



Princess Planning Co.

These are the BEST Strategies for Lightning Lanes - Updated 12/2/24

Lightning Lane Methodology and Strategy

With the old Genie+ skip the line service, there were a lot of ways to strategize your picks and optimize your time in the parks. With the ability to make pre-selections, the old strategies should be thrown out the window. As I learn the new system, maybe there will be room to add, but essentially there are only a couple things to keep in mind to optimize this new service.

1. Pick the earliest Return Time possible
 - a. Always try and choose the earliest return time that is available for any of your selections. This way, once you scan into your first Lightning Lane of the day (ideally around 9:00-9:30 AM) you can start booking those Tier 1 attractions that you could only choose one of during pre-selection.
2. Pay attention to the return times before booking
 - a. As you start scanning into attractions, keep in mind what you want to prioritize and if you notice the return times are getting very late, BOOK IT
3. Rope Drop
 - a. Use rope drop! If you are staying on property, you can access Fantasyland and Tomorrowland 30 minutes prior to the rest of the park attendees. The lines will be short, and this is a great opportunity to knock out some heavy hitters without using up a Lightning Lane. (Or if you're lucky, using a Lightning Lane later and riding them twice!)
 - b. If you are not staying on property, you can still participate in rope drop, and I would recommend starting in Adventureland. Fantasyland and Tomorrowland will be pretty clogged at this point with resort guests, so Adventureland will be a great opportunity to hop on Jungle Cruise or Pirates of the Caribbean quickly before the rest of the park makes their way over.

In my opinion, you don't have to get super fancy with a whole strategy. The easiest way to get the most out of this service is to make sure you're using it on the popular rides in the parks. If you want to get technical with it, there are great sites like [Thrill Data](#) that you can use in the weeks leading up to your trip to track certain attraction's wait times, among other things. But that isn't really necessary. I have included a list of the most popular rides and attractions (see [How To Make Those Pre Selections Before Your Vacation](#) section above).

Stacking

Stacking¹⁵ is especially great for trips where you want to split up the day, like the resort pool or Disney Springs in the morning and the parks in the evening, but this method can also work on a full day in the park. Here's how it works:

Let's say you want to spend a morning of your trip lounging at the pool, then head to Hollywood Studios later in the day. Since you don't actually have to be in the parks to purchase or use Single and Multi Pass Lightning Lanes, go ahead and purchase it a week (or three days) in advance. Follow instructions for making pre selections (found [here](#)), but choose all of the latest return windows possible.

At this time, you can head to the parks whenever your first return time is and you should have a stacked list of back to back (or near back to back) return windows so you can enjoy your pool day, then skip the lines all night at the parks!

The one caveat here is that you can't choose a new Lightning Lane until you scan into your first one, so there is a chance that some more popular rides will no longer have return times available by the time you scan into your first ride of the day. Keep this in mind when you make your pre-selections.

There is no one size fits all, so feel free to try different strategies and see what works for you. The most important thing is that you are getting the most out of your vacation, and having fun! I

know it's hard, but try not to be too engrossed in your phone and make sure to take time to enjoy the magic in the moment.

