

Q: Last year when I tried to bring Christmas presents for my grandkids aboard a flight, I had troubles with my carry-ons. I don't want to be searched and hassled again this year by airport security. I know those guys and gals are just doing their jobs, but I bet they'd strip-search Santa Claus. Just what are the rules?



A: No, Santa escapes security by flying way high above airports. Seriously, as you approach the x-ray screener, put all items containing metal in the plastic box to go through with your carry-on bag. Just to make it go a bit faster, you may as well take off your shoes and put them in the box. Other items for the box include belts, pens, coins, glasses, wallets and anything else that has any metal on it. I

f you're wearing a prosthetic device, you'll need to declare it, and expect it to be electronically scanned. Also, if you're wearing a wired bra, and security demands a pat-down, ask for a woman security officer to do it.

Here's the list of absolute no-nos: toy guns, knives, razor blades, scissors, screwdrivers, corkscrews, flammable liquids, aerosols, strike-anywhere matches and lighters. This year, liquid personal care items, such as medications, perfume, lotions and deodorants, are permitted in bottles of 16 ounces or less.

You must check as baggage all power tools and weapons, and sports equipment that could be used as weapons, such as golf clubs, baseball bats, hockey and lacrosse sticks, ski poles/skis, martial arts equipment and pool cues.

These suggestions certainly don't cover all of the requirements and restrictions. If you have any questions about taking anything aboard your flight, contact the Transportation Security Agency at TSA-ContactCenter@dhs.gov.