

# Safety Tips

## General

- **Travel light.** You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand.
- **Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would use at home.** Be especially cautious in areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals, and neighborhoods.
- **Check the weather** at your destination and note when the sun rises and sets.
- **Consider your attire.** It's usually best to wear clothing considered appropriate to the host culture and not items that make you look like the stereotypical **"American tourist."** This can result in unwanted attention and potential targeting by thieves.
- Make two **photocopies** of the first page of your **passport** (in color if possible), country-specific entry **visas** (if applicable), **airline tickets**, **travel itinerary**, **contact information**, **driver's license**, and **credit card/ATM card**. Leave one copy of this information with family and/or friends at home and then pack the other copy separate from the originals.
- **Avoid public demonstrations** and other civil disturbances.
- **Keep a low profile** and avoid loud conversations and arguments.
- Be cautious of what you discuss with strangers or what others may overhear. Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- **Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers** who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices or for "free."
- **If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police.** Keep a copy of the **police report** for insurance claims. After reporting missing items to local police, **report the loss or theft of:**
  - Credit cards/ATM cards to the issuing credit card company or bank
  - Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate
- **You can be detained for photographing security-related institutions** such as police and military installations and government buildings. If you are in doubt, ask permission first.

## Transit

- **Travel in a group or in pairs** and **don't travel alone at night.** If you are out late at night, let someone you trust in the host country know when you will return.
- **Be aware of your surroundings** and keep track of your belongings at all times. Act purposeful when you move about.
- **Avoid handbags, fanny packs, and outside pockets** that are easy targets for thieves. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or **money belt** under your clothes.
- **Put your name, address, and telephone numbers** inside and outside all baggage. Use covered luggage tags to avoid casual observation of your identity or nationality.
- **Beware of pickpockets.** They often have an accomplice who will:
  - Jostle you
  - Ask you for directions or the time
  - Point to something you spilled on your clothing
  - Distract you by creating a disturbance (this can even be children trying to play with you)
- Only take public transportation clearly identified with **official markings**.
- If on a faculty-led program, **give a copy of your itinerary** (including where you plan to stay and how to contact you) **to the Faculty Leader** each time you travel independently.

## Contact Information

- If you're on a faculty-led program, **keep the leader's and group's contact information**
- **Keep host university International Office** contact information with you at all times.
- **Keep the address and phone number of any accommodations** (hotel/residence hall/home stay/hostel, etc.) Also keep a map with directions to that location with you.
- **Find the phone number of the country's "911" equivalent.** For more information, visit: <http://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/emergencies.html>
- **See the "Emergency Contact Information" document** for details and more contacts

## Especially for Women

- **Ask the hotel's concierge and/or local women** if there are any areas they consider unsafe and ask what they do to protect themselves.
- **Observe locals** and dress/act in congruence with them as is appropriate.
- **Avoid wearing clothing considered inappropriate** to the host culture.
- **Try to travel in groups** or with people who you know.
- **Consider sitting next to other women or families** while traveling on public transportation.
- **Stay alert** when on the phone, searching through your personal items, and any other activities to avoid being caught off guard.
- **Wear the strap of your bags across your body** and walk with the bag away from the curb.

## Alcohol and Drugs

- **As a K-State student, you are responsible for abiding the Kansas State University Code of Conduct** ([www.k-state.edu/osas/code.html](http://www.k-state.edu/osas/code.html)) and Conditions of Participation. Violation of these policies may result in your expulsion from your program and K-State.
- **If you decide to consume alcohol, you must do so responsibly and follow all host country laws** and customs related to alcohol consumption.
- **The legal drinking age may be lower or higher** in your host country.
- **Always remember that you are a representative** of K-State and your country.
- **Students are prohibited from using, carrying, and trafficking illegal drugs abroad.** If the host country takes legal action for illegal drug use or alcohol related criminal activity against a student, the US Embassy can do little to intervene.
- **You will not be protected by American laws while abroad.** You are expected to uphold the laws of the country you are visiting.
- **If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities** or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs abroad even when purchased legally elsewhere.

## Research the Host Country

- **Topics to Research Include:**
  - Interpersonal Communication (including body language)
  - Gender Roles and Relationships
  - Cultural and Geographical Information
  - View of the United States and American Citizens
  - Safety and Health Information
- **U.S. Department of State:** <http://www.travel.state.gov>
- **U.S. Center for Disease Control:** <http://www.cdc.gov/travel>
- **U.S. Embassies & Consulates:** <http://www.usembassy.state.gov>
- **World Health Organization:** <http://www.who.int>