



*Guest Senior Travel Guru Marge P., Atlanta GA:* Air travel etiquette doesn't start after boarding your flight. There are also some simple consideration practices you should follow earlier while waiting in the airport. The most annoying offender is the obnoxious character next to you yakking very loud on a not-so-smartphone two inches from your ear.

These days, every traveler needs a handy smartphone to keep up with the latest at home and every- changing schedules. However, for the sake of those nearby in the waiting area, go find a quiet corner. There you can yell, squawk and scream as loud as you want. Another annoying airport character is the blob who must occupy two or three seats with carry-on bags and plopped up feet, while others must stand and wait. Be considerate, take up just one seat and put feet and bags on the floor with you. The worst offenders are those who flake out prone, taking up four or five seats during the busiest times.

We all know airport delays are more common these days of inflated prices and deflated flight schedules. But if you must get some lay-down sleep in the terminal, have the courtesy to stretch out on the floor against a wall in a quiet peaceful area.

GIs, students and savvy senior travelers who have long airport waits should take backpacks containing blankets, eye shades and quick-blow-up little mattresses and/or pillow. They get as much comfort as possible on floors and benches without blocking foot traffic.

For consideration and etiquette once aboard your flight, the same general rules apply. Look to your own comfort, but also be aware of the rights of others. I fly frequently and always get the feeling that somehow Murphy's Tobacco Law will strike me.

The obvious smoker plops down next to me, and is not only literally dying from lung-destroying addiction, but also suffering greatly by being denied his poison during the flight. Clothing, hair and body still smell ... make that stink ... strongly of old burnt tobacco. Unable to light up, the seatmate becomes a nervous, fidgeting wreck with an irritating cough.

Of course, there are the kids. I raised my own and love 'em all. Except screaming, misbehaving, incontinent and/or barfing little ones on the aircraft seat next to me. I know it's both cruel and useless to yell at the harried mother to solve the problem immediately. But there are ways of toning down the disruptions by kids.

When my kids were very little, we tried to schedule red-eye (late night) flights. With proper

preparation, and after a busy day, they slept throughout the trip. We did that more for the sake of the comfort of our kids and ourselves than out of courtesy for other passengers. Whatever the reason, the results were happier people all around.

Etiquette is a fancy way of describing the practice of simple consideration for others in airports and on flights. Or even more basic, it's the application of the Golden Rule.