



STUDENT TRAVEL SAFETY

Are you thinking about venturing abroad on your own, or maybe taking a gap year to go backpacking or perhaps just enjoying a vacation with friends? There is no doubt that traveling can offer a multitude of opportunities and fantastic experiences, but preparation is important.

At AIG Travel we want to give you the tools and the know-how to travel the world safely and enjoyably. For more information and advice on Student Travel Safety please visit: www.aig.com/travel/students.

The following tips and advice can help you not only prepare for your trip, but they will also be useful for your parents and the faculty at your school:

RESEARCH THE DESTINATION BEFORE DEPARTING ON YOUR TRIP

- Look online for any health and safety, cultural or security-related information on the country or countries you will be visiting. Government travel advisories are available by country and are a great resource.
- Bear in mind that certain travelers, such as women and the LGBTQ community, may face different risks in some countries. Make sure you read up on the local laws and customs.
- Learn some useful phrases in the local language, such as requesting help, asking for directions or being able to say, "It's an emergency."

PLAN AHEAD AND BE PREPARED

- If you have a trip-coordinator ask them to explain their emergency plan before you leave. Check your understanding of the plan so you know what to do if something goes wrong.
- Double check your travel insurance. Make sure it has the correct travel dates and covers your planned activities, such as scuba diving, hiking or rock climbing.
- Choose your contacts for the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). These individuals, such as a parent or friend, need valid travel documents and all the necessary information for your trip - including a signed release so they can receive personal or medical information in case there is an emergency.
- Pack any prescription medications in their original bottles. If you need to take a large amount, pack a note from your doctor confirming that the quantity is correct for the duration of your trip.

BE SAFE AND SECURE DURING YOUR TRIP

- Know the location of your nearest diplomatic embassy and how to contact them in case a security event or other issue arises.
- Use the "buddy" system whenever possible, so no one is ever alone. This may be particularly important for women and LGBTQ travelers.
- Keep all important information, including photocopies of travel/identification documents, accommodation, hospital and embassy contacts, together and easily accessible.
- Know how and when to contact your insurance provider in case of an emergency.
- Be mindful and respectful of local cultures and legal customs.

BE A LESS DESIRABLE TARGET FOR CRIME

- Maintain a heightened sense of situational awareness when out in public, similar to what one would expect when traveling to an unfamiliar area at home.
- Leave your valuables at home! Petty theft is one of the most common crimes experienced by travelers abroad, and students are particularly vulnerable. If you don't want to risk losing it, leave it behind.
- Avoid displays of wealth, including excessive use of mobile phones, wearing jewelry or accessories that appear valuable, and carrying large amounts of cash.
- Minimize use of ATMs and only use those in populated and well-lit areas, including inside of banks, shopping centers and hotels.
- Keep a close watch on your personal belongings when using public transportation to minimize risk of theft.
- Vary your routine. Travelers that stay in one location for extended periods of time become more vulnerable to crimes like kidnapping. Changing your routine can help mitigate some of this risk.
- Keep credit/debit card receipts and check account activity often to ensure that charges posted are consistent with transactions made.

AVOID POTENTIAL INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

- Be aware of posted warnings at recreational sites including beaches and swimming pools, rock climbing sites and hiking trails.
- Be aware of your physical and health limitations. Don't feel pressured to participate in activities if you feel uncomfortable or have medical concerns.
- Always look up and pay attention. You might be tempted to look down at your smart phone for quick moments or extended periods, but keep in mind that in some cities pedestrians do not have the right of way and motorists in certain countries drive on the opposite side of the road.

DRINK RESPONSIBLY

- If you plan to go out drinking at night, use a group system, have a designated sober friend in the group, and always stay together.
- Avoid leaving drinks or food unattended.
- Do not accept food or drinks from strangers.

PRACTICE DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA SAFETY

- Be aware of social media posts, browser history and downloaded apps, as some destinations have stringent regulations on acceptable content.
- Be cautious if using public and unsecured Wi-Fi networks, as hackers and scammers have been known to utilize these to take personal information from vulnerable devices.
- Do not post photos of your boarding pass or travel documents to social media sites. This will help reduce the likelihood of personal information being made easily available to opportunistic individuals.
- Create a backup plan in the event cellular service is unavailable. Keep a physical copy of a map of the region and important emergency numbers. Ensure someone traveling in the group has access to a satellite phone or other form of communication.

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE OR HAVE QUESTIONS?

Visit www.aig.com/travel/students to view more in-depth information on safety and security for student travelers.