

Advice for Women Traveling Abroad



Traveling can be a great experience. But for women, traveling alone can bring gender-specific risks and challenges.

It is important for all travelers to be aware of potential risks when visiting foreign countries, but particularly for women who continue to disproportionately be targets of violence and other discriminatory situations. It is important for all travelers to be aware of these cultural differences when visiting such countries and to take steps to reduce the risk of any dangers.

General Safety Tips

- + Don't announce that you are traveling alone.
- + Don't tell strangers where you are staying or details about your travel plans.
- + Always be aware of local customs and dress codes.

For information on the local culture and customs for the countries you are traveling to, [click here](#) to read travel advice offered by the British FCO.

Accommodation

- + Use your first initial and no title ('Miss', 'Ms' or 'Mrs') when checking in.
- + Never leave your key where someone can note your room number.
- + Check that the locks on windows and doors are secure, and keep these areas locked unless currently being used.
- + Never leave your window open, especially if your room is on the ground floor or has a balcony.
- + Lock your door when you are inside the room.
- + If the door has a spy-hole or chain, use these before opening the door to unexpected visitors.
- + On dark evenings, keep curtains closed.
- + Display the 'DO NOT DISTURB' notice on your hotel room door to discourage anyone from entering your room.

While Visiting

- + Stay aware of your surroundings and those in your presence, and ensure you feel safe at all times.
- + Plan your daily itinerary: know where you're going and how to get back. Store the number and address of your accommodation in your phone in case you get lost.
- + Avoid spending solo time uninhabited or neglected areas when possible.
- + Look to the advice of your host or hotel staff when seeking recommendations for taxis or public transit routes.
- + When dining alone, choose well-lit and busy restaurants when possible. Bringing a book or secondary form of entertainment can discourage unwanted visitors from sparking conversation.



- + If you believe you're being followed, calmly head to a safe location nearby such as a hotel or museum, and speak to an employee about your concern.
- + Make sure that someone always knows where you are and when you are expected.
- + Wearing a fake wedding ring can often discourage unwanted male attention.
- + Be cautious when invited to spend time with relative strangers. Get a full picture of what you're being invited to, when it is, and who will be there.
- + Never put being polite over your own safety. If you ever feel uncomfortable in a situation, don't fear being rude by removing yourself from it.
- + Remember that making a loud noise or attracting attention if you are uncomfortable is acceptable. In English-speaking countries you may receive more attention if you shout 'fire!' rather than 'help!'
- + If carrying a handbag, make sure that it stays closed and near you at all times. Placing it in your arms or on your lap instead of on a table or chair while dining out will help to avoid tampering.
- + Keep accessories to a minimum, as items like designer handbags and jewelry has the tendency to attract pickpockets.
- + Remember to keep some ID's and a small amount of money in your hotel safe. This ensures that if you are the victim of pickpocketing, you don't lose all your valuables.

Dress and Appearance

- + Before packing, research the local fashion customs and modesty expectations placed on women's clothing.
- + Many religious buildings have specific modesty requirements, so be sure to research possible restrictions before those outings.

Health

- + Sanitary products may be difficult to come by or expensive in remote areas, so it's best to travel with your preferred products to prevent any discomfort.
- + Speak to your doctor about any travel healthcare you may need in advance of the trip, and if it could interfere with any medication.