

What if I can't wait to start traveling?

It's difficult for me to give advice on this without feeling hypocritical because when I first got into nursing and I discovered the idea of travel nursing, I was just like you. I wanted to hit the road as soon as possible and I did. I managed to find a company that was willing to take me with 8 months experience.

Don't get me wrong, most companies will insist that you have 1 year experience. They do this to maintain their quality of nurses and for the fact that hospitals want nurses that have at least one year experience when they come in. Hospitals need someone that can start work right away without much of an orientation.

Looking back though, I think it would have been better if I had actually waited for 2 years to get my experience. I work in surgery and had mostly scrubbed my first year. Going to an operating room with different equipment and being expected to circulate more than scrub was overwhelming for me. It didn't get me down though. I toughed it out and then stayed in one place for another six months working registry to get used to the position and going to different places. Once I had mastered local registry, I had much more confidence to go out again and travel.

Everyone is different, but based on my experience, I now advise people to get at least a year experience, if not 2 years, sample the local registry to see if you are ready for all the changes, and then if you are doing fine with that then get going immediately. You will love traveling. You want to make sure you are prepared. Once you are traveling, you are kind of on your own. People expect you to be well experienced and to function without much assistance or training. You have to be confident in your skills and then you will do fine.