

General advice for Travel safety

Suggestions include:

- Keep your travel plans, including accommodation details or areas you are stay in the city, to yourself.
- Don't hitch hike.
- Try not to travel at night.
- Avoid 'seedier' areas of the cities you visit, especially at night.
- Ask your host family and/or program director for advice on 'safe' versus 'unsafe' local areas.
- As a general rule, city streets that include children and women suggest the area is safe for families.
- Carry with you at all times the contact details of the U.S. embassy. If your city doesn't have a U.S. embassy, find out which other country's embassy is available to help you, such as the British embassy.
- Keep a photocopy of your passport and all other important documents in a safe place.
- Use ATMs during the day, when there are people around.
- Carry small amounts of cash only.
- Try to rely more on credit cards rather than cash or
- If you are mugged, don't fight back. It is better to lose a few dollars and a wristwatch than get injured.
- Avoid incidents such as fights, riots or civil disturbances at all times.

Transport safety

Suggestions include:

- At the airport, watch for your suitcase as it appears on the carousel. Don't hang back and wait for the crowds to disperse - you might find that someone else has already taken your bag in the meantime.

- Avoid changing money at airports, as thieves could be watching you.
- Consult with your hotel manager or tourist information centre about the public transport in your area. Make sure you know what official taxi cabs look like. A thief may pose as a taxi driver to lure you into their car.
- Don't share taxis with strangers.
- Carjacking is a problem in some cities. When driving, keep all doors locked and windows up. Make sure your boot is locked too.

Hotel safety

Suggestions include:

- If possible, choose accommodation that has unmarked 'swipe cards' rather than numbered keys for each room. If you lose your swipe card or if it is stolen, the thief won't know which room to rob.
- Take note of emergency exits, stairwells, fire escapes and emergency plans, just in case.
- Always lock your hotel door when retiring for the night. If there is a chain included, use it.
- When arranging to meet people you've never met before (such as business associates), wait for them in the lobby. Don't ask them to come up to your room.

Don't stand out in a crowd when travelling

Suggestions include:

- Even if you're not sure where you're going, walk like you've got a purpose.
- Match your dress style to that of the locals. Don't wear an obvious 'tourist' outfit like a loud shirt with a camera slung around your neck.
- Be discreet when map reading and pulling out your phone.

- Notice the people around you. Be wary if someone seems to be taking more than a passing interest.

Don't make yourself an attractive target when travelling

Suggestions include:

- Don't wear expensive jewelry on obvious display.
- Wear valuables (such as traveler's cheques and credit cards) on a belt worn under the clothes and next to the skin.
- If feeling particularly vulnerable, wear your money belt somewhere other than around your waist. Thieves know all about money belts too.
- Consider carrying a 'dummy' wallet holding a small amount of cash. If you are directly confronted by a mugger, you can hand over the dummy wallet and avoid further distress.

Beware of scams when travelling

Thieves devise inventive ways to rob you. Some of these may include:

- Posing as a police officer and asking to check your money for counterfeit bills.
- Posing as a tour guide and offering to show you the sights of the city.
- Slipping sedative drugs into your food or drink.
- Thieves in different cities tend to favor different scams. Ask your in-country support team for information.

Where to get help

- Travel agent
- Embassies
- Local police
- Public business