

Family Trip Decision Worksheet

A blank comparison grid for narrowing your own shortlist by age fit, budget, and season — fill it in against whatever destinations you're actually weighing.

How to use this

Score each destination 1–5 in the four scored columns (5 = excellent fit, 1 = poor fit). Add the scores for a rough total — it's a decision aid, not a verdict. The example row below shows the format filled in for a hypothetical family with a 4-year-old and a 9-year-old choosing between three real destinations from our guides.

DESTINATION	AGE FIT (1–5)	BUDGET FIT (1–5)	SEASON FIT (1–5)	LOGISTICS (1–5)	TOTAL	NOTES
<i>Example: San Diego</i>	5	3	4	5	17	<i>Great for both ages; direct flight; May Gray could affect early trip</i>

What each column actually measures

- **Age Fit** — does the destination's real age-suitability research (in our guides, the "Age Suitability" section) match every kid you're bringing, not just the oldest or youngest?
- **Budget Fit** — does the destination's real cost-per-day research land inside what you've actually budgeted, not what the marketing implies?
- **Season Fit** — does your travel window match the destination's real best-season window, or are you fighting weather, crowds, or closures?
- **Logistics** — flight time, time-zone shift, and how much of the trip is actually travel days versus destination days.

A few honest notes before you decide

A high total score doesn't mean a destination is objectively "best" — it means it scores well against the priorities you weighted. If season fit matters far more to your family than budget fit, weight it that way rather than treating every column equally. And a genuinely honest downside (see the "Honest Downside" section on every one of our destination guides) is worth re-reading before you commit, even for your top-scoring pick.