

Simple and Free Steps to Travel Safely

Safe travels begin with you. Understanding your personal characteristics and your destination are the keys to identifying risks. These steps are simple, yet crucial, to ensure you return home safely after your adventure.

Traveling is one of life's most enriching experiences, but being adventurous doesn't mean being reckless. In fact, part of the adventure is also returning home safe and sound. Prioritizing safety is essential, and the good news is that it doesn't have to be complicated or expensive.

Here are some easy and free tips to help you prepare, understand the risks, and take preventative measures, ensuring your travels are as safe as they are memorable.

1 Pre-Travel Planning: "Plan Before You Land"

- **Know yourself and your companions.** Your personal characteristics (race, nationality, gender, health, beliefs, etc.) determine your specific needs, how others might perceive you, and the types of threats you could encounter.
- **Conduct a threat and risk assessment.** Research your destination using open sources like [government travel advisories](#), news outlets, and even social media. Look for information on crime trends, political instability, health risks, and local weather patterns to stay informed.
- **Maintain a controlled itinerary.** Share your complete travel plan with a trusted contact. Never publish travel details on social media before or during your trip.
- **Be prepared for emergencies.** Have a list of key numbers ready, including your local embassy, police, vetted transportation, and medical providers. Carry essential items like medicine and extra cash. Consider purchasing an international SIM. Make and keep a safe copy of important documents (eg. Passport).
- **Choose your accommodation wisely.** When booking, prioritize security by reading reviews. Request a room on a floor between the third and fifth—high enough to deter most break-ins but low enough for emergency services. Consider bringing a torch flashlight and a rubber door stopper for an extra layer of security.



2 Situational Awareness: "Be Present, Stay Safe"

- **Grey Profile:** Dress and behave to blend in; avoid flashy displays of wealth or tech.
- **Environmental Scanning:** Practice a 360° awareness, especially in transport hubs. Know exits and choke points in every venue. Avoid walking with your face in your phone, as it makes you an easy target and limits your awareness.
- **Digital Awareness:** Protect your devices. Avoid public Wi-Fi for sensitive work without a VPN. Do not scan random QRs.
- **Body Language:** Walk with purpose and project confidence, even if you're unsure of your surroundings.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** If a person or situation feels wrong, trust your gut and remove yourself immediately.
- **Tactical Positioning:** In public spaces, try to sit with your back to a wall and facing the entrance to see who comes and goes.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Be mindful of local customs and social etiquette to avoid unwanted attention.



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3 Location Intelligence – “Know Before You Go”

- **Safe Zones.** Identify secure locations before you arrive, such as reputable hotels, embassies, and vetted restaurants.
- **Areas to Avoid.** Research which neighborhoods are considered unsafe and at what times of day you should be extra cautious in certain areas.
- **Transportation.** Pinpoint reliable transportation options, including trusted ride-sharing services or taxi companies. Always know the common routes to your accommodation.
- **Financial Safety.** Only use ATMs inside banks, hotels, or malls—never street machines. Inspect the card slot & keypad (look for loose parts or hidden cameras). Cover your PIN—shoulder surfers are everywhere. Press “Cancel” after use—prevents “ghost transactions.” Split cash—carry small amounts in two secure locations.
- **Common Scams.** Research common local scams.
- **Local Laws.** Familiarize yourself with local laws regarding public behavior, alcohol, and other regulations that may differ from your home country.

4 Social Interaction Risks: “Trust, But Verify”

- **Meet in Public:** Always choose a secure, public venue for your first meeting and never agree to a private residence.
- **Verify Identity:** Before meeting, consider video chatting with the person to confirm they are who they claim to be. Remember you are meeting a stranger.
- **Share Your Plan:** Inform a trusted contact of your date's details and your meeting location.
- **Decline Offers:** Be wary of accepting alcohol or drugs from a new acquaintance, as this can be a setup for robbery or drugging. This is not being rude.
- **Bring a Companion:** If you feel uncertain or unsafe about a meeting, bring a trusted friend with you.
- **Control Your Transportation:** Arrange your own transportation to and from the meeting so you can leave whenever you want without being dependent on your date.

Survival Tips



- Use pre-booked, vetted transport (Uber and similar platforms are not always legal or available).
- Avoid walking alone after dark.
- Walk facing traffic to spot possible threats.



- Keep important documents with you if you don't have a safe box; make a copy and secure them separately.
- Do not show signs of wealth. Keep bags in front of you or locked, and prefer front pockets.
- Divide cash into different small packages.
- Limit the use of your phone in public to prevent robbery.



- Some activities, especially illegal ones, will always carry a high risk and should be avoided.
- When unsure, seek advice from a trusted local. If they advise you against doing something, it's best to follow their guidance.
- If you feel that locals are overly attracted to you, remember it may not be genuine. Not everyone has good intentions.
- You are in a foreign country. Be respectful. Being a foreigner doesn't grant you special rights.



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