

My Disney Mistakes - Part 3: What NOT to Do While at Walt Disney World

by Rebecca Pearson, PassPorter Guest Contributor

Here is the conclusion of Rebecca Pearson's series on Disney Mistakes. Check out [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)!

Here is what NOT to do before and after your trip to Walt Disney World!

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01. Book flights into the wrong airport! I booked two, one way flights that LOOKED like a great deal. I let the excitement of a good deal get the best of me. On a last minute decision, I booked one way flights out of Midway in Chicago, for only \$59 each. I hoped that another cheap flight back would pop up, but if not, I could still pay the going rate. Eventually I found flights for the date we needed to come back for only \$79 each. I was so excited and we'd never flown out of Chicago before, so I booked as quickly as I could without paying attention. We were flying back into O'Hare, a totally different airport, about 45 minutes away! Since I was trying to surprise my kids on this trip, we drove to Midway, checked into a hotel, then drove to a park and ride outside O'Hare, took the shuttle to O'Hare, and got on the train to take it back to Midway. My son was 7 and was a huge train lover, so this seemed like a great idea. I read online that it would take two hours. Wrong. It took closer to 3, with all of the stops, and resulted in my son peeing in a coffee cup that I pulled out of a garbage can because we couldn't leave the platform and it was nearly 9:00 pm at night, and I wasn't exactly sure how the L train worked. Not a proud moment. We survived, finally got to the hotel and in bed, by 10:30 pm, almost 5 hours after we had originally left the hotel. We had to get up at 3:30 that morning, because our flight was a 6:30 departure. We should have just taken a cab, and I shouldn't have been so bent on getting around cheaply. Sometimes a little extra cost is worth the convenience.

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02. Count on getting a big reaction! I expected too much excitement for our surprise trip, and was let down. The trip above was meant to be a surprise for the kids. I planned to tell them when we woke up to head to the airport, and expected squeals of delight. My little white lie to get them to think we weren't going to Disney was that we were spending a few days in Chicago, and the train ride was part of it. My 9-year-old daughter questioned why we were parking in airport parking at O'Hare. I blew her off, although she was still suspicious. Since we got to bed so late, when we woke up at 3:30 am, and told them we were going to Disney, they were so tired, she just said "I figured that already," and

Dillon said, "But you said we were going to stay in Chicago and would ride the train again." So much for that surprise. I realize now that planning to surprise them was probably more for my benefit than theirs. They would have liked going to Florida either way. I didn't plan as well as I could, and I had too high of expectations for the situation that we ended up in.

3. Wait to check out your PhotoPass pictures. I let our Photopass pictures from our first trip expire before I got to order anything. Huge Fail. I still have pictures from that trip of course, but I'm not sure that I have any of all of us in front of the castle, and I'd have a lot more had I not let it expire. I hoped to add borders, then lost track of time, and at the time, I don't think they had the option to pay for extra time (which I do recommend taking advantage of, it has saved me before). Take advantage of Photopass. With the new Memory Maker option, it's an even better deal, and the characters do pose differently, arguably even better, for the PhotoPass photographers. Set reminders in your phone, on your calendar, anything that you can do to remember to download your photos; I find it to be well worth it.

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□4. Overdose on Energy Drinks. I drove through the night to Florida and accidentally overdosed on energy drinks. Okay, maybe overdosed isn't exactly correct, but I'm not sure what else to call it. We drove for the first time, and while we planned to stop at a hotel on the way home, I just wanted to get there and decided that I could drive through the night. I used to work nights, so I could handle it right? I guess I did, but I also scared the crap out of myself in the process. I drank my first energy drink at about midnight. I had never had one, so I wasn't really sure how it would work for me. It worked great honestly, but it was a bit too sweet. At around 4am, I decided I was getting tired again and needed gas, so I bought a smaller energy drink of a different brand. In my mind, four hours was enough time to pass before drinking another. I'm not sure if it was the timing, or the energy drink I picked, but it was a crazy experience. It felt like my limbs were asleep from the knees and elbows down, I had that pins and needles sensation, and when I sneezed, pins and needles went through my entire body. I sat there trying to bounce my legs and use up energy to get rid of the sensation, eventually got to a rest stop, and just got out of my car to jog to the restroom and jump around a bit to try to get some energy out. Energize me it did, but to a scary degree. I wouldn't drive straight through again, and I haven't had an energy drink since.

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□5. Wait until your kids are older to take them out of school. I didn't take the kids out of school soon enough for a trip. I know there are different schools of thought regarding this, however, we don't have strict guidelines and school has been easy for my children. I finally took them

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out of school in 7th and 4th grade. I wish I would have done it sooner. It was no big deal for my son, but it did affect my daughter as she missed a band concert. The older they are, the more demanding homework and sports schedules become. I should have taken them out of school when they were both in elementary, and taken advantage of the Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party, which we've yet to see, and the lower crowds and prices at the different times of year.

About The Author: Rebecca Pearson is the proud mother of two children and is known for her "epic fails" in her every day life that inspired her to write this article. She has been to Walt Disney World seven times in the past seven years!

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