



Pre-Vacation Laboratory Guide and Checklist

A Labguru eBook

labguru



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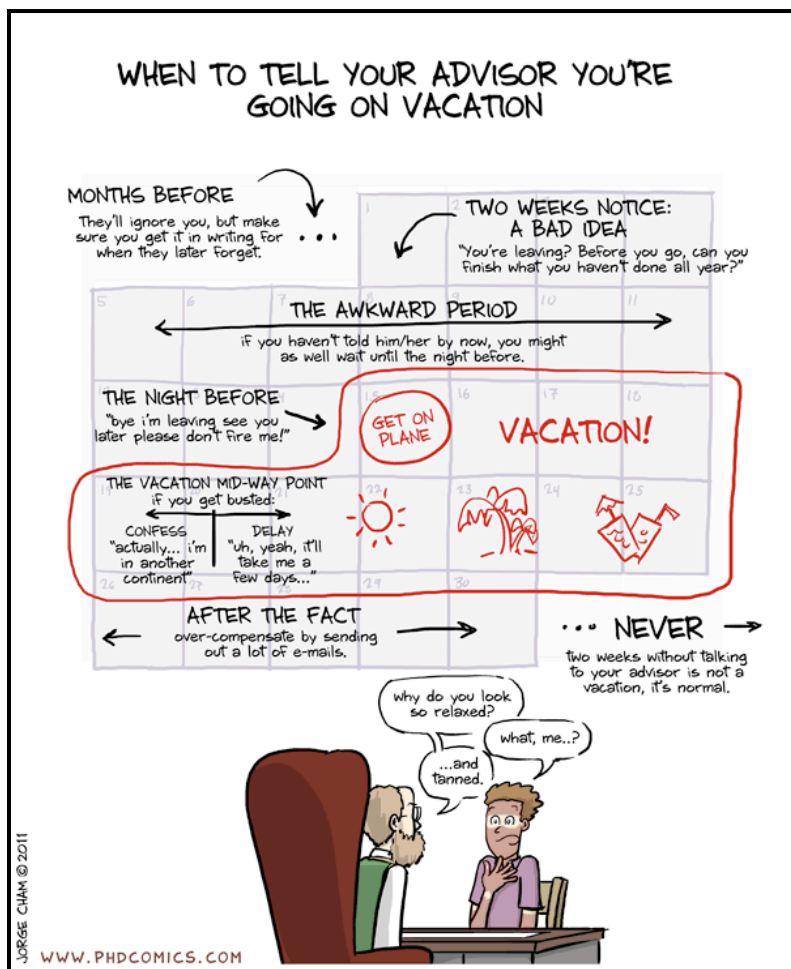
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Labguru is a web-based research and lab management system for life science laboratories. It help plan experiments, manage storage and procurement, and track research materials, documents, biological collections and overall research progress. Currently used by thousands of researchers in hundreds of labs worldwide, Labguru is available FREE for personal use. To get started, check out www.labguru.com.



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Going on vacation just got a whole lot sunnier!

Every researcher dreads it. No, not lab cleanup days. Planning a vacation. We all deserve one (and certainly want one), but often, between coordinating reagents, finalizing data, and pausing ongoing experiments, cell lines, animals, and collaborations, leaving the lab involves more stress than rest and relaxation.

This does not have to be so. With a few simple, well-planned steps, executed ahead of time and in conjunction with your colleagues, collaborators and lab mates, you can continue your research seamlessly during your vacation, and also manage your lab long after your return!



Preparation is the Key

When preparing for a vacation, one of the largest worries, especially for those personnel leaving on multi-week trips, is management and continuation of duties and projects that they will be leaving behind. There are several areas of planning and preparation that all researchers should employ to ensure they don't have to sacrifice productivity for rest and relaxation:

(1) Consult With Fellow Researchers

Before hopping on that plane to Bermuda, make sure that you spend some quality time with your lab mates going over your current projects and whatever experiments you have entrusted them with while you are gone. Discuss your current progress, and what next steps are needed to ensure that experiments stay on track during your absence. If you expect that your expertise may be needed while you're away, be certain to leave a contact number or email address. Make sure that the lab mate is comfortable with performing the experiment.

(2) Provide Written Documentation and Instructions

Depending on your role in the lab, it may be important for you to compile data, research, reports, or inventory information in advance for your fellow researchers. It is always best to err on the side of caution (especially if you don't want to be getting frantic calls while you're busy suntanning on the beach!), so prepare any information in advance that you think might be needed to help keep projects going smoothly. If necessary, prepare project notes and protocols that may be helpful to other lab workers who might have to fill in for you while you're gone. Arrange a folder to store the protocols in, go over them with your lab mate and share all the undocumented "secrets" of the protocol. Additionally, arrange a -20c box of reagents or a rack of tubes on the bench that are relevant to the delegated experiment so that colleagues don't have to search through too many separate reagent boxes.





(3) Stay Organized

You may still be wondering if your lab is ready for your vacation. The amount of preparation necessary prior to a vacation can be daunting, even to the point that you might want to jettison your plans altogether. But remember that if you stay organized and make sure that everyone is informed and on the same page, there is no reason that your lab shouldn't be able to continue functioning smoothly.

In order to keep your research lab properly organized at all times, you may want to consider a program like the Labguru [lab management system](#). This web-based system was built on many years of multi-disciplinary laboratory experience, and is specifically designed to meet the needs of scientists: It can help track projects (including setting milestones and experiments), catalog lab materials, and simplify communication between all laboratory personnel. A program like this can not only make it easy for you to participate while away, but can also make the lab efficient and connected enough that your absence won't impede research progress.

As long as you take plenty of time to consider what questions or problems might arise while you're away and you preemptively answer them by providing needed resources, you should find that the lab is just as well-organized when you return as it was when you left.

(4) Leave ALL contact information for everyone that will be performing delegated tasks in your absence.

This sounds simple, but you'd be surprised how many people jet out for vacation with out leaving basic contact information (cell phone, email if you're checking it, etc.) with anyone that might need to get a hold of you in case something goes wrong. And if you plan on climbing the trails of Machu Pichu, and there's no reception, leave hotel information where people can leave urgent messages.





Plan your getaway, the Labguru way!

[Labguru](#) has revolutionized laboratory management - we believe organizing laboratory inventory, data, experiment progress, and personnel communication can be done efficiently, easily and securely. Our modular, secure, [web-based platform](#) is custom-tailored to the needs of individual researchers, scalable to any size laboratory or project, and provides staff support for any questions or concerns. Stay competitive, increase lab productivity, and save money. There's no better time to start getting the most out of Labguru's smart management tools than in the hectic days leading up to planning a vacation.

First, take a look at our "vacation checklist" essentials (on the following pages), carefully designed and assembled by a team of scientists, researchers and laboratory personnel to help you maximize strategy, organization, preparation and research continuity. Then, [sign up](#) for Labguru's management system, FREE for personal use, to help you and your lab mates successfully implement the checklist. Finally, enjoy your first stress-free, guilt-free vacation!



Start organizing for your vacation today with our essential checklist:

☒ **Researchers, have you...**

- ☐ Scheduled your daily tasks both leading up to your vacation and essential maintenance tasks for while you are gone?
 - ☐ Planned a post-vacation work schedule that resumes the flow of your project(s)?
 - ☐ Asked the lab manager to order any required reagents that are needed ahead of time, especially rare reagents that require a lot of handling time?
 - ☐ Cleaned and tidied your bench/hood?
 - ☐ Organized all your documents?
 - ☐ Documented your tubes, reagents and supplies to easily locate them when you return?
 - ☐ Documented your ongoing experiments?
 - ☐ Share and describe specific tasks or experiments that you need to be performed by other group members or collaborators and asked who can lend a hand?
 - ☐ Did you reserve time on equipment? Some common equipment or space (such as microscopy, FACS sorting, vivarium, etc.) can be booked weeks ahead of time.
 - ☐ Asked lab members who are planning to attend interesting seminars while you are gone to record them (with an iPad, which now supports the Labguru program!)?
 - ☐ Scheduled one final pre-vacation group meeting with labmates and your PI for a progress update and to iron out any issues prior to your vacation?
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Start organizing for your vacation today with our essential checklist:

☒ **Lab Managers, have you...**

- ☐ Checked your reagents inventory?
 - ☐ Ordered relevant reagents and supplies with a 10% overhead?
 - ☐ Asked members for their experimental plans one month ahead of time?
 - ☐ Made sure to breed your mice colony?
 - ☐ Found someone to split cell lines in your absence?
 - ☐ Cleaned your desk so people will be able to leave you invoices and certificates when you are gone?
 - ☐ Left contact information in case of laboratory emergencies?
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Start organizing for your vacation today with our essential checklist:

☒ **Principal Investigators, have you...**

- ☐ Met with specific members a couple of days to a week before their or your vacation?
 - ☐ Verified that all group members are in sync regarding laboratory projects and ongoing reagents that need to be maintained?
 - ☐ Signed all the crucial papers that need your signature?
 - ☐ Created an auto-replay message from your email saying you are out-of-office?
 - ☐ Sent your lab members your emergency contact information while you're gone?
 - ☐ Signed up for Labguru's online lab management system, allowing you to organize, maintain and stay on top of your research everywhere in the world?
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The above checklist is just the start of the arsenal of management tools that will be at your disposal as you explore Labguru's cloud knowledge management program.

Our flexible system is [perfectly tailored](#) to individual lab personnel, offers [scalable pricing plans](#) according to desired storage space and number of group projects, and is the ONLY data management system on the market that offers staff support to help you execute your vacation planning, and continue managing your lab when you get back. And now, Labguru has even developed an [application for the iPad](#)! Just imagine... you can help manage your projects and experiments conveniently right from the beach—or wherever your vacation may take you.



So what are you waiting for?

Start organizing your projects and laboratory inventory by signing up for a [FREE Labguru account](#) and receive feedback and support from our technical staff.

Sign up for our [next introductory webinar](#), and follow Labguru on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to get more information on their revolutionary new cloud management system.

Got anything else to add that should be a part of this checklist? Or questions about how to use it or our management system? Leave a comment on our [blog](#), and tell us your lab's vacation strategies. We'd love to hear from you!