

Let us know in the chat box if there's a specific question you have that we can answer in the webinar.

If you'd like to be a case study, let us know where you'd like to travel, where you're based, and what credit cards you have now.

We'll be starting soon!



*Dream of  
Travel Writing*

# Create Your Own Free Travel Plan with Points and Miles

by Gabi Logan, founder of Dream of Travel Writing

A blurred background image of a coffee shop setting. In the foreground, there is a white cup of coffee on a saucer. To the left, a smartphone is visible. In the background, there is a vase of purple flowers and a white napkin. The text "Today, we're going to talk about..." is overlaid in the center.

Today, we're going to  
talk about...



1. Points, miles, credit cards—what does this all mean?
2. A quick crash course in how to physically book points and miles flight
3. The seven-step system for setting up your own personal points and miles strategy
4. A case study from one of your freelance travel writing peers (if you'd like to be one as well, please let us know in the chat box)

A special giveaway!





# Who Are We?

## Dream of Travel Writing

- The tools, techniques and products you need to grow your travel writing income.
- The Travel Magazine Database
- The Webinar Library
- Workshops and One-on-One Coaching
- \*New\* The Dream Buffet
- *The Six-Figure Travel Writing Road Map*

## Gabi Logan

- I've been full-time air travel and points and miles travel for nearly 8 years
- Fly around the world in business class several times a year with miles left for family trips and domestic work trips



Before we get this train moving...

Why do I keep saying “points and miles?” Aren’t they the same thing? Is there a difference?



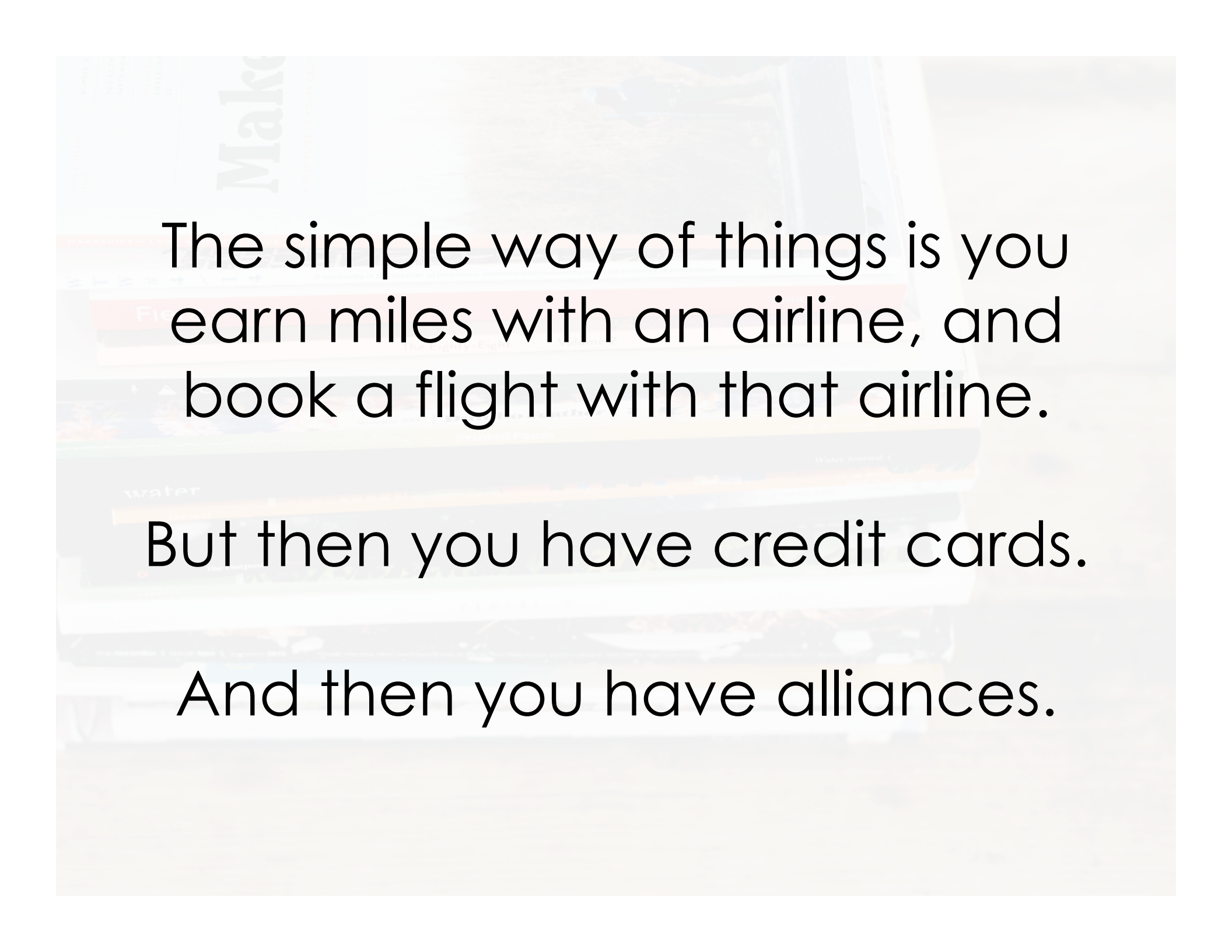
Getting the most out of points and miles centers on understanding why you get them in the first place:

they're a reward for something a company ***needs to bribe you to do***



# Quick recap on ways to earn

- Surveys and other market research
- Restaurant programs and other collaborations (Australia is fantastic with grocery, pharmacy, really every store)
- Airline online shopping malls (especially with high bonuses like 15x on flowers for Mother's Day)
- Points from travel someone else books for you (corporate and press trips)
- Basic credit card spend (and why you should always try to upgrade your old cards)
- Credit card sign-on bonuses



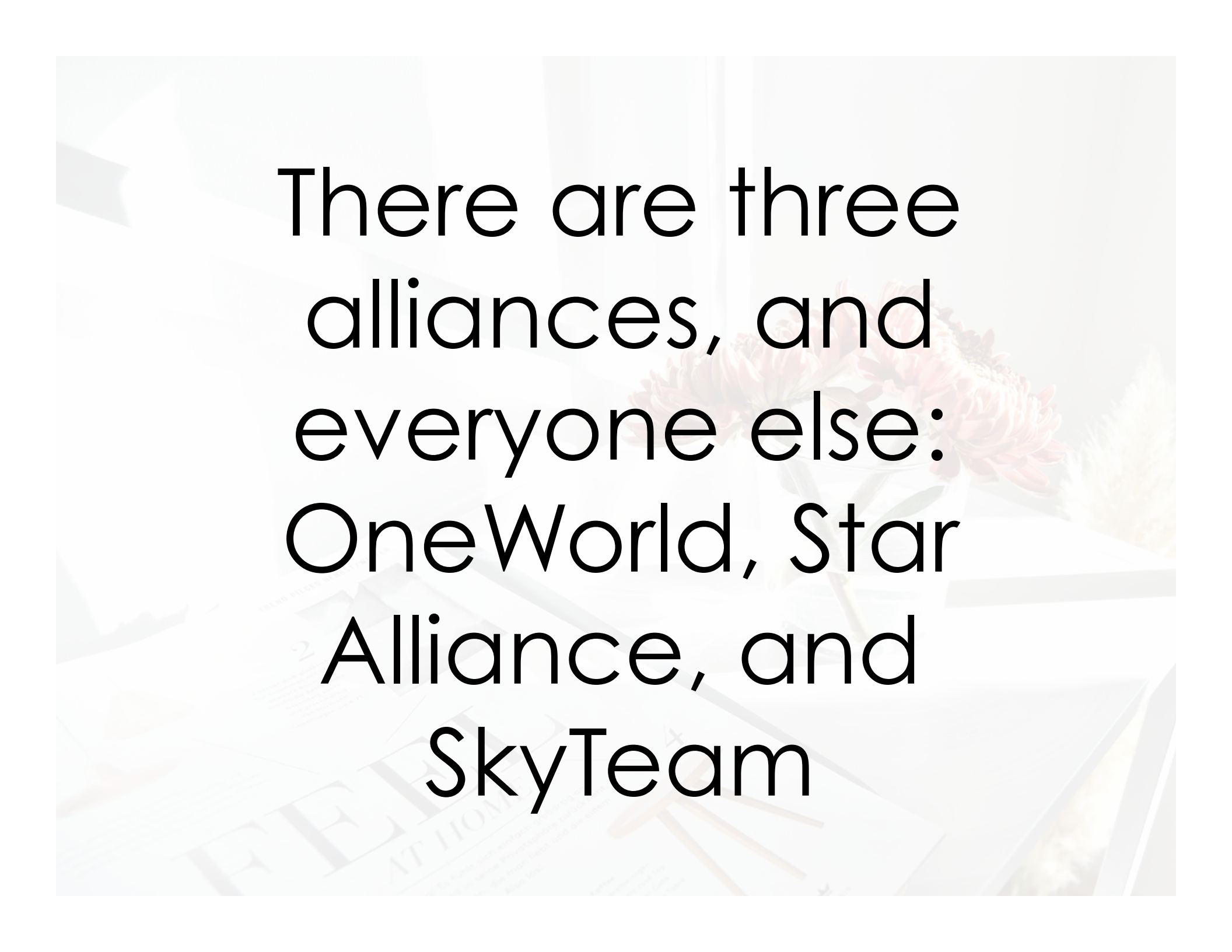
The simple way of things is you  
earn miles with an airline, and  
book a flight with that airline.

But then you have credit cards.

And then you have alliances.

Then there are three  
main credit points  
systems and  
everyone else:  
Chase, American  
Express, SPG





There are three  
alliances, and  
everyone else:  
OneWorld, Star  
Alliance, and  
SkyTeam

# “Everyone Else” includes airlines like:

- Etihad
- JetBlue
- Alaska
- Virgin Atlantic
- Virgin America
- Virgin Australia
- Emirates
- Southwest

*Note: some do have credits or partner with major credit card companies, making them “usable” but not a good idea for a specific points investment*

# The 7 Step System for Fantastic Free Trips

1. Set your goal:
  - One destination, several?
  - What's your time line?
2. Map your spend
3. Convert existing credit cards to maximize spend
4. Apply for cards with serious sign-on bonuses (especially business cards!)
5. Once you hit the bonuses, allocate each spending category to the card with the best bonus
6. Keep tabs on seats on the itinerary you have your eye on and any potential program changes
7. Book yourself or through an agent
  - Gary Leff from View from the Wing or Cranky Traveler are recommended
  - Can monitor availability of award seats with ExpertFlyer



## Step Two: Mapping Your Spending

- If you use a personal finance tracking like Mint, it's a snap to tally this all in one place.
- Otherwise, you can log into your banks and add everything up manually.
- If you want to sign up for a card that gives bonus points for gas, grocery, and restaurant spending, break those out separately and multiply by the bonus.

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Minimum spends  
sound really scary.

Who wants to sign up  
to spend \$5,000?!



That's why **step 2** in creating a personal plan is to chart your *current spending* and *what you can shift to credit cards* if not already there

# Meeting Minimum Spend: The Elephant in Your Financial Planning

- Need to touch on this, but not recommend: manufactured spend
- Venmo, Paypal, etc.
- Gift cards for later spending on things you know you already pay for: gas, groceries, etc.
- Rent, mortgage, etc.
- Bundled utilities or insurance
- Charity and taxes
- Plan new cards for times of big expenses, like a move, new car, etc.
- Add an authorized user (family members are great!)

A great list with links to specific resources: <http://extrapackofpeanuts.com/ways-to-meet-minimum-spend-requirements/>

# Now What? Set it and Forget it?

5. Once you hit the bonuses, allocate each spending category to the card with the best bonus

- works very well with online payments like phone bill
- keep a small number of cards in your wallet and use the best one for restaurants, groceries, general spending
- Chase Freedom categories rotate, so you need to keep an eye on the current bonus categories

6. Keep tabs on seats on the itinerary you have your eye on and any potential program changes

- don't let your points get devalued before you use them!

7. Book yourself or through an agent

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## Case study:

“As a full-time employee with my own small business (ramping up to start earning again after remodeling my website) I am looking now into the Chase Ink Business Card.

I currently have:

1. Chase Sapphire
2. Capital One I never use
3. Barclay's Travel card

I use the Chase Sapphire for everything and have redeemed many round trip flights/hotel stays with that card alone using flight alerts to get the best flight deals.”

# The Secrets to \*Lots\* of Points

- Sign-on bonuses
- Maximizing families and partnerships
- Don't book the airline you want to fly
- How to do it all without spending a lot

# It seems like I know all of these loopholes by heart! How can you find them?

- Want to really soup up earning?
  - Travel Hacking Cartel
  - (If you want to go really crazy and learn it all in a weekend: Frequent Traveler University or just network at a MegaDo)
- Best ways to learn about what at the new best cards or deals, as well as info on how to reach different destinations or maximize your cards:
  - Gary Leff, View from the Wing
  - Lucky, One Mile at a Time
- Program by program guidelines:
  - Reward Expert
  - Million Mile Secrets





**WANT TO WIN AN E-BOOK WITH  
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT POINTS AND MILES  
TRAVEL?**

EMAIL

[QUESTIONS@DREAMOFTRAVELWRITING.COM](mailto:QUESTIONS@DREAMOFTRAVELWRITING.COM)

WITH AT LEAST ONE TOPIC YOU'D LIKE TO SEE US  
COVER ON AN UPCOMING WEBINAR!

GIVEAWAY ANNOUNCED MONDAY, SO PLEASE  
ENTER BEFORE THEN



# JOIN US IN THE NEXT WEEKS TO LEARN:

THURS JAN 25:  
CREATING YOUR OWN FREE TRAVEL PLAN  
WITH POINTS AND MILES

THURS FEB 1: ARTICLE NUTS AND BOLTS:  
PUTTING TOGETHER A NEWS BRIEF

FREELANCE TRAVEL WRITING BOOTCAMP!

# UPCOMING EVENTS

AT-HOME IDEAFEST: JAN 15- FEB 9  
AT-HOME PITCHAPALOOZA: FEB 12 –  
MARCH 16

FREELANCE TRAVEL WRITING  
BOOTCAMP: FEB 4-10  
IDEAFEST: MARCH 16-18  
PITCHAPALOOZA: APRIL 13-15



Thanks so much  
for joining us today!

It was a pleasure chatting  
travel writing with you 😊

Have a follow up question on this webinar? Email [questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com](mailto:questions@dreamoftravelwriting.com) and we'll cover it in an upcoming webinar or in our Monday reader mailbag post on the Six-Figure Travel Writer blog.

