



## 5 Ways to Find Cheap Family Cruises



There are always ways to save when booking a family cruise vacation. Whether it's choosing a budget-friendly family cruise line or choosing a departure location that isn't far from home, you can certainly find a cheap family cruise that is fun for the whole family.

Consider these saving tactics for a cheap family cruise.

### 1. Find a Port Close to Home

Where there's an ocean, there's a cruise port! Do a quick search to find the nearest cruise port. By removing the flight from your family cruise, you have already saved a bundle. Some popular ports of call include Baltimore; Boston; Cape Liberty, New Jersey; Norfolk, Virginia; New York; Fort Lauderdale; Miami; Orlando; Seattle and Tampa. There are numerous cruise options and itineraries out of these ports of call (as well as many others), so if you are within driving distance, this is a great way to create a cheap family cruise vacation.

Luckily for us in Texas, we have the port of Galveston.

## 2. Look for Kids Sail Free Promotions

Some cruise lines offer kids sail free packages and promotions. (Be aware that restrictions will very likely apply.) Royal Caribbean, which partners with DreamWorks and offers numerous kid-friendly onboard activities, often features a discounted rate for the “third or fourth person” in your cabin. This deal is not a guarantee, but it’s a good one to keep in mind when researching and booking. Norwegian Cruise Line also sometimes offers the “third and fourth passenger” discounted rates. Holland America, CroisiEurope, Crystal Cruises and the luxury cruise line, Paul Gauguin, also offer similar discounts for kids. And we love this one — MSC Cruises allows all children 12 years old and younger to sail free when they share a cabin with their parents!

## 3. Book Early (or Late)

A little research goes a long way when it comes to finding a cheap family cruise. Cruise lines often offer sales; you just need to find them. Wave season, considered a promotional time when many cruise lines offer deals, runs between January and March. Holidays can also be a good time to find and book a cheap family cruise. Many cruise lines offer early-booking deals. Advance booking is great if you know your exact travel dates and what you are looking for in a cruise. Or, if booking too far in advance is too much of a commitment, try finding a last-minute cruise deal. Cruise lines consider “last-minute” anywhere between a few days and a few months before the sailing.

## 4. Have Flexible Travel Dates

Obviously school breaks are the most convenient time to take a family vacation. But the cruise lines know this as well. If you have some flexibility with your travel dates, finding a cheap family cruise will be a lot easier. The summer and holidays are peak cruise times with larger price tags, but if you can set sail in the fall or early spring, it is a great way to save on your family cruise vacation (and possibly enjoy fewer crowds).

## 5. Take Advantage of Packages

Once you’ve booked your cruise, make sure to inquire about purchasing beverage packages in advance of your sail date. Whether it’s alcohol, soda or water, each cruise line has a different price and policy. Some lines even allow you to bring your own on-board so see what your cruise line and specific ship has to offer prior to boarding.

Article courtesy of [familyvacationcritic.com](http://familyvacationcritic.com)