



ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *USEFUL TRAVEL SAFETY TIPS*

1. Learn Common Travel Scams

Wherever you go in the world, you'll always find people ready to trick you out of your hard-earned cash. If you're lucky, they'll be kind of obvious – but there are plenty of craftier, professional con-artists out there too.

2. Write Down Emergency Info

If disaster strikes, you might not have time to search for numbers for local police or ambulance services, or directions to the nearest embassy for your country. You may also be too stressed and panicky to think straight. Don't put yourself in that position. Instead, record that information in advance, and create an "Emergency Plan" for you to follow if things go badly.

3. Check the State Department Website

The U.S. Department of State has a page for every country in the world, where it lists all known difficulties and current threats to the safety of visitors. Researching travel warnings will give you a general idea of what's going on in the country/state you're visiting, and specific problem areas you may want to avoid.

4. Lock Up Your Valuables

Putting aside the fact that traveling with anything super valuable is usually a bad idea, there will always be something you absolutely cannot afford to have stolen. Always be aware of your valuables and try to keep an eye on them in such a way that it would be impossible for someone to steal without you knowing.

5. Get Travel Insurance

You never think you need it, until you do. If you're really worried about the safety of yourself and your gear while you travel, you can *almost* completely relax if you have some good insurance.

6. Ask Locals for Advice

If you really want to know which neighborhoods are safe and which might be sketchy, ask a local resident of the area. Most locals are friendly and will warn you about straying into dangerous areas. On the other hand, if a stranger offers up advice, it's also wise to get a second opinion – just in case.

7. Tell Your Bank Where You're Going

Imagine the agony of doing absolutely everything right and keeping yourself perfectly safe and secure – only to have your trip ruined because your bank thinks you're the thief, and locks down all your cards. It's also always good to have "emergency cash" hidden somewhere in your luggage or clothing (i.e. Rolled into an empty Chap Stick container).

8. Don't Share Too Much with Strangers

If you're ever tempted to make your itinerary more public, say in a Facebook post, just remember it can be a roadmap of your movements – just the sort of thing someone with ill-intentions would love to know. Don't share too many details about your travel plans or accommodation details with people you've just met.

9. Be Aware of Your Clothing

When it comes to travel, the wrong clothes scream "TOURIST" and make you a target for scammers, thieves and worse. The less obviously a visitor you look, the less attention you'll get from the wrong kind of people.

10. Travel in Numbers

The more people around you, the more eyeballs are on your valuables – and the more legs are available for running after thieves.

11. Pack A First Aid Kit

Injuries can happen when you travel abroad, not matter how careful you are. Traveling with a basic first aid kit is always a good idea.

Provided by the ASA – Houston Chapter Safety Committee

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