How To Survive an SCMS Conference (from experienced conference-goers)

You’ll want to carry around your conference program or use the Grupio mobile app. All attendees will have access to both.

In general, the temp in Chicago at this time of year is around 26 to 50 degrees, but please check the forecast before you pack, and bring layers because conference rooms may be too hot or too cold for you.

A few other things that might make your conference experience feel a bit more laid back...

- Flash drive—for easy printing of your paper and/or loading of your presentation onto someone else’s computer. You can use it with computers in the SCMS Lounge/Recharge Area (Pre-Function Area of the International Ballroom, Fairmont, 2nd Floor).
- SCMS Quiet Room —during the conference, persons who desire a quiet place to prepare for a presentation may visit the SCMS Quiet Room. It is located on the 10th floor of the Fairmont in Room 1023.
- All-Gender Restroom—SCMS is committed to making the conference accessible and welcoming to all of our community. Gender-neutral bathrooms are an important part of making the annual conference more inclusive. All person-all access restrooms are available at the Fairmont Chicago on the 2nd Floor close to the Embassy Room, the Gold Room and the International Ballroom. The all-gender restroom is marked with special signage during the conference. To find other safe restrooms in Chicago, visit Refuge <refugerestrooms.org>.
- Pronoun Stickers—as a show of SCMS’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, this year we are introducing pronoun stickers for your name badge. Stickers will be available for pickup at registration and can easily be worn as a show of solidarity, and a means of making our annual conference a friendly and safe environment for all.
- A charger for your phone—SCMS provides a “recharge” room in the SCMS Lounge/Recharge Area (Pre-Function Area of the International Ballroom, Fairmont, 2nd Floor).
- A folding or expandable bag—for visiting the exhibit area, etc.
- Cash—you’ll be splitting cabs, tabs and most likely sharing a few other costs with friends...don't carry your entire conference’s worth of cash around if you can avoid it. Take just enough to get through today and leave the rest in the hotel. OR download an app like Venmo—a free digital wallet that lets you make and share payments with friends
- Easy Snacks—keep in mind, bars, nuts and fruit can hold you over until you can find a proper meal that isn’t obscenely overpriced (and it may be unhealthy, depending on where you go).
- Business cards—for networking or simply use the cloud to share contact information via your mobile phone.
- Rain gear/umbrella.
- List of contacts—people on your panel, people you have appointments with.
- International adapters for Europe/UK/etc to US sockets (if applicable).
- There is a grocery very close to the hotel. Google Mariano’s at 333 E. Benton Pl.
- There is a CVS directly across the street from the conference hotel in case you forgot something.

Some kind souls also shared their personal tips:

- “You know those single-packaged handi-wipes? You’d be amazed how much use you can get out of sticking a few of those in your bag.”
“Additionally, if you don’t think of yourself as someone who “works out”, bring along one set of clothes to hit the hotel gym. You’d be amazed how much sitting and drinking coffee all day wears you out and a quick trip to the hotel gym can do worlds of wonder for your energy level on conference day(s).”

“Have multiple versions of your presentation (paper copy, laptop, flash drive) with you in case of computer loss or crash, etc. Keep different versions in different places (e.g., paper copy in your suitcase, laptop in your computer bag, flash drive in your pocket or purse).”

“If you plan to project from your Mac laptop, remember your Mac dongle (the hotel doesn’t supply them).”

“Let people know that the conference has water and candies around so it’s typically not necessary for people to bring and carry those.”

And lastly...”when listening to music while getting ready in the morning, place your phone into an empty glass as a handy amplification trick, it really works”. 😊

Have a productive and enjoyable conference!