing and assessing as much as you can. Do your homework.
- **Don’t get too attached.** Getting too attached to your surroundings will almost always end in tears. Although you’re not simply passing through places, you won’t be stopping long enough to put down roots either. Know from the beginning that you have a departure date and relish all you can. Your relationships with people, events and places will be all the more vivid for this realization.
- **Be strong.** Nomads get lonely! There will always be the layovers, the long bus journeys, the solitary moments where you’re faced with only your reflection and when you won’t know a soul. Be comfortable with yourself, see it as a test of strength, and find a way to tune out when you need to.
- **Be positive.** Attitude really is key, and being positive opens doors you hadn’t even noticed. People respond to openness and friendliness, and a smile returned brightens up even the darkest day. Most nomadic journeyers find this positivity inescapable, and as it grows you’ll notice that moving to a new place and forming a new social circle gets quicker and easier every time.
- **Accept failure.** Everyone makes mistakes. Don’t get frustrated. Walk it off and stay positive.
- **Discipline.** Travelling gets distracting, and it’s easy to get side-tracked with projects that side-swipe you once in a while. If you’re not self-motivated you’ll get derailed too. Fix your goals early and work to achieve them.
- **Know yourself.** Be aware of what makes you happy, and always work that into your goals and self-discipline. You won’t always have the stability or time to hope things fall into place.
- **Curiosity.** Ask questions! This helps immensely with knowing yourself and your surroundings, your attitude, making the right calls, and gleaning as much information as you can. People react well to curiosity, and it really shows your genuinely

committed to wherever in the world you are. A nomad *lives* from place to place, you're not simply a drifter. Plus, who knows what treasure you'll find.

- **Be proactive.** Things don't just come to you. Go out and make them happen. Make the most of your time, wherever you are.

The nomadic journey is one that takes time and discipline, and that's true of both the fresh-faced journeyer and wizened vagrant. Yet with the right mental framework, eventually these challenges become ways of strengthening who you are, and the skills you've learned to foster through the nomad's lifestyle are some of the most versatile and valuable tools you'll keep with you. Trusting in both your strengths and weaknesses is one of the hardest first steps you'll ever take, but once you've started walking you'll be amazed how effortless the journey becomes.

## Disadvantages of Coworking

I'm a great fan of [coworking](#) and honestly think it is a lifesaver with clear [advantages](#). However, it's only fair to explain some of the potential disadvantages that co-working might have, so you can take a decision if it is the right environment for you:

- **Money** - Co-working costs money. How much exactly will change drastically. In the Romanian town I am currently staying in, it costs around \$70-80 a month, which falls on the lower end of the scale, but in the UK for example, you might be looking at closer to \$350. Digital nomads, and nomads in general, aren't rich, so making a decision if this substantial cost is worth it is important. Before committing to a period (month, week and so on), take advantage of the free first day most coworking places offer to get a feel for the place before you put your money down, understand if you're going to make the best use of it. Don't let it be like an under-appreciated gym membership, and make a decision to use it once you pay.
- **Noise** - Coworking places can be noisy, and this is hard if you're easily distracted. Noise is part and parcel of coworking places. People will make calls, talk to each other, move around and sometimes distract you, although most coworkers are quite aware and respectful in the working environment. The same goes to you, if you make many calls, you might want to check if the environment allows that. I recommend to use the first free hours while picking a place to see what is the noise level in the place where you are at, and see if it conflicts with your style of working.
- **Lost time** - You will probably lose some time due to socializing. As it will be harder to work for eight hours straight, you'll spend a considerable amount of time talking to people. For me, this is a factor I look for (not to mention that business connections and friends that are gained in the process), but make sure you're aware of it before you jump in.
- **Transport** - This is an additional cost you since you will spend time and money going to and returning from the co-working location. Try picking a place that is close to home and that has convenient transport connection.
- **Being presentable** - You can't come to work shirtless and in your boxers, and what you can do at home you can't do in the co-working space. This is actually good since presentability aids productivity, as it puts you in the working mode. But still, you will have to change your socks daily.
- **Going for big cities** - Coworking places are usually located in big cities since they need a critical mass to exist. If you are a village and nature type, and need co-working it can be a drag, but then again, you can always do co-working for a month and then break away for a week to an island or a village before returning to your co-working office.

If you look closely, you might discover that many of the disadvantages of coworking are actually a blessing in disguise. Interaction that might take time creates contacts, time spent on arriving your location is getting you out of home to breath fresh air and so on. So, just mitigate the disadvantages by picking the right place, and start co-working.

## Different Coworking Types

*How* do you find a coworking place that suits your needs? Once you've decided that working from home or a café is not the best option for you, the [advantages coworking spaces offer](#) should probably push you to go for this option. If you are lucky enough to have a wide variety of coworking places where you are at, choosing the right coworking space will greatly enhance your coworking experience. There are roughly three different coworking types:

- **Total office.** A dignified, posh place typically used by businessmen for a short stay in a new place. This is an ideal place for lawyers, PR agents and accountants who need comfort, while also helping them make a good impression on their clients. The most well-known option is Regus, who provides office services around the world for those who need an office but don't want the hassle of administration. This is a good solution with a higher pricetag than the other options, offering a benefit to the quality of service, a more upscale approach (secretaries and fancy furniture), providing you with a wide array of office needs that cover your necessities, if only you can afford it. Note that they usually have limited working hours (typically 9-5), and are not that fun oriented.
- **Coworking places.** These are usually for freelancers. They're cool, and nowhere near as posh. You'll get a desk, meet other people, mingle in a good atmosphere and in a usually younger crowd. They're open for longer hours, and provide differing levels of services. Those places are a perfect hangout for meeting other freelancers, and also put on good events for likeminded people. Since freelancers aren't rich, they have a lower price tag too.
- **Startup-oriented incubators.** These are more geared towards people with online businesses and startups who need an environment that'll connect them to other startups and contacts. One common example would be incubators or accelerators that push startups to success. Check availability in advance, as sometimes they only accept startup owners. The advantages are clear: lots of young people with great ideas who'll make it big, dedicated to changing the world and with limitless energy. These places might even offer you support, funding, and training. They're an interesting option if you're really into developing and pushing your startup forward.

The types of services you'll get in each of these places vary, so make sure you understand what's important for you of the following:

- **Opening hours.** Some are 9-5, some are 24 hours (leaving you with a key).
- **Full office services.** Printers, scanners, office supplies.
- **Virtual office platform.** Including a receptionist receiving visitors and calls for you, a mailing address and so on
- **Conference room.** A room for meetings (usually with clients).
- **Utilities.** Microwaves, fridge, coffee machine.

- **Different packages for stay.** Some places are more flexible than others and offer packages of hours, half days, weeks and so on. Make sure you understand exactly what you need, then customize your best option.
- **Dedicated desk.** Some places let you keep your own desk, in others, you sit where it is available.
- **Making calls and noise levels.** Sometimes coworking places get noisy; If you have many Skype calls, make sure the place can accommodate calls comfortably without disturbing the others. Some spaces have a quiet place you can go to when making calls.
- **Lockers.** Those allow you to go swimming in the middle of the day and leave your stuff safe.
- **Dedicated rooms for small groups and teams.**

How do we locate these places? Google them! Let's say you're in Buenos Aires. Google search, "coworking Buenos Aires". If the city is big enough, there'll be a variety of results. If the results aren't satisfactory, then look up related synonyms for "coworking" – "shared desk", "offices to rent", for example. Ask a local friend to write the search in the native language, as some places are new and don't yet have an English page. There are also directories for coworking\*\*, the best known being <http://www.sharedesk.net/>. Now that you know what types of places there are and what they all offer, it's up to you to search and find the right place for you. Good luck!

## Advantages of Coworking

*A*s a freelancer or digital nomad you should consider using coworking spaces. Working at home, or taking your laptop to a cafe might not be the best option, and renting office space presents the problem of expensive costs and time commitments which a nomad can't afford. A "coworking space" is a place to which you can go daily, with chairs, tables, internet connection, coffee, a kitchen, and the company of like-minded people that all together simulate a typical office environment. In a way it is ironic that we broke free from the 9 to 5 daily routine with the office, and are now offering a substitute to simulate another office. After coworking for 4 years in more than 20 countries, here are the advantages of coworking I came up with:

- **Separate work from home.** If you work from home, there's no real accountability. It's too easy to get distracted by your bed, your TV, and other temptations. Family and chores can easily take up your time. Working away from home creates accountability, and this separation is important.
- **Enhance your effectiveness.** Research shows that people who use coworking spaces are more effective. It makes them work faster since you're surrounded by energy and productivity so your costs are more easily covered. It's not always right for all of us – some people can work like tigers from home – but most of us will benefit greatly from coworking.
- **Working alone is isolating and can bring you down.** Having coworkers and interaction is covering a social need. It's less lonely, more energizing, fun and happy. There can be downsides (noise, not being in synch with people, for example), but in general, we need people around us to be happy.
- **The psychology of work.** This one is a little deep, so let's start with an example. It is a common recommendation to work at home with clothes you would wear at the office. Working with flip-flops in your pajamas usually decreases your productivity as you are signaling to yourself that you are not in work mode. Coworking creates consciousness by: 1) makes you dress up before you go to work 2) The actual walking/driving to the coworking place signals that your work is important enough to take this effort 3) Seeing people around you work pushes you to do the same unconsciously.
- **Improves your Social Life-** One of the biggest drawbacks of leaving a 9 to 5 work is missing out on all the friends you could have had. Jobs provide us with a major source of new friends, and once you leave your work this source is depleted. A coworking place allows you to fill in the gaps and make new friends with like minded people.
- **Reducing uncertainty-** Once you decide working from home, a frustrating thing might happen. You will find yourself running from one coffee shop to another hoping that today it won't be too crowded, loud and that the internet is going to work. This constant searching for the new next place takes time and energies that could have been used working for your clients and makes you less happy in general. Coworking provides your life with stability.

- **Connections for the future.** Some of the people you meet in coworking spaces may turn out to be the people you work with in the future, future clients or suppliers for example. You'll meet quality, talented, and likeminded people to add to your network.
- **Small perks.** Free coffee. Fridges, microwaves. You get to save money while still in a working environment, unlike at a cafe where your small costs quickly add up. (Coworking will probably be cheaper than 3 Starbucks coffee a day)
- **No long-term commitment.** Some coworking spaces offer weekly and monthly packs, and you don't need to commit to longer stays. Many coworking spaces offer free one-day trials.
- **Events.** Coworking spaces often organize events as they need to steer awareness to the advantages of coworking. This presents many social benefits for a digital nomad.

Coworking is a great solution, and will no doubt shape a lot of the future labour market. If you're a digital nomad, you may want to consider it for yourself. Granted, if you're someone who's able to work easily and effectively from home, it might not be for you. But for most, it can be a life-saver both increasing effectiveness and allowing you to meet new people.