A family vacation can be the ultimate bonding experience. Whether you’re after adventure or relaxation, these trips can create long-lasting memories for everyone involved. And with a little bit of preparation, you can put your mind completely at ease and know that everything back home is safe.

Simple tips to get prepared

In the days leading up to your trip, make a checklist of the items you want to bring with you. Check the list — then check it again, because it’s easy to forget vacation essentials like flip-flops or sunglasses on your way out the door.

When you start packing, be sure to remember any specialty toiletries or prescription medications that may be hard to find at your destination. You may need to use travel-sized bottles if you are flying with carry-on luggage. Also remember to pack special items for your kids like a stuffed animal or their “blankie” to keep them comfortable while away from home. If you’re doing any special activities on your trip, don’t forget important gear like a snorkel mask or ski gloves.

Be sure to check the weather forecast for your destination. After all, beaches aren’t always 86 degrees and sunny. Bring extra layers like pants and hoodies so you can effortlessly adjust to changing temperatures. The weather can also affect what activities your family is able to do. Plan out your days, but leave room for flexibility and have backup plans in case you’re stuck inside.

If you plan on picking up any souvenirs while you’re away, make sure you leave a little extra room in your suitcase. You don’t want to be figuring out how to ship porcelain figurines and coffee mugs two hours before your flight home.

Safety and security at home

In addition to getting ready for your trip, there are also a few safety and security checks you can make to your house before you leave. Put a hold on your mail to ensure the safety of any private documents and to prevent a buildup in your mailbox. An overflowing mailbox can tip off home intruders that a house is empty.

Line up a trusted neighbor or friend to stop by the house a few times throughout the trip to make sure everything is A-OK. If you’re still concerned, you can also alert local police about your vacation timeline.

On the day of your departure, make sure all doors and windows are locked. Also ensure that the oven, stove, and all other appliances are completely turned off. For an added security measure, leave a light or the TV on a timer to make it seem like someone is home.

It’s also important to be smart about social media posts. Although you might want to share your adventures with family and friends, it’s safer to wait until you come home so people don’t see your posts and know your house is empty.