



Travel Safety Tips  
from the  
U.S. Department of State



### **Start Early**

Passports are required to enter and/or depart most countries around the world. Apply for a passport as soon as possible. Some countries also require U.S. citizens to obtain visas before entering. Check with the embassy of the foreign country that you are planning to visit to see if you need a visa. (Passport and visa information is available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. Passport information is also available by calling 1-900-225-5674 or with a major credit card, 1-888-362-8668.)

### **Make a copy of your passport's data page and any visas.**

Keep it with you, but separate from the originals, at all times while traveling.

### **Remember to leave an itinerary with family or friends.**

Leave a detailed itinerary and a copy of your passport or other citizenship documents with a friend or relative in the United States.

### **Find out the location of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.**

If you are traveling to a remote area or one that is experiencing civil unrest, find out the location of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate and register with the Consular Section when you arrive. (Embassy and consulate locations can be found on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>.)

### **Learn about the country you plan to visit.**

Before departing, take the time to do some research about the people and their culture, and any problems that the country is experiencing that may affect your travel plans.

## Read the Consular Information Sheet.

Consular Information Sheets provide up-to-date travel information on any country in the world that you plan to visit. They cover topics such as entry regulations, the crime and security situation, and the location of the U.S. embassy, consulates and consular agencies.

## Check for Travel Warnings and Public Announcements.

A Travel Warning advises travelers not to go to a country because of dangerous conditions. A Public Announcement provides fast-breaking information about relatively short-term conditions that pose risks to the security of travelers.

There are three electronic methods to access Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements 24 hours a day:

- **By Internet:** Information about travel and consular services is available at <http://travel.state.gov>.
- **By Fax:** From your fax machine, dial 202-647-3000 and follow the voice prompts.
- **By Telephone:** A summary of Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements may be heard any time by dialing the Office of Overseas Citizens Services at 202-647-5225 from a touch-tone phone.
- **By Mail:** Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped business-size envelope to:  
Overseas Citizens Services  
Room 4811  
Department of State  
Washington, DC 20520-4818

On the outside envelope, write the name of the country or countries needed in the lower left corner.

## Also available at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov):

Passport Applications & Procedures Foreign & U.S. visa information Travel Publications and links to several U.S. embassy and consulate websites worldwide.

## Top Ten Tips for Travelers

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 Public Announcements or Travel Warnings, if applicable) for the countries you plan to visit.
3. Leave copies of your itinerary, passport data page and visas with family or friends at home, so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.
4. Make sure you have insurance that will cover your emergency medical needs while you are overseas.
5. Familiarize yourself with local laws and customs of the countries to which you are traveling. **Remember, while in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws!**
6. Do not leave your luggage unattended in public areas and never accept packages from strangers.
7. While abroad, avoid using illicit drugs or drinking excessive amounts of alcoholic beverages, and associating with people who do.
8. Do not become a target for thieves by wearing conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry and do not carry excessive amounts of cash or unnecessary credit cards.
9. Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques in order to avoid violating local laws.
10. When overseas, avoid demonstrations and other situations that may become unruly or where anti-American sentiments may be expressed.

