



Statistics are that one out of 100 checked bags is returned to its owner with at least one article missing from it. If that happens to you on a flight, the most likely suspects are baggage handlers and airport security staff.

Airport security opens bags, but usually in front of the owner, and are monitored by video. They're concerned with carry-on materials, and not usually involved in checked luggage.

Baggage handlers are not authorized to open checked bags, but are not always in security camera view. Of course, at least 99 percent of airport workers do their jobs honestly. However, when news of thefts are revealed, it reflects on all of them.

There are ways to protect valuables in checked luggage. When packing, make a list of everything you'll check, including serial numbers of electronic gear and sales records of jewelry and other valuable items. If, after you reach your destination, believe something was missing or stolen from your checked bag, make sure first you didn't forget to pack it. When certain something is missing, report it immediately to airline authorities. Do it at the airport desk, or if you've already arrived at your destination, by Email to the website, or call the airline's passenger support number.

In addition to reporting a missing item, notify the Transportation Security Agency. Do that even if you find an official note inside your bag saying your bag was opened and inspected by a TSA rep.

Act quickly, because there's always a time limit for reporting stolen items from your checked bag. In most cases, it must be within 48 hours of arriving at your destination.