

TIPS FOR TRAVELING ABROAD



Before embarking on your travels in 2024, it's vital to take some time to consider how you can ensure your safety. You can start by discussing potential "what if" situations and coming up with ways to mitigate risks. Asking yourself questions is a simple yet effective method for improving your travel experience. By being proactive, prepared, and protected, you can set yourself up for success. It's essential to approach risk and safety with a fresh perspective by determining your risk tolerance and implementing effective strategies, tools, and techniques.

Start the safety conversation with these three questions.



If you need help with the conversation, GSR can help.

Do you know the emergency number for your travel destination?

You can find the 911 equivalent number for the country here.

https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/students-abroad/pdfs/911_ABROAD.pdf

Another critical issue to cover with travelers is a communication plan. Will you check in with someone at home? Will it be with a text or call? How often, every day, every week, or when you return? Ken DeLand was a missing American traveler in Europe a few months ago. His story was covered by many news agencies internationally. His parents were on numerous news stations doing their best to bring awareness to their missing child. In addition, they started a missing person website asking for tips. Thankfully, he was found safe. This was a perfect example of a communication failure. He was off exploring; he had no idea his parents were looking for him. But what added to the hardship for the parents was that they couldn't communicate directly with the Embassy about their son. They didn't have a privacy waiver form filled out. The Privacy Act of 1974 prohibits a U.S. Consular Office from releasing any information about a U.S. citizen without the traveler's written consent except as outlined in the Act. A U.S. citizen can complete a Privacy Act Waiver ([form DS-5505](#)) authorizing a Consular Officer to contact individuals on your behalf and disclose information. Failure to complete the Privacy Act Waiver may make it more difficult, or impossible, for the Department of State to assist. It's recommended to discuss signing the DS 5505 form with a loved one before traveling and be sure to develop a communication plan. If there is an emergency and you need help, your emergency contact can talk directly with the Embassy on your behalf. Ensuring your emergency communication plan is in place with the proper documents is priceless. Here is the [link](https://www.globalsecurestudent.com/privacy-act): <https://www.globalsecurestudent.com/privacy-act>

Do you know what the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program is?

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service that allows U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to receive critical information from the Embassy about safety conditions in their destination country, helping them make informed decisions about their travel plans. It also will allow the U.S. Embassy to contact you in an emergency, whether a natural disaster, civil unrest, or other safety issues. Every year, the U.S. Embassy and consulates assist U.S. citizens who have been victims of various mishaps and crimes, including armed robbery, carjacking, extortion, kidnapping, pick-pocketing, and sexual assault. One way to be proactive in preventing accidents and crime is to develop a proactive approach to learning more about the country you plan to visit. Identify personal vulnerabilities and focus on risk mitigation. No matter your age, it is up to you to be better prepared to make safety and security decisions. Be prepared with a plan of action should an emergency occur.

Have you confirmed your medical coverage?

Do you know what is and isn't covered in the policy? Are you planning on participating in extreme sports? You might have to add coverage. A lack of insurance can lead to a financial catastrophe. Is there Medical Reunion and Bedside Visit benefits in your insurance coverage for a family member to come in an emergency? Have you purchased a supplemental hospital-to-hospital plan that will transport the traveler back to the U.S. in case of hospitalization, as Medjet offers?

Actions to Take Before Travel:

- Research your destination. Learn about the Travel Advisory Level and Risk Indicators.
- Review your personal security plans and fill out the [DS-5505 form](#).
- Improve situational awareness with the 2Rs Risk and Resources strategy.
- Be aware of your surroundings and maintain a low profile.
- Safety Tools: StashBandz, Doorstop, Data Blocker, & GPS beacon.
- Monitor local media for updates.
- Know the emergency number where you are traveling for immediate assistance.
- Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. STEP Program <https://step.state.gov/>
- Review your medical insurance. Ask what is not covered. Add an elevated service [Medjet](#) for additional coverage for hospital-to-hospital transport. Global Secure Resources link - www.medjet.com/globalsecure

Travel Advisory Levels

Travel Advisory Levels
Find updated travel advisories, risk indicators, and alerts for your intended destination.

1. Exercise normal precautions
2. Exercise increased caution
3. Reconsider travel
4. Do not travel

Travel Tip: Before leaving visit the State Department <https://travel.state.gov/>

Find more travel tips at www.globalsecurestudent.com

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To learn more about this speaker or to book for your next event, email GSR@globalsecurestudent.com

Logos: FOX NEWS, TRAVEL LEISURE, FORBES, USA TODAY, BuzzFeed, GENERATIONS FOR AMERICA, WBENC, INNOVATION Women

Risk Indicators

Travel Advisory Risk Indicators

E - Time-Limited Event
C - Crime
T - Terrorism
U - Civil Unrest
H - Health
N - Natural Disaster
K - Kidnapping & Hostage - Taking
O - Other Risk
D - Wrongful Detention

Be Sure to Research Safety Strategies Before You Travel

Travel Tip: Before leaving enroll in the STEP Program <https://step.state.gov/>

Traveling to new places and immersing oneself in different cultures and languages can be an amazing experience. As someone who has lived and worked abroad for over 12 years, I have gained valuable knowledge on how to reduce travel risks. The first step is to have a conversation and ask questions. Don't forget to share these tips with your loved ones and acquaintances so they, too, can have a safe and enjoyable adventure.

Carrie Pasquarello is the CEO and co-founder of Global Secure Resources Inc. Carrie is a victim advocate who took her overseas experience with the State Department and turned it into a platform to help others navigate safe travel. She spent over a decade throughout Europe and Asia developing her business strategy based on risk mitigation involved with her travel to over 35 countries. In the process, Carrie refined the security protocols used to keep diplomats safe on their travels and integrated these techniques for clients to ensure their business continuity and, most importantly, the safety of their loved ones. Her company is certified Women-Owned. Author: [Study Abroad Safety, A Parent's Guide to Sending Your Child Abroad](#).

Website: globalsecurestudent.com and globalsecureresources.com

Need help? Let's chat. Book a time here. <https://calendly.com/gsr1/15min>

Safety isn't expensive; it's priceless.