

The US State Department issued a [travel alert](#) on May 1, 2017 for its citizens going to Europe, citing the continued threat of terror attacks.

This advisory expires 1 September; however we always advocate for taking personal safety and security seriously – whether you are an experienced or first-time traveler.

The following is a checklist of items to mitigate concerns when traveling abroad.

Before You Depart

- Learn about your destination-become familiar with your intended airport, routes, locations, local laws and customs (do not bring offensive reading material)
- Obtain the phone numbers of the appropriate embassy or consulate in destination city
- Label luggage with generic name tags. No logos or flashy luggage
- Make copies of your airline ticket, passport, driver's license and credit cards to be used while traveling. Carry this with you as well as two extra passport photos separate from the originals. This will speed up replacement if needed
- Establish a point of contact for your family for emergencies and provide your itinerary
- Ensure you have all travel documents such as passport, immunization records, driver's license, medical insurance, medical history, credit card phone numbers etc.
- Exchange cash into local currency to cover your arrival needs
- If driving overseas; confirm your insurance coverage before leaving the country
- Gather information about any terrorist or criminal threats at your destination via the State Department
- If trip is an extended stay; register with the appropriate embassy/consulate
- Refrain from posting travel plans to social media before or during travel

Upon Arrival

- Proceed to baggage claim, customs and be courteous. Exit the airport as quickly as possible
- Stay alert, check emergency exits and keep your distance from unattended luggage
- Be wary of what you photograph and where you visit (such as government facilities)
- Be suspicious if you are singled out (such as placed in a different area of the hotel from travel party)
- If you have a layover, or an extended wait time before departure, be aware of your surroundings and suspicious activities of others.

During Your Trip

- Always keep sensitive documents in your personal possession and physical control
- Hotels and restaurants are rarely suitable for sensitive discussions
- Don't divulge information to anyone that is not authorized to hear it; including personal information
- If traveling on business; establish a point of contact in the country you are visiting. Carry that info with you.

- Recognize that your laptop and smartphone are targets for theft. Keep these items in your carry-on baggage, and leaving them in your hotel room is a significant risk. If you must leave these items at your hotel, lock it in your suitcase.
- Protect your passport, carrying it in front pocket or hidden pouch under your clothing. Use discretion in presenting your passport.

Safety Tips

- Travel in a group where possible
- Avoid high crime areas, walking in well lighted areas and avoiding short-cuts
- Be wary of street vendors and innocent looking young people (potential pickpockets)
- Keep a low profile, avoid attention
- Do not carry large amounts of cash
 - Deal with reputable currency exchanges
 - Track all transactions
- Medical: keep prescriptions in their original containers with labels
 - Should you need medical services due to injury or serious illness, contact your nearest Embassy or Consulate for physician information
- Hotel:
 - Locate exits
 - Secure doors and windows
 - Do not leave anything valuable in room if possible
 - Do not accept deliveries unless previously arranged
 - If required to leave passport at hotel desk; be sure to have a receipt and leave valuables in safe
- Driving:
 - Drive carefully and lock vehicle at all times.
 - Never pick up hitchhikers and if you observe an accident, call or drive to the nearest telephone or police station to report it