

TRAVEL TIPS

- ✓ Make sure all your documents: passport, driver's license, etc. contain valid information and are not out of date. Check whether visas are required for your destinations. Be aware that in some countries it is required for your passport to be valid for a period of time, such as six months after the date of your travel. It is advisable to check on requirements for the countries you are visiting. You can visit the on-line UK Passport Information site at www.ukpa.gov.uk or call: 0870 521 0410.
- ✓ Check that the personal information and contact details in the back of your passport are updated for your next-of-kin or person to be contacted in an emergency.
- ✓ It is always a good idea to carry two forms of identification with you when you travel. As well as your passport, take your photo driver's license or other valid document, preferably one with your photo affixed.
- ✓ Check whether vaccinations are required for the countries you are visiting, and also whether any courses you have taken previously are still valid. You can find out about this from your own doctor or check on the Department of Health information website at www.dh.gov.uk/travellers
- ✓ Take a spare pair of spectacles or contact lenses with you and, if possible, a copy of your prescription.
- ✓ In advance of your trip make sure that you have sufficient supplies of any needed prescription medications. It is advisable to leave the medication in its original wrapping and keep copies of the prescriptions, or take a letter from your doctor confirming that you have been prescribed the medication. You can also check with the consulate of the countries you are visiting to make sure that the medications you take are legal there.
- ✓ Always make copies of your travel itinerary, including flights details, and leave one at home with a family or friend. Make sure someone at home knows where you are and when you will return. Also make copies of your passport and visas, travel insurance and other important documents. Leave one copy at home and keep one copy with you, packed separately from the original documents.
- ✓ Carry with you emergency contact numbers. If you carry a mobile phone, program it with an 'ICE' number – which is the person who should be contacted 'In **C**ase of an **E**mergency.'
- ✓ Make sure you carry enough cash or travellers cheques with you to cover the unexpected. Keep a separate note of the travellers check numbers. Find out what you need to do in the event of their theft. Also make a note of numbers to call your bank in the event of credit cards being lost or stolen. Think ahead.
- ✓ Check on local laws and customs for the countries you plan to visit. Make sure that your dress is appropriate – particularly when visiting religious sites. To avoid problems, read your guide books and do research on the countries before you leave.
- ✓ It is a good idea, and polite manners, to ask permission before taking photographs.

- ✓ Know the rules regarding items you are permitted to bring back to the UK. Especially with regard to animal or agricultural products. You can check the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs website at www.defra.gov.uk or phone 08459 335577 for more information on the countries you plan to visit. You can also check with HM Revenue and Customs regarding allowances at www.hmrc.gov.uk or phone 0845 010 9000.
- ✓ Know the local laws regarding alcohol consumption. Do not drink and drive. If you are consuming drinks in a public place, keep your drink with you at all times to avoid any tampering with your drink and potential negative consequences.
- ✓ Do not pack your expensive jewellery or items of great value if it can be avoided.
- ✓ Place an ID tag on the outside and inside of each piece of luggage. Use luggage straps and something to make your bags easily identifiable.
- ✓ Pack your own bags and secure them. Never leave your bags unattended. Never carry packages or bags for other people. Be wary of accepting gifts.
- ✓ Be aware that penalties for being caught with illegal drugs overseas can be **very severe**.
- ✓ Do not lend your vehicle to other people. If travelling in someone else's vehicle and you reach a border crossing or customs checkpoint, it is advisable to get out and walk through carrying your own bags.
- ✓ Be wary of what you eat and where it came from. Check whether the water is safe to drink, or play it safe and purchase bottled water. Use plenty of sunscreen to avoid burns and skin damage.
- ✓ Visit your dentist for a check-up several weeks prior to your trip.
- ✓ We don't like to think about these things... but make sure you have a Will in place and also a power of attorney.
- ✓ The Foreign & Commonwealth Office has lots of good and up-to-date travel information on their website at www.fco.gov.uk.

Note:

These Travel Tips are intended as general guidance only and as rules and information may change be sure to check for yourself before you travel.