

Tips On How To Pay Less for Budget Airline Tickets

Description

Ever bought tickets on a budget airline, only to realize upon checkout that the total price is much higher than you expected it to?



Welcome to the real world. While we've gotten savvier at sourcing for cheaper travel deals online, the airlines have found other ways to earn our money as well. My friend Timothy wrote a good piece in Dollars and Sense today on [How Budget Airlines Are Getting You To Spend More Than You Should](#), and I wanted to add on with some of my recent experiences and tips for everyone else thinking of flying budget air.

Scoot, JetStar, AirAsia and TigerAir are my top go-to places when I need to fly short-haul (anything less than 7 hours). However, the prices aren't always as cheap as we're led to think. Here are some tips to look out for:

1. Buy during a promotion



Langkawi is a paradise for adventure junkies. It offers many inexpensive activities. Tickets to the outdoor adventure park Skytrex Adventure start at RM45, a feast at the night market costs about RM15, and enjoying Langkawi's public beaches is absolutely free! Enjoy island life without burning a hole in your pocket when you fly there from \$34. More #Tigerflash deals: <http://goo.gl/FBpYNU>

Promotion includes tax, excludes booking fee. Conditions apply. Singapore currency fare is shown for reference only. Fare on website will be in local currency.



Airlines almost always have some sort of promotion running at any given time. It could range from a simple discount code from a campaign they recently teamed up with a local influencer, or select flights for lower than their usual prices. If you have some flexibility in your travel dates and timings, don't book tickets as soon as you've decided to travel – WAIT for a promotion, and buy during then. You'll generally end up saving more that way.

2. Subscribe to mailing lists and social media channels



When there are promotional prices, airlines usually update the consumers on their email lists first, so it makes sense to subscribe and get them in your inbox, although it also means a lot of filtering during periods where you're not actively travelling.

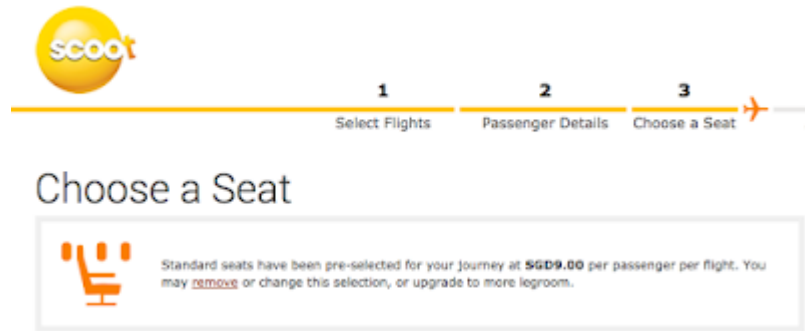
Always look at their social media accounts, especially Facebook, to see if there are any ongoing promotions that you might not have known about.

3. Clear your browsing history and Internet cache

I'm not a tech geek, but many people believe that some airlines track your Internet cookies to see how often you've been checking back for prices, which might explain why the prices you keep seeing hover around the same range. It'll thus be good practice to clear your tracks before you search, or browse in incognito mode to the same effect.

4. Skip the add-ons (pre-selected seats, check-in baggage, travel insurance)

Many of these options are automatically pre-selected for you during the booking, so don't be surprised if you're wondering how come the final price got jacked up by so much. Simply spend a few minutes to uncheck the boxes and remove the unnecessary add-ons that the airlines automatically charge you for. I generally slash about \$50 off each trip whenever I do this, although it can be quite cumbersome.



For travel insurance, I'm almost always able to find a better deal through a direct insurance provider. You can get many of these online easily, or even at the airport ATM prior to your flight. Don't also forget that some credit cards offer you free travel insurance if you book your flights with them – I've been enjoying this benefit on OCBC for the longest time already!

You might not always be able to run away from the pre-selected seats, especially if you're travelling in groups and don't want to risk being split up. Scoot charged me \$9 for each seat (\$18 in total, 2-way trip) and it greatly annoyed me to no end. However, if the flight isn't too packed, you could always try to switch seats after everyone has settled in, at no extra cost at all. I see couples and groups doing this almost every time I fly budget!

5. Consider flying during weekdays

Flights for Mondays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays tend to be more expensive as many people typically book their holidays to coincide with long weekends and public holidays.

If your boss allows you to be flexible with your leave, my favourite is departing in the middle of the week, between Tuesdays to Wednesdays where prices are usually cheaper.

My recent trip saw me leave on a Wednesday afternoon and come back on a Monday night, which only cost me 4.5 days in leave!

6. Factor in the credit card processing fee

Receipts & Payment Details

Receipt	Pricing Currency	Receipt	Pricing Currency		
Departure Fare	SGD	55.00	Seat Selection Fee	SGD	18.00
Return Fare	SGD	55.00	Processing Fee	SGD	20.00
Fees And Taxes	SGD	21.13			
Government Aviation Levy	SGD	6.10			
Airport Passenger Security Service Charge	SGD	8.00			
Airport Imposed Passenger Security Fee	SGD	19.90			

I find it ridiculous that Scoot charged me \$20 for processing my payment through credit card for a flight that cost only \$59. That's almost 1/3 of my entire flight price! But you can't really run away from these when you book online, so just suck it up and add it into your budget.

7. Try mix-and-match options



If you're willing to do some homework to save more money on your flights, I recommend trying different variations to see which gives you the best rate. For instance, I usually search 1 vs. 2 or more passengers, and the price has varied by a significant margin on numerous occasions (more expensive for a pair during promo periods). Another trick I use is to compare 2 separate trips instead of putting it as a 2-way return trip, which yields some cheaper results at times.

If you don't mind different airlines, you can take your flights on different carriers like what I did recently for my Bangkok trip. Scoot's flight to BKK was cheap, but the return was highly expensive. On the other hand, JetStar offered a more expensive package for a return trip, but a single flight from Bangkok back to Singapore was cheaper than the one Scoot offered, so I broke up my flights in the end to save about \$40. Just note that you've to convert the currencies to make sure you're really getting a cheaper deal!

8. Don't rule out full-service airlines

It is an open secret that sometimes full-service airlines like Singapore Air or Cathay Pacific offers flights that can be on par or even cheaper to the prices offered by their budget counterparts, especially if you need check-in luggage and perhaps a meal or two while onboard. Always shop around before you purchase!

What other tips do you use to get the most value out of budget flights?

With love,
Budget Babe

Category

1. Family