



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with
National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A., Associated Country Women of the World
and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service

Boats, Cars, and Planes: Tips for Travelers Educator Guide

Objectives:

Participants will:

1. Identify tips for making travel safe and enjoyable.
2. Develop a personal checklist for travel.

Most travelers expect a carefree trip, leaving worries and troubles behind. The loss of personal property, a minor illness or accident, however, can turn a great trip into one that you would rather forget. By becoming a well-informed traveler and planning ahead, you will be better prepared to protect your health and safety when traveling. When planning a cruise, vacation, tour or air travel, consider the following:

AIR TRAVELER TIPS

Air travelers can reduce delays and inconvenience in the wake of tighter security by taking some simple precautions. Passenger and luggage check-in now takes longer due to more thorough security procedures and the elimination of curbside check-in. When traveling on domestic flights, arrive at least two hours before departure - or three hours for an international flight, to allow more time and reduce the risk of missing a flight. Remember that there is a limit on the size and number of luggage/carry-on items and extra fees are being charged for checked luggage – **PACK LIGHT!**

- Airlines now enforce carry-on baggage limits. Check with your individual airline to find out what their carry on limits are.
- Carry identification. Many airlines will verify that the person checking in is the person to whom the ticket was issued. Therefore, carry at least one government-issued photo I.D. such as a driver's license or passport. A second photo I.D. is required at some airports.
- Don't ever leave your luggage or carry-on items unattended, they could be stolen or be a potential target for someone to sneak an illegal item on board the airplane. Also, luggage that appears to be abandoned could look suspicious and be confiscated and destroyed by airport personnel.
- You will help to reduce time at the security check-in if you take only personal and carry-on items that are truly necessary for your flight or for your security. Also, laptop computers and other electronic devices must be hand checked by security personnel and may require additional time to clear security.
- If you have special physical needs including the need for wheelchair access when boarding the aircraft, ask your airline to make these arrangements when making flight reservations.
- To avoid theft of your valuables, don't pack them in luggage that will be checked. Medication, cameras, eyeglasses, jewelry, car and home door keys, important documents and passports are items to carry on board with you.
- To avoid dehydration on long flights, drink plenty of nonalcoholic, decaffeinated beverages.

SAFETY TIPS FOR A CRUISE

- Have medical and dental checkups just prior to departure to head off any potentially uncomfortable or harmful episodes.
- If you have special health needs, ask about the ship's medical facility or the tour operator's medical assist options, what type of equipment is available and if a doctor or nurse will be on board.
- Have an existing medical condition? Ask your doctor for a letter explaining the condition, treatment or procedure for you to follow. Make the ship's medical staff or tour company representative aware of your condition at the start of the cruise.



- Concerned about motion sickness? Consult a physician before you leave on vacation. A number of prescription and over-the-counter aids are available to control motion sickness.
- Pack an extra pair of prescription eyeglasses, sunglasses and/or contact lenses, all prescription medicine, the instructions and dosage amounts. Take a copy of your prescriptions (must have generic name) in case you need to replace the eyeglasses or medication.
- If traveling to a cold area, pack clothes that can be worn in layers for warmth. Include gloves, warm socks and a hat.
- Put valuables in the ship's safe deposit box or hotel room safe.
- Never leave cabin or hotel keys unattended. If you plan to be at the pool, check keys with the ship's steward or leave them at the hotel front desk.
- Use dead bolt and other locks provided by the cruise line or hotel. Make sure the door to the adjoining cabin or hotel room is locked.
- Protect yourself from the sun. Use plenty of sunscreen and wear a hat.
- When disembarking for a land tour, follow the directions of your tour guide. If a self-guided tour is planned, ask authorized ship personnel which areas of town to avoid and if any special precautions should be taken when driving a rental car or using public transportation. Walk only in well-lit areas.
- Don't let your guard down. Walk with a sense of purpose, as if you know where you are and where you are going. If you do get lost, don't panic. Find a police officer or go into a hotel, restaurant or shop and ask directions.

DRIVING TIPS

- Inspect, or have your car inspected - check brakes, tires, antifreeze, wiper fluid, lights, battery, wipers and fill your tank with gasoline. Have a plan to refuel along your route – stop with ¼ tank left to refuel – don't gamble that you can make it further.
- Pack several blankets, non-perishable food and drinking water, flares, and two flashlights with fresh batteries.
- Check with your health plan about coverage in your planned destination.
- Share arrival, departure and destination information with close friends and family so that people know where and when you are expected. Get plenty of rest before you leave.
- If you wear glasses or lenses, take along an extra pair, and bring your prescription with you.
- Leave early, and give yourself plenty of time to make the drive. Don't speed!
- Make sure everyone wears safety belts at all times.
- Avoid taking over-the-counter medications that make you drowsy while you drive.
- When traveling a long distance, try to plan your trip for early in the day or later in the evening when the weather is cooler. Carry a cell phone and charger in case of emergency. State law requires headlights to be turned on any time the wipers are in use due to rain, fog or other conditions. Remember to always buckle up and never drink and drive.

TEN TIPS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL

1. Make sure you have a signed, valid passport and visas, if required. Also, before you go fill in the emergency information page of your passport.
2. Read the Consular information Sheets and any travel warnings for the countries you plan to visit. Stay aware of events in the country while you are there.
3. Familiarize yourself with the local laws and customs of the countries to which you are travelling. Remember, while in a country, **YOU ARE SUBJECT TO ITS LAWS!!!**
4. Make 2 photocopies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home. Carry the other with you in a separate place from your passport.
5. Leave a copy of your itinerary with family or friends at home so you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
6. Notify by phone or register in person with the U.S. embassy or consulate upon your arrival.
7. Don't leave luggage unattended in public areas. Don't accept packages from strangers.
8. Don't be a target! Avoid conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry and don't carry excessive amounts of money or unnecessary credit cards.



9. In order to avoid violating local laws, deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques.

10. IF YOU GET INTO TROUBLE, CONTACT THE U.S. CONSUL.

The Department of State issues Consular Information Sheets for all countries of the world. They describe unusual entry or currency regulation, health conditions, the crime and security situation, political disturbances, areas of instability and drug penalties. In general, Consular Information Sheets do not give advice. Instead they describe conditions so that travellers can make informed decisions about their trips. However, in some dangerous situations, the Department of State recommends that Americans defer all travel to a county. In these cases, a Travel Warning is issued for the country, in addition to its Consular Information Sheet. There are many ways to access Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings: You can listen to them 24 hours a day by calling **(202) 647-5225** from a touchtone phone. Visit this web site: http://travel.state.gov/travel/travel_1744.html

Traveling to unfamiliar destinations can bring to you the sort of troubles you do not want to experience while on the road namely: robbery, rape, or murder. Tourists often fall prey to perpetrators because they do not prepare properly before embarking on a trip. Let's examine some things you should do to prevent your travels from becoming a tragedy.

TIPS FOR CHOOSING A HOTEL

1. Smaller is smarter: you want the staff to be familiar with guests and with you. The smaller the lobby, the more noticeable the loiterers.
2. Aim for a well-trafficked street (neighborhood restaurants and late-night stores mean traffic, corporate offices mean darkness). Affluent residential areas tend to have more reliable transportation and fewer threatening street people.
3. If you're still concerned about the area, ask a female employee--not one in reservations--whether she walks around at night. (Call the restaurant, for instance.)
4. A reception and concierge desk near the entrance, and/or the elevators, is more likely to deter non-guest undesirables.
5. There should be privacy for guests checking in: no one should be able to overhear a name, room number, or other personal information.
6. Room numbers should be written on the key envelope, not mentioned aloud or inscribed on the key--this way, anyone finding your key won't have access to your room.
7. Look for a parking lot that is well lit and secure. Find out if there's valet parking . . . and if it will be available when you need it. Use it, even it costs a little bit more.
8. Does the hotel gym have an attendant? Being alone and semi-dressed in the basement is not good for your health.
9. The hotel should have sufficient staff to walk you to your room late at night. Inquire when you book and you'll get an idea of how woman-friendly the hotel is.

ROOM SAFETY TIPS

10. Request one near the elevators and away from any renovation work. Have your key out when you leave the elevator. Know where the emergency exits. A room on the ground floor will be more easily accessible to criminals from the outside. A high level -- such as the 20th floor -- may be quieter, but in case of a fire, there's little chance firefighters could reach you with even their tallest ladder.
11. The door should have double locks--one of which is a dead bolt - and a peep hole.
12. The "please make up this room sign" tells everyone you're not there. Call housekeeping instead.
13. Conversely, the do not disturb sign can make the room seem occupied (especially handy if you leave expensive items inside). Put expensive clothing on hangers under other garments. Lock valuables in the front-desk safe.



STREET SMART TIPS

14. Study a map before going out; once on the street, use a pocket-size guidebook to avoid looking like a tourist. Your hotel's concierge or a female employee can mark any dangerous areas on your map.
15. Dress down. Avoid jewelry--even a chain that's fake gold can be ripped off your neck. Do consider wearing a wedding ring.
16. Be wary when getting off a bus or train, or riding stairs and escalators; that's when pickpockets tend to strike.
17. Carry just one credit card and photocopies of important documents. Divide money for small and large purchases so you don't have to expose all of your money at once. Become familiar with foreign currency before you need to use it.
18. Have gratuities ready for porters and doormen.
19. Ask the concierge to make any restaurant reservations, and have him or her say, "Please take care of our guest, she's coming alone and will need a taxi home."
20. Should a car start to follow you, immediately turn and walk the opposite way.
21. If you must ask for directions, approach families or women with children.
22. On sidewalks, keep your handbag and other valuables away from the street side (and on escalators, away from the opposite ramp).

TRANSPORTATION TIPS

23. On overnight flights, keep an eye on your valuables. A good idea is to put your valuables in a security waist pack (versus leaving it in your stowed carry on) and wear it while sleeping. If travelling alone, when you go to the restroom, take your purse/valuables with you.
24. Talk to female passengers and flight attendants on the plane about the safety of your destination.
25. Don't exit a taxi until you're sure you've arrived at your destination. Pay while still in the taxi so that you can be sure you've gotten the proper change.
26. Stay close to your valuables when passing through airport security.
27. Tear your name and address off magazines before leaving them on the plane. Why announce to the world that you're away for home?
28. Don't disclose a lot of personal information or your exact travel plans with new acquaintances who you meet on the plane. Pleasant conversation is fine – disclosing your "life story" to a stranger is not a safe practice. Use discretion.

SUMMARY

Planning for your travels involves more than picking a destination and making a reservation. Put safety first and allow time to "plan" details necessary for a successful trip. Make your own personal trip checklist before you travel. Following these TIPS can insure safe and memorable travels for you and your family!



Information compiled by Dr. Deborah J. Thomason, Extension Professor and Specialist, Clemson University



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