

# I wrote my thesis on an airplane, for heaven's sake

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As I wrote today's story, I recalled that I wrote the bulk of my thesis on an airplane. In longhand. Microsoft flew me out for an interview, so I had to endure two cross-country plane trips. I scheduled the interview on a Monday so that I would miss only one day of class, and among the things I brought with me was a notepad, which started the trip blank. I wasn't sure why I brought it, but I was sure it'd come in handy. And then I realized that I had a lot of time to kill, what with spare moments on the ground, in the air, back on the ground, waiting for my next interview, whatever. And during that time, I wrote. By the time I returned to school, I had written the bulk of the first draft of my thesis. Now, of course, it's not like I did all the *work* on the airplane. This was just the writing-it-down part. When you're working on a project like a thesis, you have committed nearly every detail to memory, since you spend so much time thinking about it, researching it, experimenting with it, and thinking about it some more. The act of writing it down is in a sense just a dump of the thesis you've been writing in your head all year. But it's still good to get it down, so you can move on to the editing step. So I may not have written FAT on an airplane, but I wrote a thesis.

What's an interesting thing you accomplished while on an airplane? (And no, I don't mean *that*.)

Raymond Chen

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