

# Travel Risk Awareness Information

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# 1 Travel Risk Awareness

While travelling can be a highly enjoyable and stimulating experience, it does present challenges and possible problems. When travelling, your usual support structure to handle unexpected issues is not available in the same way, such as friends, your relatives or a family doctor. It is important to consider how this might affect you and how to prepare before you travel.

### How to prepare

Before your trip, think about what problems you might encounter while in the field. Have plans and procedures in place to mitigate issues, and research the conditions at the location you are travelling to. Take into consideration health factors such as local hygiene and sanitation, environmental conditions like smog, and food safety.

The impact of regular illnesses like colds can be increased during travel. Prepare a travel health kit before departure so you can quickly alleviate symptoms.

Pre-existing conditions and medical history should also be taken into account when considering possible health risks related to travel. Talk to your doctor if pre-existing conditions may make travel more hazardous. For more information consult Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)).





Prepare a travel budget and choose the best way to access money during your trip. Although increasingly rare, in some countries the use of VISA, MasterCard or other types of debit/credit cards may be limited to major urban areas, or even completely unavailable.



Have access to cash and call your bank before you leave so you can use local ATMs. Research your destination for information on local crime and the precautions you should take to keep your money and valuables safe.



Road traffic accidents are one of the leading causes of preventable risks that travellers are exposed to both at home and abroad. Road safety varies widely between countries.



According to World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics, low-risk countries generally include Scandinavian and Western European countries, Japan, Australia and Canada.



Many African countries, some Southeast Asian countries as well as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kazakhstan are ranked among high-risk locations.

Depending on the nature of your travel there may be problems involving tensions with the local community.

People travelling for business should consider if the company they represent is involved in activities that could lead to protests or other forms of disapproval. There may also be cultural differences that can cause friction; familiarising yourself with potential cultural sensitivities is highly recommended.

During travel it can be easy to get lost and end up in the wrong area. This can be particularly concerning when travelling in major cities, as the risk of falling victim to a crime can vary significantly from one street to another. With some research on your destination, you can minimise the risk of walking into the wrong neighbourhood.

Local contacts and hotel staff may also be useful sources of information.



## What to do if something happens

While travelling, you should always make sure your food is prepared in a hygienic environment. Food stands that are often found in public squares and where tourists congregate are often more susceptible to bacteria compared to more traditional restaurants. Make sure you have access to medication during travel.

If you are beginning to feel any symptoms of sickness, you should take measures to alleviate the condition as soon as possible. And always make sure you have emergency contact details, such as local doctors and hospitals, close to hand. Travel can be mentally and physically straining, which may lead to the condition becoming exacerbated.

Petty crime and pick-pocketing can be significant risks while travelling to tourist areas. As previously mentioned, you should consider alternatives for how to secure access to travel funds and this should be considered during travel. You should ensure that you are able to obtain additional funds in case your wallet is stolen.



A good way to mitigate the risk of losses is to carry a throw-away wallet with a small amount of money in your pocket, while having most funds secured in a hidden travel bag or money belt. Caution should be exercised if travelling in a country that is ranked poorly for road safety. If you are travelling by car, it is important to remember that driving for several hours can be taxing, and that jetlag can lead to fatigue which contributes to unsafe driving.

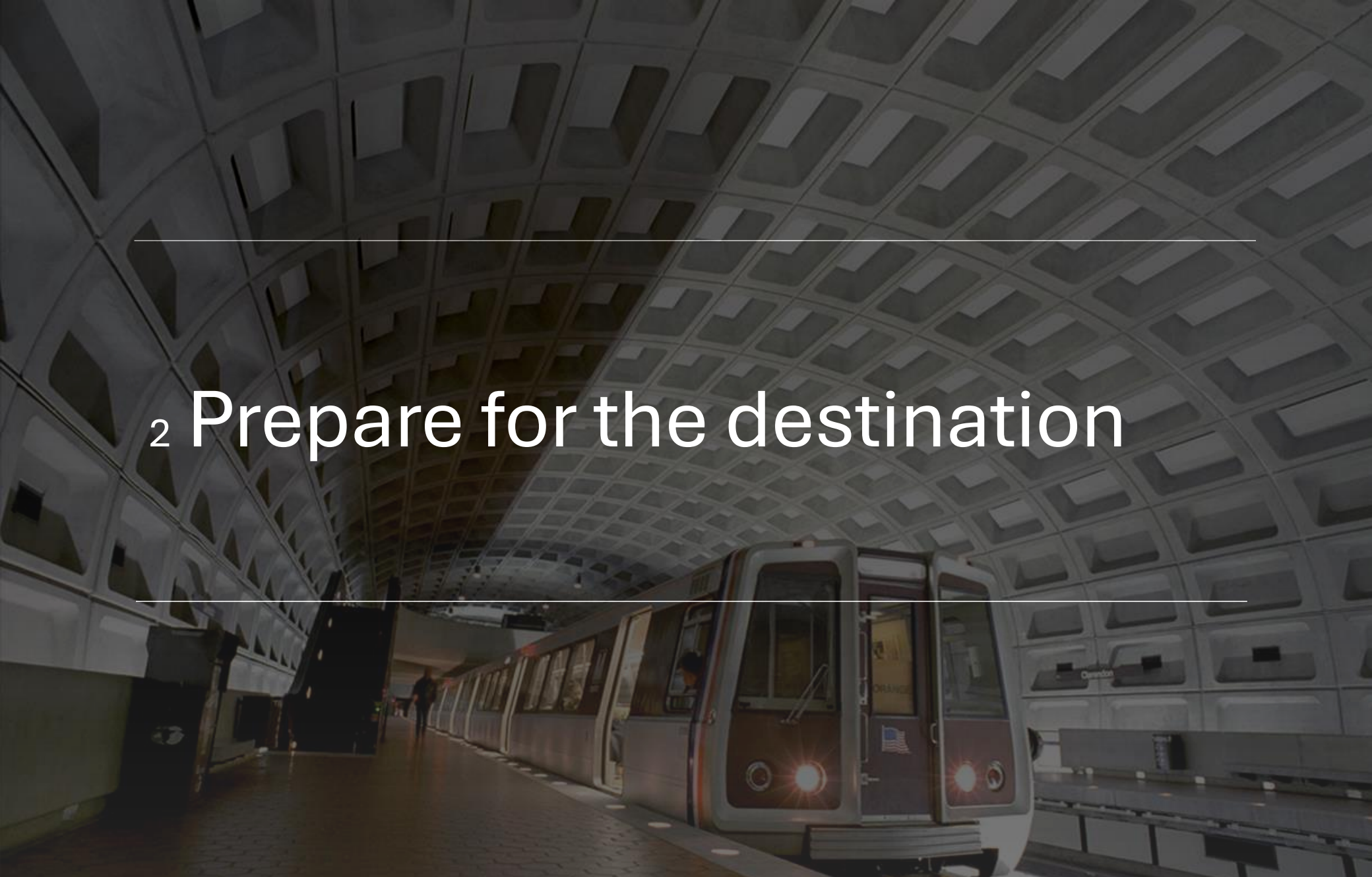
## Prepare for the destination

In this part, we will provide useful information and tips to consider during the preparation stages before your trip. Identifying practical problems that you may encounter while abroad and preparing for those eventualities will minimise the risk of mistakes and limit the impact of problems that may affect your journey.

Plan ahead for travel to manage potential complications prior to departure, in-flight, upon arrival, and with required documents or luggage.



## 2 Prepare for the destination



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A collection of travel-related items including a backpack, headphones, a camera, and a passport, arranged on a light-colored surface.

## How to prepare

**Climate:** While preparing your trip, research the climate and seasons of the destination you are travelling to. You should choose your clothing according to the conditions of your destination. Also, consider if you will need some form of specialised equipment for the environment.

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**Correct visa:** Travel to many countries is dependent on having the correct visa, and the process of obtaining one could take months. Make sure to check requirements for a visa and other forms of documentation as early as possible in the travel plan procedure.

Also check the date your passport expires. Depending on your country of origin and destination, it may be required to have up to six months of passport validity beyond the date of entry into or departure from your travel destination.

**Medicines and vaccinations:** As soon as you decide to travel internationally, check for comprehensive travel vaccines, medicines, and travel advice. Many vaccinations require administration 2 months before travel begins.

Obtain any particular medicines you may need ahead of time before your travel. Bring supplies to cover your needs for the entire duration of the trip and have a prescription at hand stating both the name and active ingredient of the drug.

**Risk assessment:** Consider the risks involved in your travel, and what you should do if they appear. Look into emergency contacts including local emergency services and your relevant consular contacts.

Also look at your insurance coverage and how best to contact the insurance company in the field. They may have local subsidiaries or partners that can provide timely assistance. For business travellers, it is recommended to check with your employer who to contact in the company in case of distress.

Many foreign ministries administer voluntary registrations of citizens travelling abroad. Reporting your destination during travel to such a list may allow your government's consular emergency services to provide help in a crisis. These registrations can usually be found easily on foreign ministry websites.

When looking into available hotels, pay attention to their safety standards. Use hotels that have fire alarms and sprinkler systems installed.

**Basic phrases:** Learning some basic phrases and buying a phrase book in the language of the country you are planning on visiting can prove to be very useful in many situations. It is often greatly appreciated to show even very basic language skills. You can also use web-based services like Google Translate to aid communication.





## What to do

**At the airport:** While at the airport, it is always important to keep a watchful eye on your valuables and luggage. Airports can be lucrative opportunities for pickpockets attempting to steal phones or passports. There is also a risk of theft from baggage, including by airport employees after checking. Many airports offer baggage wrapping services that will make it difficult for a thief to access your luggage.

**At the hotel:** Upon arrival to the hotel, you should inspect the layout of the building and memorise the location of emergency exits. Familiarise yourself with the hotel's surroundings and check access roads. Take notice of the nearest exit from your hotel room. Remember that during an evacuation visibility may be hampered by smoke, so take note of the distance and direction to the exit and memorize the number of doors in between.

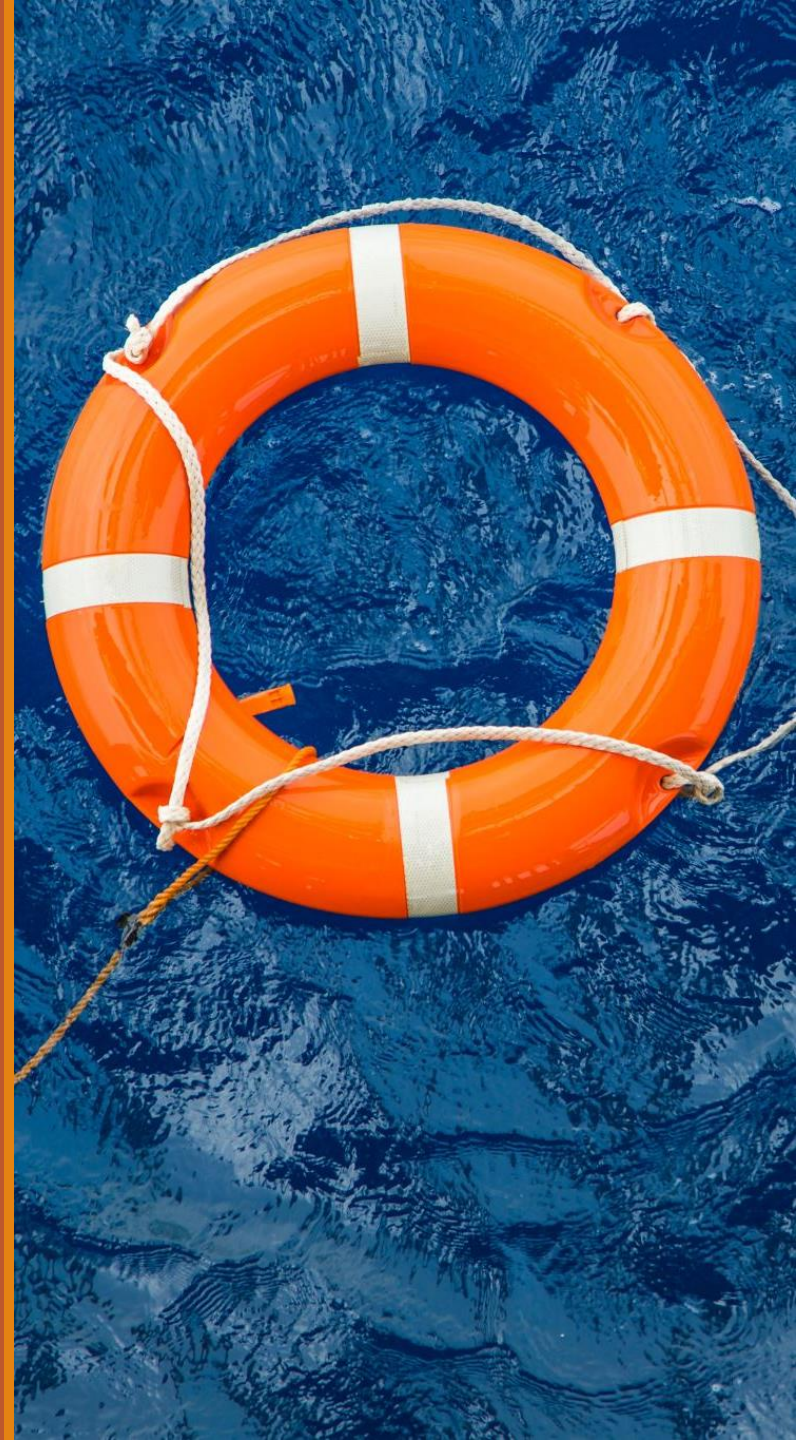
During travel it can be easy to forget information that may be important to have at hand if any problems arise, such as how to reach any local contacts you may have, or the name and address of your hotel. Make sure to memorise or carry in writing such information when travelling.

If you find yourself in an emergency or crisis during your travel, swift action and decision-making can be vitally important. When assessing the situation, there are certain factors to consider that should guide your response.

Does the situation present an immediate security threat? If so the recommended course of action is generally to leave the area directly and put as much distance between yourself and the source of the threat as possible.

If there is no immediate danger in your area, consider if there is anything you can do to help others that may have suffered injuries and/or are in distress. The first recommended action is generally to contact emergency services to notify them of the situation.

As was mentioned in the preparation section, it is important to consider who you should contact in difficult situations. Such resources, either in the form of insurance providers or your employer's management team, may be able to provide important support and should be notified as soon as possible.







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**Fire alarm:** In case the fire alarm goes off in your hotel, the best course of action is generally to leave as fast as possible. There are a few things to think about. As you leave close all doors behind you to prevent a potential fire from spreading quickly. Use the stairs, not the elevators if there is a risk of fire.

If a fire is occurring, there is a risk that you will be unable to escape through the emergency exits. If you can sense heat or other signs of fire from outside your hotel room, you should not open the door.

Hotel rooms in well-built hotels are constructed to mitigate the spread of fire, including fire-resistant doors. Use wet towels to block smoke from entering the room through the bottom of the door and turn off fans and air condition.

Call emergency services to notify them of your location and move to a window to signal to the outside. A travel flashlight can be useful for this purpose. Consider the possibility of exiting through the windows.

The background image shows the interior of a bus, looking towards the front. Yellow vertical poles are visible on both sides, and blue seats with a colorful pattern are arranged in rows. The lighting is somewhat dim, and the overall tone is slightly muted.

## 3 Transport safety

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Getting around an unfamiliar city can be challenging. Regardless of whether you use private or public transport, there will always be risks that could jeopardize the entire journey. Having local knowledge will certainly help, but if this is your first visit and you don't know what to look out for, then it can be difficult.



## How to prepare

There are a number of issues that one should take note of when using public transport including:

- **Strike action:** One major issue facing public transport is the possibility of a strike which could cripple the city's transport infrastructure. Buses, rail networks and intercity trains could have cancellations and delays for hours, or even days in some cases.
- **Breakdowns and engineering works:** Engineering and maintenance work could result in your journey being delayed or altered. These scenarios particularly affect rail services when work is carried out on weekends or during off-travel peak periods. Similarly, unscheduled breakdowns could also result in severe travel delays.
- **Ticket touts:** Ticket touts, otherwise known as scalpers, can usually be found at bus or rail stations. They often target unsuspecting travellers who could be in a rush or unsure of which operators to use. Tickets that are being re-sold tend to be at a higher price and may even be invalid.
- **Pick-pockets:** A crowded bus or train is usually where pick-pockets will strike. They will blend into the crowd, which is the perfect opportunity to steal valuables and leave unnoticed. Pick-pockets will know bus and train timetables well, meaning they will pick the optimum time to strike.



**Always plan your journey in advance.** Before travelling to a new city, check for information about the public transport network and how it works. While big cities will often use a combination of several modes of transport, smaller cities might just have one or two. Using private transport in a smaller city might be a better option if the system is not convenient or you are concerned about reliability. Knowing the general fares and timetables in advance is also advisable.

**Download a journey planner app.** Some public transport operators provide apps in which up-to-date information on engineering works and strikes, fare structures and timetables is provided. Such apps are extremely useful, especially when navigating an unfamiliar location. Information on delays may also be found on the operator's social media accounts.

The best way to avoid ticket touts/scalpers is to **Purchase tickets at the official counters.** Buying tickets online is also a faster and safer option.

**Always be vigilant in crowded places.** Make sure that your personal belongings are with you, at all times. Important documents such as identification cards, passports and money should be checked regularly when safe to do so. Keep them close to you.

## What to do if something happens

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**Robbed on public transport:** Don't panic. If a problem arises from delays or cancellation, seek alternative modes of transport such as taxis or ride-hailing apps. Ask a member of staff for the latest information. If you fall victim to a pick-pocket or have been robbed on a public transportation, **report it to the police** immediately. Surveillance footage can be useful in obtaining further information.

If you are harassed by ticket touts/scalpers, head to the nearest security personnel to seek assistance.

### **Rental car**

**Local laws:** Keep in mind that countries will have specific laws. Study the local driving laws such as which side of the road to drive on, basic traffic signs, speed limits, and local driving regulations. Familiarize yourself with the local laws to avoid being pulled over or putting yourself in a dangerous position.

**Parking spot:** Choose a parking space that is safe and secure to avoid the risk of theft. Before you park, check your surroundings. If the parking area is covered in broken glass, you should find somewhere else to park. Park in a well-lit area or near the entrance of your accommodation if possible and remove all electronic devices and valuables from your car to avoid being a target for criminals. Before you leave your car, be sure to lock all doors and close the windows and sunroof completely.



Check your insurance policy before accepting an insurance option from the rental agent.  
Exercise due diligence to understand what is and is not covered.



If your personal car insurance policy includes collision and comprehensive coverage, then it may extend to a rental car but make sure you check before renting a vehicle.



Inspect the car before signing the contract. Renting a well-maintained car will help keep you safe while travelling. Check tyres, brakes, oil, and tools necessary to change the spare tyre. Walk around the car and take photos of all panels. If there is damage, mark this on your contract.



Also, make note of useful roadside assistance numbers in case of breakdown or emergency.



Navigation apps are useful when you are driving in unfamiliar areas. Before driving, download the app and set the address of your destination. It is also recommended to bring a hard-copy road map.



## What to do if something happens

### Rental car (accident, vehicle breakdown)

Remain calm and get everyone to safety. Make sure everyone involved is safe before checking your surroundings. If you believe there is a danger of explosion or fire, move to a safe distance and be extra careful before inspecting the car. If you are pulling off the road onto the hard shoulder or a side road, put the hazard lights on to alert other motorists and, if safe to do so, get out of the car and move a safe distance away. If your surroundings are dangerous and it is safe to do so, stay in your car until any danger passes and call the emergency services.

Exchange information. Exchange your name and contact details with anyone else involved in the incident. This includes whether you have crashed into another vehicle or there are witnesses at the scene. Take note of car registration numbers, names, addresses, telephone numbers, date and time of the accident, damage to vehicles and injuries sustained by all parties. Additionally, make sure to take photographs of the incident as this may be required by your insurer.

Contact your rental car agency and personal insurance company. Inform your rental car agency about your situation and ask for advice on recovery, repairs or possible car replacement. Also, check the insurance provided by the rental company along with your own personal cover.

## Ride-hailing apps

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*Be vigilant:* Sit in the back seat, and always be mindful of the road and the driver. Make sure you wear a seatbelt. Once you are in the car, keep track of the route leading to your destination. If you are unfamiliar with the area, be sure that the road is safe and watch out for odd routes along the ride.

*Take care of your personal belongings:* Keep your belongings close to you when you enter the car. Having valuables on show may attract unwanted attention from the driver or other motorists. Keeping your belongings close by makes it easier for you to leave the car safely and quickly if needed.

*It is recommended to stay indoors when you are requesting the car:* Since the alert on the ride-hailing app will notify you when your driver arrives, it is better to avoid lingering outside for too long, to minimise risks like pick-pocketing.

Be sure to check your surroundings before entering the car.

*Check the driver's rating when requesting the car:* Apps like Uber have a rating system that can help you decide if you want to proceed or cancel the booking. The rating represents the driver's customer satisfaction scores.

*Confirm your driver's identity before getting into the car:* Double check the name, photo, and type of vehicle from the app when the driver arrives. This will help ensure your safety.

Ride-hailing services like Uber have developed an emergency button on their app that can be used any time during a ride to call local authorities in case of emergency.

*End the journey:* If something does not feel right, request to be let out of the car at an appropriate stop. If you need to end the journey urgently, be sure to find the nearest public space where you can get help. If the threat seems imminent and people are close by, try to make a commotion or yell to let others know you are in distress.

*Rate and report:* It is important to give a rating or feedback to your driver once the ride is complete. Your rating and feedback helps to keep other users safe. Should a serious incident occur during the journey, be sure to report this to the police as soon as it is safe to do so.



## **4 Destination safety**

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On any trip abroad, even to countries thought to be safe, it is important to consider the cultural and social differences. Any upsets or adverse situations might be more difficult to handle away from home, especially if the language is unfamiliar.

A business trip can be compromised due to the lack of awareness around local customs and cultures. You may encounter difficulties even with the smallest tasks, such as getting directions, reading street signs, or ordering food when you don't speak the local language.

Some habits and customs that are common in your home country might be disrespectful or even criminal in some places.

Even in the safest places in the world, tourist spots are often prone to criminal activities, such as pick-pocketing.



## How to prepare

Research your destination in advance. Looking up a country's traditional dishes and delicacies beforehand might help you avoid any foods that you dislike or are allergic to.

Learn how to greet people in your destination country to avoid embarrassing and disrespectful situations. Using transport in a new and different environment can be stressful.

Some measures can be taken to mitigate the risks :

- Arrange transfers with reputable companies, especially for airport pick up.
- Ask your hotel, business centre or restaurant for help arranging rides. These places usually use trusted firms.
- Use a recognized ride-sharing app.

Download a suitable, reputable travel app before you travel. Apps such as Uber, Grab and Lyft are available in many locations. They can be useful and more reliable tools, as they provide the drivers' information and contact details.

Some apps also provide the ability to share your route information with your contacts, such as relatives or company risk managers.

Due to the risk of express kidnappings, do not use illegal taxi services. Usage of official hotel transport or professional / security ground transport providers whilst travelling in high-risk areas are recommended.

If you use public transport, research the local security situation and network beforehand. Some apps and sites help with timetables and service information. You can also ask official bus, train or metro staff for help. It is not recommended to ask the public for information unless absolutely necessary. Rent a car from a reliable company. It is important to select car insurance with as much coverage as possible. Some companies offer a replacement car, or even taxi rides if the rental car breaks down or an accident occurs.

Tourist spots anywhere in the world, even in countries considered safe, attract criminals. Looking and acting as though you are new to a city can draw attention to yourself, and result in risky situations. Steps can be taken to minimise the dangers.

- Be aware of your surroundings. Always pay attention to what is happening close to you. If you hear someone yelling, or someone alerts you to a robbery, it is possible that the perpetrator is still around and presents a risk.
- Pick-pockets tend to target people that appear unfamiliar with the location. Take only what is necessary with you when you go out. Bring a small amount of cash and some identification documents, but not your passport.
- Book a hotel room with a safe, this way you can store your valuables (jewellery and cash, for example). Leave your passport in your hotel room safe. Take another form of photo identification with you such as a drivers license.
- Try not to draw unwanted attention to yourself by talking loudly in a foreign language. Do not show off jewellery or other valuable articles such as cameras and smartphones.
- Trust the advice of local contacts. If they advise to avoid certain areas or events, do so. Trust your instincts. If you do not feel comfortable doing something or going somewhere, do not do it.

## What to do if something happens

Even after preparing, unpleasant and unpredictable situations can happen. Dealing with them during an international trip requires a calm and sensible approach. Where possible, always have important contacts at hand: travel insurance provider, security advisor, reliable hospital, etc.

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*During a robbery attempt:* Do not resist or try to argue and do not attempt to fight whoever is approaching you, especially if they have a gun. In most cases, criminals are trying to steal valuable goods. No item is worth sacrificing your wellbeing or life for. Do not make any sudden, rapid movements. Your attackers could think you are reaching for a weapon. If you put your hand inside a bag, or pockets, do it slowly signalling (or saying) that you are doing so. If you do not understand what they are saying, try your best to communicate. Learn the local phrase for “I only speak English” (or whatever your local language is.)

**“Okay”** tends to be a universal term. It can show that you are fully complying with what is being asked.

Self-defence in the face of an attack is always very risky and should only be pursued as a last resort if you believe your life is in imminent danger. The main objective is to protect your health, a violent response to an incident is only advisable if it seems that a perpetrator is out to harm you, and that there is no obvious option to escape.

After the incident, try to distance yourself from the location and report it to the police promptly.





*During a police approach:* In some locations, police can be overly forceful, and some situations can give cause for misunderstandings.

Follow the advice below to avoid this happening:

- Make sure your hands are always visible. Remove your hands (slowly) from your pocket, or, if driving, put both hands on the wheel.
- It is also recommended to turn the inside lights on and turn off any loud music.
- Try to communicate that you are a foreigner, so they know that if you do not follow some instructions it will be because you may not understand them.

# <sub>5</sub> Cyber safety

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Cybercrime, also known as computer-oriented crime, comprises any criminal act involving computers and networks, as well as traditional crimes conducted through the internet. The prevalence and cost of cybercrime, including identity theft, hacking of bank accounts and loss of intellectual property has ramped up significantly over the last decade.

All kinds of business, including the travel and tourism industries, have increasingly been targeted in the last few years by cybercriminals. They attempt to breach computer systems of both private and public sector networks.

The threat has increasingly grown and become more common, more dangerous and more sophisticated. Whether you are a leisure or business traveller, you should consider the risks associated with such crimes as it could complicate your journey significantly.

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There are a range of different types of threats that can pose a concern to businesses, including attacks on individual devices (computers or phones) or sometimes entire networks or websites. Attacks on websites in the form of Distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) is a very common form of cyberattack that can shut down important services such as online banking or travel booking. Hacking attacks of government or private websites is also a concern as such acts can lead to criminals obtaining credit card information and other sensitive data and can facilitate identity theft and fraud.

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*Individual devices:* Common threats to individual devices include phishing scams and ransomware. The attacks are usually spam emails that may be formulated to resemble a business offer or similar promises of some form of major gain for little-to-no effort. Ransomware is often spread through infected websites and is a type of malicious software designed to lock the data access in the victim's computer, typically by encryption, and payment is demanded to decrypt the data and return the access to the victim.





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**Phishing** is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information such as usernames, passwords and credit card details, often for malicious reasons, disguised as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication. Phishing is typically carried out by email spoofing or instant messaging, and it often directs users to enter personal information at a fake website. The look and feel are identical to the legitimate site, the only difference is the URL of the website in concern. Communications purporting to be from social web sites, auction sites, banks, online payment processors or IT administrators are often used to lure victims.


Phishing attempts directed at specific individuals or companies have been termed spear phishing. In contrast to bulk phishing, spear phishing attackers often gather and use personal information about their target to increase their probability of success.

## How to prepare

There are firm steps and routines you can do to improve your resilience to such crimes during travel. Your online behaviour regarding travel can also be related to securing your home. There have been reports of criminals monitoring social media for people announcing they will travel, and then selecting their homes for burglary.

Avoid open Wi-Fi networks – Airports and cafes often offer free, open-access Wi-Fi. Such open, unencrypted networks may offer criminals a way to monitor traffic, get a hold of personal information, or install malware on their devices.

Risk of social engineering – Be aware that criminals may try to obtain your personal information by subterfuge. They may impersonate a police officer or other official, or a travel service provider.

A top-down view of a desk with a white keyboard, a small green succulent in the top right, a pair of glasses on the left, and a smartphone on the bottom right. A person's hands are visible typing on the keyboard.

Passwords - While it is a nuisance to update and re-learn new passwords to online accounts it does add an extra layer of security to your online activities. It is also recommended to have different passwords for various accounts.

Avoid using public computers for sensitive business. If you are about to do some personal transactions like banking or online shopping, do not do it using public computers. Other people who have used the computers before you may have put programs that can record the passwords you type in.

Security experts agree that a password should have a minimum of 12-14 characters.

To remember, use a passphrase not a password. Take a line from a favourite film, a poem you know, or a children's rhyme, then swap a word. Include numbers, symbols, capital and lower-case letters.

Phrases are much easier to remember than random strings of text. If you create a very long password and worry about remembering it, then write it down on paper and secure it somewhere safe at home, such as a locked drawer.

The five worst passwords: 12345, password, qwerty, football and baseball



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### Protect your computer

- Keep your firewall turned on.
- Install or update your antivirus software.
- Install or update your antispyware technology.
- Keep your operating system up to date.
- Be careful what you download.
- Turn off your computer.



## What to do if something happens

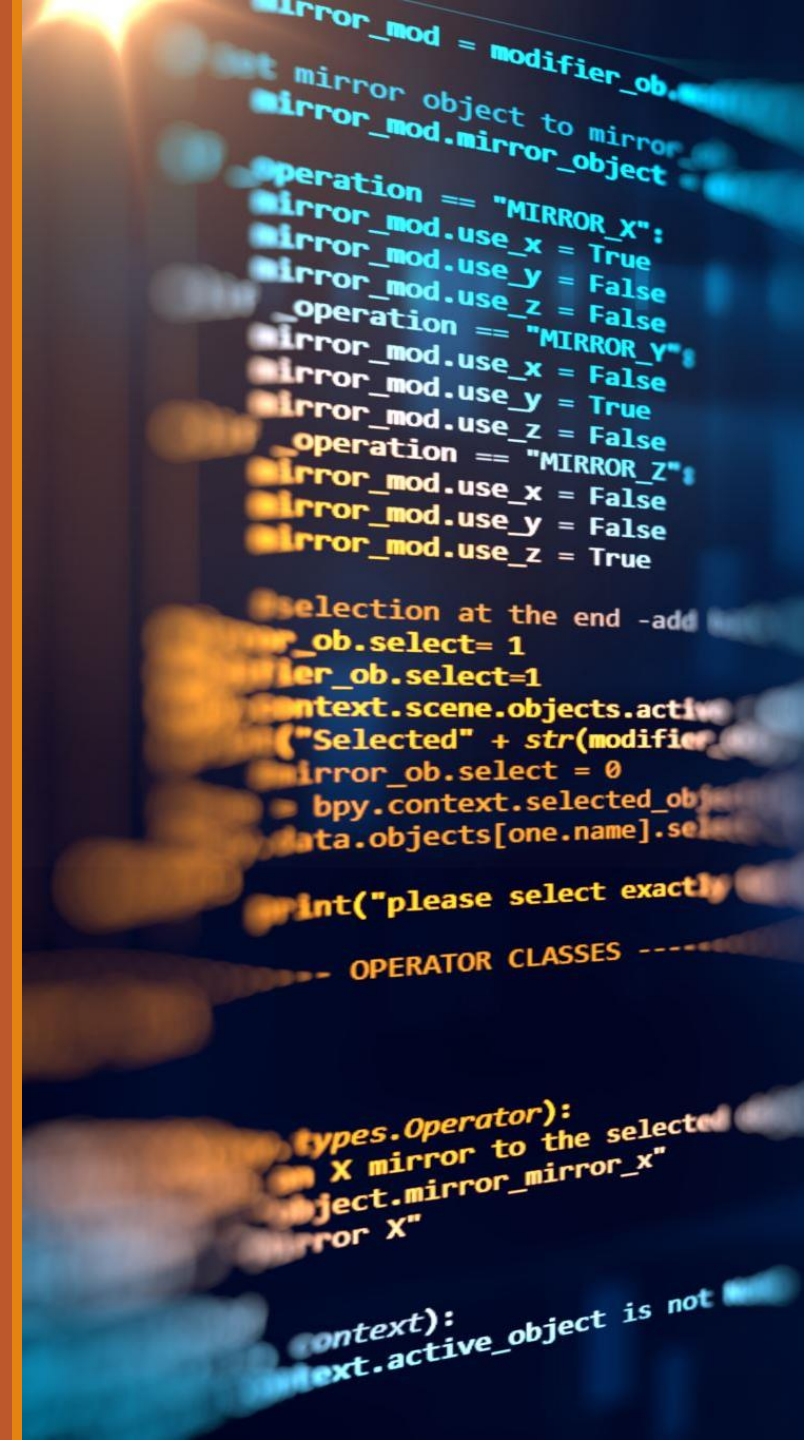
If your device is infected by some form of malware, there are steps you can take to successfully remove the malicious software and prevent loss of your important data.

- Disconnect your computer from the internet.
- Reboot in Safe Mode.
- Remove temporary files.
- Scan the computer using a malware scanner.

If you don't have anti-malware software installed, you can temporarily connect to the internet to conduct the download.

Malware can also affect smartphones. This is primarily a concern for Android users as iPhones are more restricted regarding allowed apps and how apps can communicate with the phone's operating system.

Contact your bank immediately if you suspect that your banking information may have been compromised.





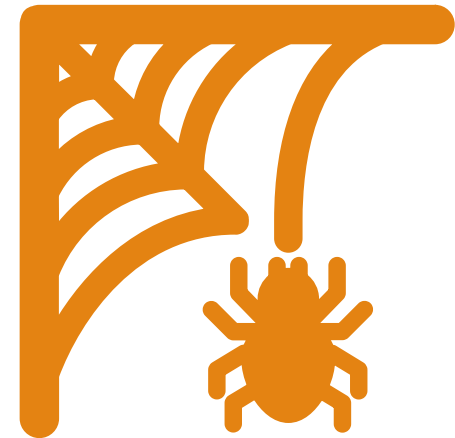
iPhone virus removal is straightforward, since the virus or malware can't actually break into iOS. This is why most hackers go after software developer kits, which are then used to create apps — and the main reason behind why you shouldn't jailbreak your iPhone and download apps from outside the App Store. If you suspect a particular app may be compromised (maybe your problems started after you downloaded it, or it's redirecting you to web pages or the App Store without permission), you can try uninstalling it and seeing if that clears up the problem. If not, you have a few other options.

- Clear history and data. This should help if you are experiencing pop-ups or “Error” messages in your Safari browser. Simply go to Settings and scroll down to the Safari tab. Then tap Clear History and Website Data.
- Power off and restart your iPhone. Nothing tricky about this — simply hold down your iPhone's power button, wait for the “slide to power off” slider to appear, then slide to turn it off. To restart your phone, hold down the power button once more and wait for the Apple logo to appear.
- Restore from an earlier backup. If the above methods don't fix the problem, try restoring your phone from an earlier backup. If your most recent backup isn't malware-free, you can try earlier backups until you find one that is.
- Restore as new device. This is a last resort scenario, but if all else fails, then you can completely wipe your device and start fresh. Do this by going to Settings >> General >> Reset >> Erase All Content and Settings.

How to remove malware from your Android device: If you think you have malware on your phone, the most important thing to do is stop the malware from causing any further damage. Here are a few steps you can take to help mitigate further loss.

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- Turn off the phone and restart in safe mode. Press the power button to access the Power Off options.
- Most Android phones come with the option to restart in Safe Mode.
- Uninstall the suspicious app. Find the app in Settings and uninstall or force close it. This may not completely remove the malware, but it may prevent further damage.
- Look for other apps you think may be infected. There is a good chance that some apps may have been infected by the malware. If you think you know those apps, delete them immediately.
- Install a robust mobile security app on your phone.





# 6 Travel health risks

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As a traveller, you may be exposed to a variety of health risks in unfamiliar environments. Most risks can be minimised by taking precautions before, during and after your travel.

There is an increased risk amongst frequent travellers who are living an unhealthy lifestyle (e.g. poor diet, lack of exercise, excess drinking), while at the same time suffer from the effects caused by jet lag (stress, mood swings, disorientation, sleep problems, and gastrointestinal problems). This combination impairs physical and mental performance. Some of the symptoms show up when crossing just one time zone.

- Research indicates that it takes up to one day for each time zone crossed to recover.



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## Environmental risks:

Travellers often experience abrupt and dramatic changes in environmental conditions, which may have detrimental effects on health and well-being.

Travel may involve major changes in altitude, temperature, humidity, exposure to ultraviolet radiation from the sun, microbes, animals, insects, and pollutants such as smog and noise.

The negative impact of sudden changes in the environment can be minimised by taking simple precautions.

## Infectious disease risks: Communicable diseases can be transmitted in a number of ways:

- Air-borne diseases are commonly spread by coughing or sneezing and can include bacterial meningitis, chickenpox, common cold, and influenza.
- Blood-borne diseases can be spread through contamination by blood and other bodily fluids. The most common examples are HIV, hepatitis B and viral haemorrhagic fevers.
- Contact transmissions – transmitted through direct body contact with an infected person. This can happen a through any number of scenarios, including sharing a contaminated object (e.g. towel, comb). Diseases that are transmissible by direct contact include conjunctivitis and head lice.
- Food-borne and water-borne diseases (faecal – oral) - pathogens in faecal particles pass from one person to the mouth of another person. Main causes of food-borne and water-borne disease transmission include lack of adequate sanitation and poor hygiene practices (e.g. inadequate hand hygiene, polluted water).
- Sexually transmitted diseases are spread through sexual contact and include HIV/AIDS, chlamydia and genital warts.
- Soil-related bacterial and fungal infections - these include diseases caused by bacteria, fungus or spores (e.g. tetanus, anthrax, and botulism).
- Vector-borne diseases - a vector (e.g. mosquito, ticks) is an organism that does not cause disease itself but that transmits infection by conveying pathogens from one host to another. Common diseases include malaria, viral encephalitis and Chagas disease.



Psychological health risks: Business travel can be stressful. Whether preparing for a trip, the anxiety of “e-mail inbox overload” or the isolation involved with business travel. This stress can be intensified by unforeseen issues at the airport and compounded by general safety concerns. These factors can lead to mental health issues. One study found that employees of the World Bank who travel frequently for work have a threefold increase in psychological claims on medical insurance as opposed to nontravelers.

Psychosocial wellbeing: Psychosocial wellbeing is perceived as a combination of cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. It is vital to identify fatigue and manage it to avoid harming a person's health and wellbeing.

Fatigue: Fatigue is a subjective feeling of extreme tiredness resulting from mental or physical exertion or illness. It is not to be confused with tiredness or drowsiness. Fatigue can cause a vast range of other physical, mental and emotional symptoms.



## Types of stress:

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*Daily life stress:* anything from everyday responsibilities like work and family to serious life events can trigger stress.

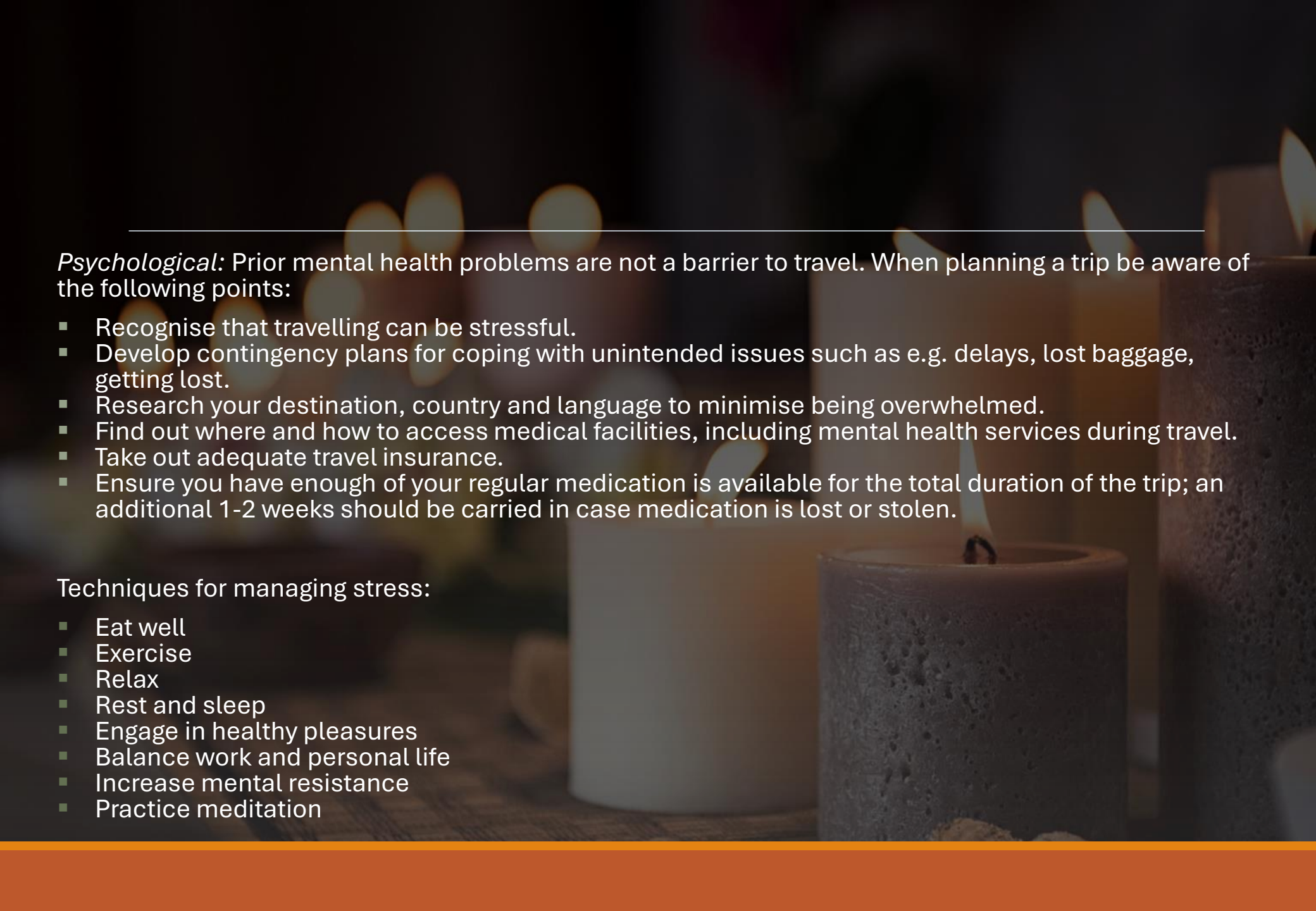
*Cumulative stress:* common experience for people in chronically stressful situations. It results from an accumulation of various stress factors such as heavy or irregular workload, poor planning and the inability to rest or relax adequately.

*Critical Incident Stress (CIS):* it is a combination of acute responses to security incidents, including violence and threats to life - your own or others. Signs of CIS needs urgent attention from trained professionals.

*Jet-lag:* Ways to reduce negative effects from jet lag include:

- Leave home well rested; use the flight to rest and reset.
- On arrival, stay awake until an early local bedtime. If flying east, passengers should gradually advance (i.e., move bedtime earlier), and if flying west they should gradually delay (i.e., move bedtime later).
- Don't drink alcohol. At high altitude, alcohol becomes more potent and dehydrates the body, severely affecting the circadian rhythm.
- Avoid all caffeine on flying day.
- Helpful sleep tools include an eye mask, neck pillow, ear plugs or noise reducing headphones, comfortable clothing and a blanket.



The background of the slide features a soft-focus photograph of several lit candles. The candles are in various shades of white and grey, and their flames create a warm, bokeh-like light effect. The overall mood is calm and contemplative.

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*Psychological:* Prior mental health problems are not a barrier to travel. When planning a trip be aware of the following points:

- Recognise that travelling can be stressful.
- Develop contingency plans for coping with unintended issues such as e.g. delays, lost baggage, getting lost.
- Research your destination, country and language to minimise being overwhelmed.
- Find out where and how to access medical facilities, including mental health services during travel.
- Take out adequate travel insurance.
- Ensure you have enough of your regular medication is available for the total duration of the trip; an additional 1-2 weeks should be carried in case medication is lost or stolen.

Techniques for managing stress:

- Eat well
- Exercise
- Relax
- Rest and sleep
- Engage in healthy pleasures
- Balance work and personal life
- Increase mental resistance
- Practice meditation



**First aid:** First Aid is the initial assistance given to a victim of injury or illness. It is important to understand and be able to apply some basic emergency First-Aid procedures or techniques.

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*Calling the emergency services:* Use the word **ETHANE** to help you remember key facts when reporting an emergency event. ETHANE stands for:

- **Exact location:** The precise location of the incident,
- **Type:** The nature of the incident, including how many vehicles, buildings and so on are involved,
- **Hazards:** Both present and potential,
- **Access:** Best route for emergency services to access the site, or obstructions and bottlenecks to avoid.
- **Numbers:** Numbers of casualties, dead and uninjured on scene
- **Emergency services:** Which services are already on scene, and which others are required



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## *Basic first aid emergency procedures in case of accidents:*

### Unconsciousness

- If a person loses consciousness, then try to awaken the person by first speaking directly and secondly by shaking that person's shoulders.
- If the person can't be awakened, call local emergency services, activate the phone's speaker-function.
- Lay the person gently and carefully on the back and check if breathing is normal. If you suspect a back or neck (spinal) injury, do not move the affected person.
  - Open the airways by correcting the head position, grab the chin and lift upwards.
  - Can you feel an airflow against your cheek? Can you see the chest rise?
- If the person breathes normally, place in *recovery position* (the body is placed facing downwards and slightly to the side, supported by the bent limbs) to ensure breathing.
- Make sure that the airways are open, and breathing is normal. Hold person under surveillance until emergency care personal takes over responsibility.

## Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) for adults

- If the person is unresponsive, no breathing or show no normal breathing (only gasping), verify first scene safety, shout for nearby help or call emergency services, proceed to initiate resuscitation with compressions.
  - Place the lower part of your palm in the middle of the person's sternum or breastbone, and your second hand over the first.
  - Press the sternum straight down, hard and fast, at least 5 cm (2 in).
- Push hard, push fast
  - Compression rate should be at least 100/min.
  - Check rhythm/ shock if indicated. Repeat every 2 minutes. Continue compressions until the emergency care takes over responsibility or until the person wakes to life. Continuing CPR for 30 minutes or more may help victims survive with good brain function. High performance CPR is hard work; if you start sweating, you're doing it right.





Airway obstruction (including abdominal thrust (previously called the Heimlich manoeuvre))

- Bend the person's upper body forward, support from the waist. Then land five firm strokes with the palm of your hand between the shoulder blades.
- If the foreign object is not loose and you are alone, call the local emergency services.
- Continue with abdominal thrusts. Wrap your arms around the person's waist. Position your hands by making a fist with one hand and grasping the fist with the other hand. Position it below the ribcage, but above the navel. Press hard into the abdomen with a quick, upward thrust — as if trying to lift the person up. Repeat 5 times as needed.
- If the item does not loosen switch between five strokes between the shoulder blades and five abdominal thrusts.
- Initiate CPR if the person loses consciousness and does not breathe normally. Notify the local emergency services of the changed situation.

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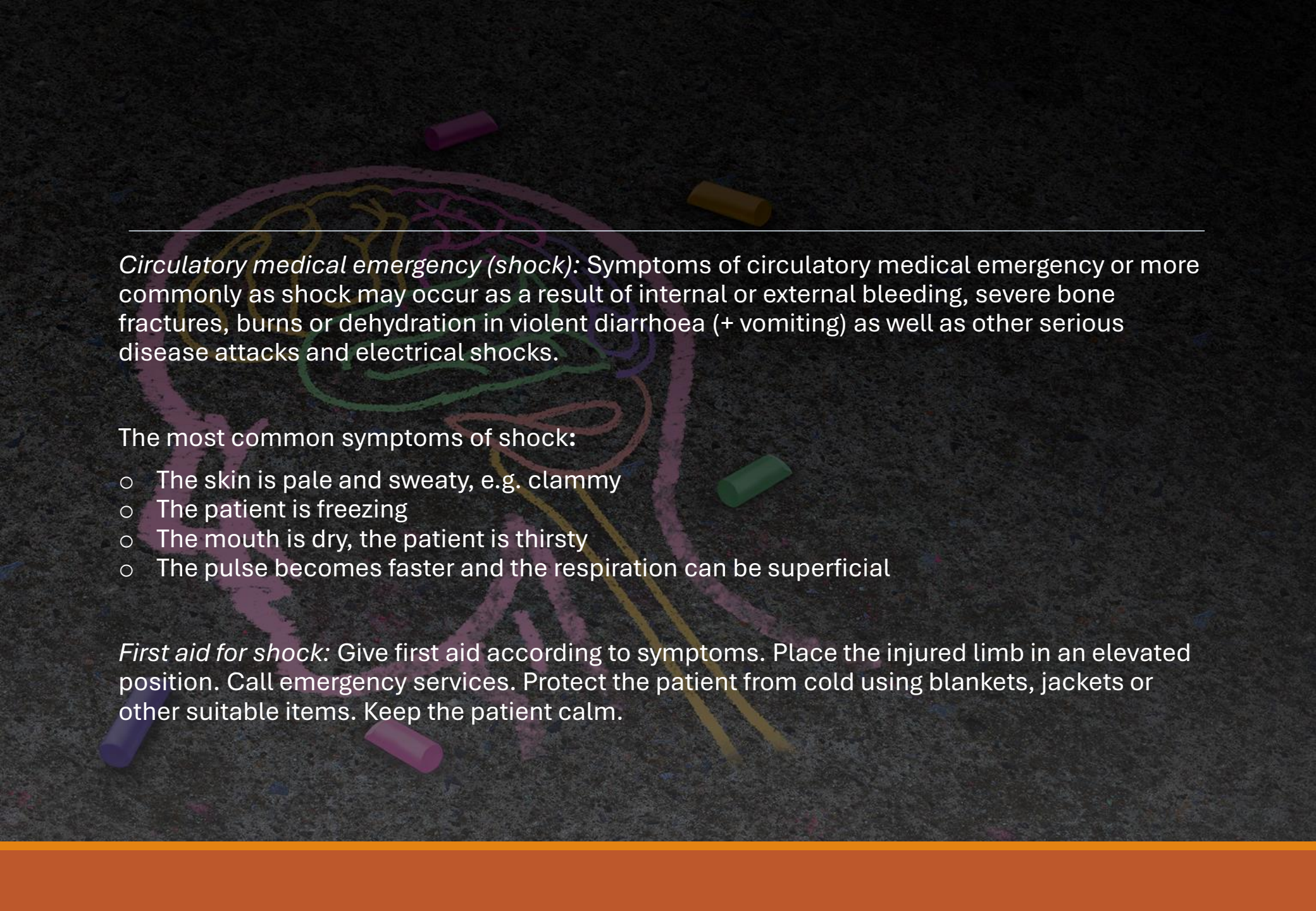
**Stop a bleed:** It is difficult to reliably measure and assess the extent of an external visible bleeding. Heavy bleeding, when the person loses 20% or more, leads to shock.

- Raise the bleeding limb and apply direct pressure by pressing your fingers or palm against the wound. Allow an abundantly bleeding person to lie down immediately.
- Call the local emergency number if you consider it necessary.
- If you have a dressing readily available, apply it on the bleeding wound.
- If the wound is on the arm or leg, raise limb above the heart (elevated position), if possible, to help slow bleeding.
- Strong bleeding can lead to a serious condition i.e. shock. Give the injured first aid according to the rules of shock. Place the injured with the legs in high position, speak calmly, protect against cold and keep the injured under surveillance until you can hand over responsibility to a medical professional.

*When should you apply a tourniquet?*

Tourniquets should almost never be used. Applying a tourniquet is a desperate move - only for dire emergencies where the choice between life and limb must be made.





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*Circulatory medical emergency (shock):* Symptoms of circulatory medical emergency or more commonly as shock may occur as a result of internal or external bleeding, severe bone fractures, burns or dehydration in violent diarrhoea (+ vomiting) as well as other serious disease attacks and electrical shocks.

The most common symptoms of shock:

- The skin is pale and sweaty, e.g. clammy
- The patient is freezing
- The mouth is dry, the patient is thirsty
- The pulse becomes faster and the respiration can be superficial

*First aid for shock:* Give first aid according to symptoms. Place the injured limb in an elevated position. Call emergency services. Protect the patient from cold using blankets, jackets or other suitable items. Keep the patient calm.

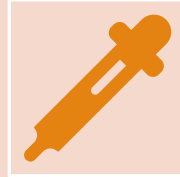


*Personal hygiene and travellers' diarrhoea:* Wash your hands frequently. If possible, carry an alcohol-based hand sanitiser with you. Infected food and water are the most common ways of acquiring travellers' diarrhoea. Avoid undercooked meats, particularly pork, poultry and shellfish harvested from shallow water.

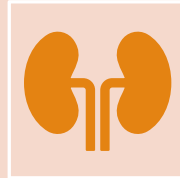


Run showers with hot water for a few minutes before entering to wash out any contagious disease. Drink plenty of fluids (approximately 3 litres a day) as dehydration is the greatest danger during diarrhoea and vomiting. Replace lost nutrients with watered down fruit juices, salty soups or commercially available rehydration packs (keep some extra in first aid kit).





Avoid the use of anti-diarrheal medicine such as loperamide (Imodium, Fortasec, Dimor) unless essential, as they essentially trap the harmful bacteria in the intestine/colon which slows down elimination of the causal organism.



Seek medical advice if symptoms are not settling - for example, vomiting for more than 1-2 days, or diarrhoea that does not start to settle after 3-4 days.



If blood or mucus are present, or if a fever develops, seek medical assistance as soon as possible.

**Medical Evacuation:** There may be a time when you, your colleagues, or your family require evacuation due to an accident or other emergency situations.

CASEVAC and MEDEVAC procedures are established for this purpose.

Casualty evacuation, also known as CASEVAC, is a military term for the emergency patient evacuation of casualties from a combat zone.

Medical evacuation, often shortened to MEDEVAC or MEDIVAC, is the secondary evacuation of a patient from a non-appropriate medical facility (e.g. rural general hospital) to a higher-level medical facility, based on the patient's medical condition.

Ensure that your travel insurance cover medevac or sign up for a separate medevac policy if spending a long time abroad or in a location where it is recommended. Know your CASEVAC / MEDEVAC procedures.



# 7 Crowd safety

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Navigating crowded spaces is common when visiting large cities. You will often arrive at busy stations and airports and sometimes it may be necessary to pass close to risky events such as political rallies.

Large crowds may cause disruption to public transport, making it difficult to navigate the city. Depending on the event and the behaviour of the crowd, there may be additional safety risks. Taking preventative measures will help reduce the risks.



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## Crowds

A mass gathering, or crowd, is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “events attended by a sufficient number of people to strain the planning and response resources of a community, state or nation”.

Mass gatherings can be categorised into two types:

- spontaneous gatherings (e.g., funeral of prominent person) and,
- planned gatherings (e.g., the Hajj).





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## Density of crowds

*Low risk crowd:* Involves densities where involuntary contact and brushing against other people usually occurs, but there remains enough room to make decisions and move accordingly. In this scenario, the maximum capacity of a corridor or walkway is reached (i.e. exiting a stadium or theatre).

*Critical risk:* Reaching critical crowd density is a main characteristic of crowd disaster - people are so tightly packed that they can no longer choose where they go. Pressure waves can travel through the crowd, and they then lose control. This is a threshold generally avoided by the public, except in crowded elevators and buses.

*Civil unrest and riot:* Civil unrest occurs when social, economic and political stresses begin to accumulate before a spontaneous event like a mass act of civil disobedience (such as demonstration, riot or strike) occurs. A riot is commonly defined as a violent disturbance of peace by a crowd. Riots often include theft, vandalism, and destruction of property.

*Crowd crush (stampede):* A major threat to life can occur during mass gathering events when panic due to an explosion, fire, or other trigger event, causes a crush. It typically happens when more and more people push into a confined area and people are squeezed so tightly that they can no longer breathe properly. Virtually all crowd deaths are due to compressive asphyxia (not the trampling often reported by the media), resulting from the combination of horizontal pushing and vertical stacking often against an exit route.

A background image showing a large crowd of people walking across a city street. The scene is slightly blurred, suggesting movement. There are trees with green and yellow leaves in the background, and a building is visible on the right. The overall tone is somewhat somber due to the dark overlay.

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**Compressive asphyxia** (also called chest compression) is an external compression of the chest, preventing normal respiration. Death may occur if the asphyxia persists, or from associated injuries.

Major events may lead to large crowds, meaning, potential safety hazards like overcrowding must be observed and avoided. Materials such as crowd control barriers, fences, and signs can be used to direct a crowd. Keeping the crowd comfortable and relaxed is also essential, so things like awnings, cooling fans (in hot weather), and entertainment are sometimes used.

**Riot control** refers to the measures used by law enforcement, military or other security forces to control, disperse, and suppress people who are involved in a riot, demonstration, or protest.

When there is a planned riot or one resulting in severe anger with a legitimate cause, law enforcement can employ robust tactics including batons, CS gas and rubber bullets to disperse the agitated crowds. There are cases where lethal weapons have been used to disperse crowds.





## Crime:

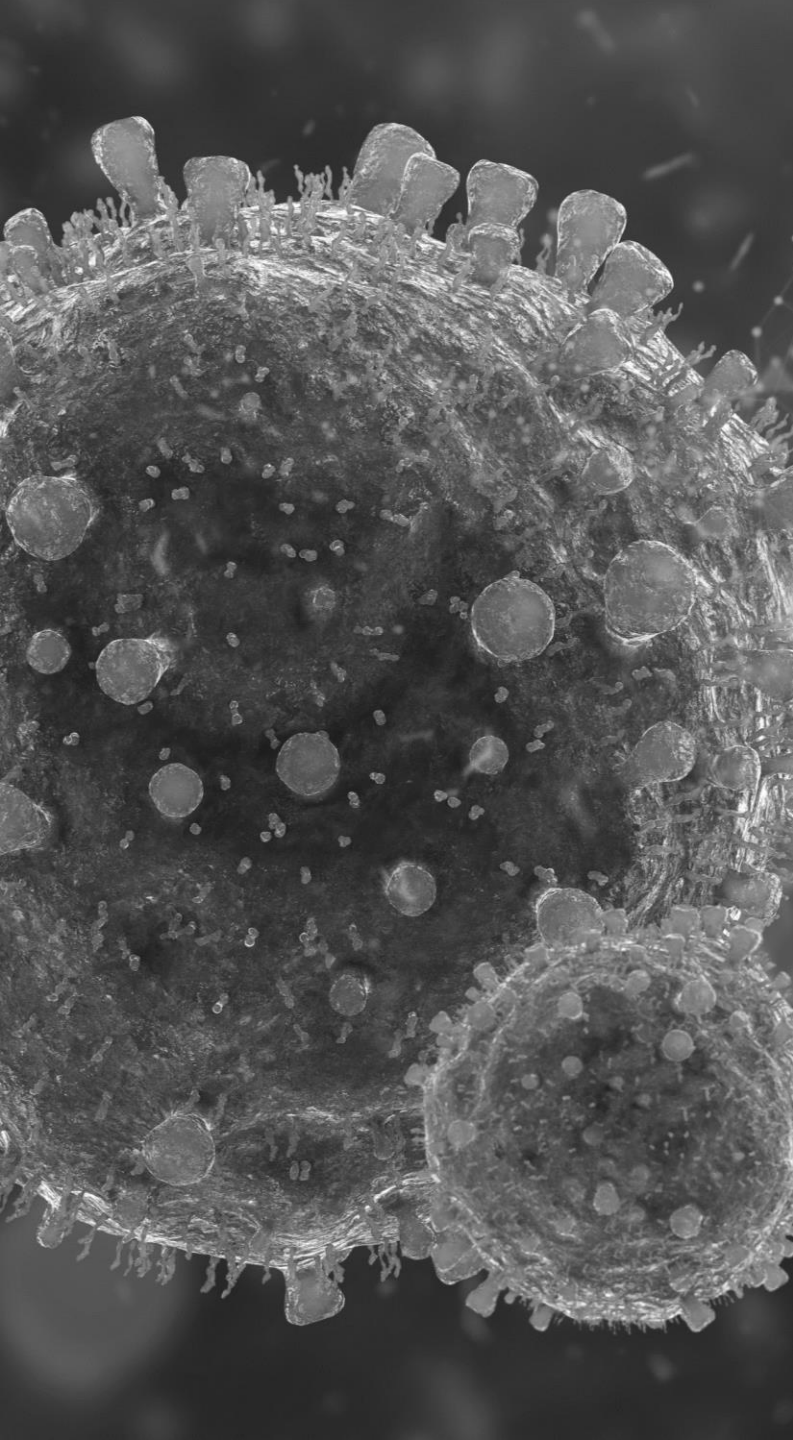
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Places and events such as transport hubs, busy streets and concerts are often subject to increased risk of petty crimes such as pickpocketing. People expect some level of contact with strangers, so people are less likely to notice these interactions.

It is recommended to avoid displaying signs of wealth, such as expensive jewellery/watches, cash, valuable objects and high-end clothes. Be aware of the situation and your immediate surroundings, while identifying any unwanted attention directed your way.

High situational awareness refers to noticing something out of place or any suspicious activity. Any crowded place has the potential to be a terrorist target and you should remain vigilant, look out for and move quickly away from anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.





## Medical issues and mass gatherings:

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Mass gatherings can result in a higher incidence of injury and illness and may be subject to a catastrophic accident or attack with large numbers of injured or dead.

One medical risk associated with mass gatherings is the spread of infectious diseases. This applies especially in events where visitors come from different nations, regions and cultures.

The type of infectious disease varies by the location and nature of the gathering. Certain events can be associated with respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases due to the large number of attendees in close proximity.

*Other considerations for mass gatherings:*

Some sporting events and concerts may have higher incidence of alcohol abuse, underage drinking, aggressive behaviour and drug-taking.

Political or cultural events may also require special arrangements such as added security measures and multilingual signposting. Political events can also spark violence.

Mass gatherings with international visitors may lead to issues for some individuals such as sickness for those not fully accustomed to the environment.

Ailments include altitude sickness, respiratory problems due to pollution or exposure, and dehydration.





### **Reasons why crowds may get out of control:**

Crowds form during social events, protests, and similar activities. In general, when a critical density has built up in the crowd, injuries can occur easily when people cannot move freely and are squeezed between others.

Be aware that any gathering can quickly get out of control, so be prepared. This may occur because:

- Fatigue (stress, frustration), lack of information, crowd organisation and time
- Sabotage
- Political grievances, economic disputes or social discord, terrorism, or foreign agitators

## How to prepare

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### *Before entering a crowd:*

- Wear shoes that won't easily slip off and are easy to move in.
- Stay hydrated.
- Pay attention and make note of all exits, always look around and maintain situational awareness.
- Keep an eye on the crowd and its "energy".
- Listen to your instincts, especially if you feel uneasy.
- If you notice an abnormal increase in the number of people entering or exiting the area, this could be the first sign that something is wrong.

If you see something that doesn't seem right, it's probably a good time to make your exit.

Have a meet-up plan (e.g., time and location) with your companions if you get lost and your phone battery dies.

Move to the side if possible, although try not to go against the crowd flow. Time your movements. Plan more than one option for getting home or out of the area in case roads are closed, transit is shut down, and options are limited.



## What to do if something happens

The main danger in hostile crowds is the risk of being crushed, although this is not to discredit the impact of psychological and physiological responses. People are known to panic when their life is in danger; however, panic alone is not a cause of death.

Common behaviour when a dangerous crowd is forming: People disregard fences or try to get out of the area in a chaotic way. Crowd turbulence occurs. People scream or shout for help. People are falling to the ground and others may be flailing their arms. People crawl over others.

Some tips on what to do when finding yourself in a hostile crowd: Do not panic. Leave the area as swiftly and as safely as possible. If in a vehicle, do not get out. Ensure that the doors are locked, the windows are rolled up, and try to leave by the safest means possible. Do not expect your mobile phone to work.

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*Some tips on what to do when finding yourself in a crowd crush:*

- Explore the space around you.
- Find a high point.
- Keep your hands up by your chest, – it gives you movement and protects your chest.
- Avoid narrow hallways and openings.
- Make use of nonverbal communication, such as hand signals, with others.
- Find a viable way out.
- Move to the side if possible, although try not to go against the crowd flow.
- Time your movements.
- If you have dropped something, leave it. Don't stop.



## 8 Female Travellers

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There are now more women travelling for business than ever before. However, women can face additional security risks while abroad.

Stay safe by adhering to local customs. Talk to trusted people and colleagues about what you should watch out for when travelling in an unfamiliar destination.

Does the country you are visiting have different attitudes towards gender than in your home country?



This information is intended for both men and women because understanding the risks can help with prevention and will better enable you to help a friend or colleague.



Dress appropriately for the destination: In some countries, the way you dress can make you a target. Part of staying safe in an unfamiliar place is dressing appropriately. So, if it is believed warranted, err on the side of caution and dress conservatively, whether that involves covering your legs, shoulders, arms or head.



Always be aware of local customs with regards to dress and appearance, so as not to offend the locals but also to ensure you don't invite unwanted attention.





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Ground transportation: Avoid hiring a taxi off the street, especially at night. Use pre-arranged transport from a reputable agency or through your hotel, local office or host company.

Intercultural awareness, legal and cultural restrictions: Understanding the local culture, beyond just common courtesy, is important for all travellers. This includes customs and unwritten rules of culture, such as gestures, hospitality, dress code, eating etiquette, and public displays of affection.

A solo travelling woman may face obstacles in some parts of the world, due to legal (e.g. in regions or countries with religious conservatism) or societal (e.g. norms, stereotypes or values) expectations. Attitudes to handshakes, bodily contact, and dress codes for women vary across cultures.

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## Harassment:

In some cultures, the perception and definition of sexual harassment can be different from your own.

Sexual harassment encompasses any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature.

Sensitivity to cultural and individual perceptions, intentions, expressions, and misunderstandings is vital.

Sexual harassment can happen everywhere. The best way to avoid that kind of unwelcome attention is to:

- Make sure you understand the modesty requirements in the countries that you visit and dress accordingly.
- Avoid making eye contact or engaging in small talk with strangers.



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*Safe meetings and leisure time:* Meet in a public place, purchase and handle your own drinks. Tell at least one person where you are and activate location sharing on your phone, just in case.

*Accommodation:* Finding safe accommodation is important for all travellers. Many females report to have encountered a negative experience and say they felt unsafe to stay in some hotels. Selecting only business-class hotels whenever possible is recommended.

Select a reputable hotel with at least the minimum safety requirements, which includes 24/7 manned reception, a well-lit entrance as well as two independent room door locks. It is recommended to choose known international hotel chains, or at least hotels with an international reputation. Comments in travel sites and guides also tend to provide helpful information to pick accommodation. Some further safety measures to look for:

- Room door security peepholes
- Room number allocation is discreet at reception



## General advice for all travellers:

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- Trust your instincts.
- Use a door jammer if a secondary lock is not available.
- Have your destination's customs in mind when dressing.
- Don't get intoxicated.
- Don't tell people where you're staying.
- If you feel uncomfortable or nervous in a situation, then leave.
- Carry some form of device for attracting attention in an emergency situation, such as a whistle.
- Ensure your mobile device has pre-programed local emergency numbers added before you travel.

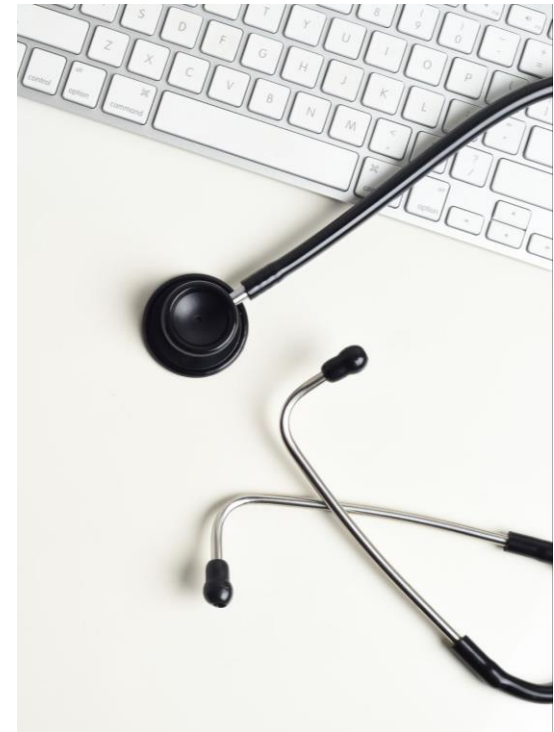


**Health:** For the most part, advice for staying healthy applies to men and women alike, but there are a few health issues women travellers should be particularly aware of.

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**Pregnancy:** If the pregnancy has no complications, then someone who is pregnant can usually travel safely as long as the right precautions are taken.

- ✓ Consult with your doctor to ensure you are cleared to travel while pregnant. Wherever you go, find out what healthcare facilities are at your destination in case you need urgent medical attention.
- ✓ Bring maternity medical records (sometimes called handheld notes).
- ✓ Ensure that your travel insurance covers any eventuality, such as pregnancy-related medical care during labour, premature birth, or date change for return tickets.
- ✓ Vaccines that use live bacteria or virus aren't recommended during pregnancy due to risk of harming the foetus. There are some routinely recommended non-live (inactivated) vaccines to use during a pregnancy. Some antimalaria tablets aren't safe to take during a pregnancy so ask a medical doctor for advice. If flying, check with the airline regarding their pregnancy policy.



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**Sexual violence:** To avoid misunderstandings, read up on your destination's social and cultural codes. Establish personal boundaries and explaining a little about your home country's habits can also help repel unwanted advances. Remember that alcohol affects your behaviour and alters your perceptions and those of other peoples.

Ways to limit potential risks:

- Socialise in larger groups of people you trust.
- Don't leave social events with someone you have just met or do not feel comfortable with.
- Never leave your drink unattended, watch your drink being prepared and only accept sealed bottles and cans.
- If you start to feel strange or more intoxicated than you should be, get help immediately.
- If driving alone, never stop for strangers.
- If staying at a hotel, meet colleagues in common areas, never in your hotel room.





The World Health Organization defined sexual violence as: "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work".

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Sexual violence can happen to anyone, anytime, and any place regardless of age, gender, or behaviour, but most cases involve women and girls.

**Sexual harassment:** An acute stress response (fight-flight-or-freeze response) is likely if you notice something is amiss. This is completely normal.

Try to move away from the situation quickly and safely. If it is crowded and moving away is not possible, try to shift your body to displace their movements or to get out of the line of sight. Try to catch someone's attention, they might see what's happening and can support you.

## What to do if something happens

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**Sexual violence:** A person facing sexual violence may take several actions during an assault. Try to evaluate the situation, for example whether or not a weapon is involved, your own capabilities and the perceived chance of defending yourself, before acting. You may choose one or a combination of the following options:

- *Active resistance:* Shout for help, run away, or fight back. Fighting back is an option, however there are risks involved. If you fail to stop the attacker, you may be subjected to greater bodily harm.
- *Passive resistance:* Talk to the attacker. By talking, you force the assailant into acknowledging you as a person. However, if talking increases the attacker's level of anger, stay quiet. You can say that you are pregnant, menstruating, or have a communicable or sexual disease. Act as though you are suffering from sickness, for example mimic the action of vomiting.
- *Submit:* It must be recognized that submission is not permission. If sexual violence can't be prevented by taking the steps above, the objective is to survive.





*After an attack:*

Sexual violence is a crime, no matter who commits it or where it happens. The trauma caused by such an event may mean you need time to think about what has happened to you.

However, seek medical assistance as soon as possible and have someone accompany you if possible.

- Discuss if you may have been exposed to HIV, potential pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is efficient within 72 hours from exposure to HIV. The sooner a forensic medical examination takes place, the better.
- Try not to wash or change your clothes immediately after a sexual assault to preserve critical evidence of the assault.
- Think about whom you want to inform.



## 9 LGBTQ Travellers

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Members of the LGBTQ community may face particular issues when traveling that must be taken into consideration.

In some parts of the world, acceptance for people identifying as LGBTQ may not be what travellers are used to in their home country.

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There may be risks associated with travel ranging from discrimination to targeted violence. In certain countries it is considered illegal to engage in consensual same-sex sexual acts. Most of these countries are located in the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, and parts of Asia and Oceania.

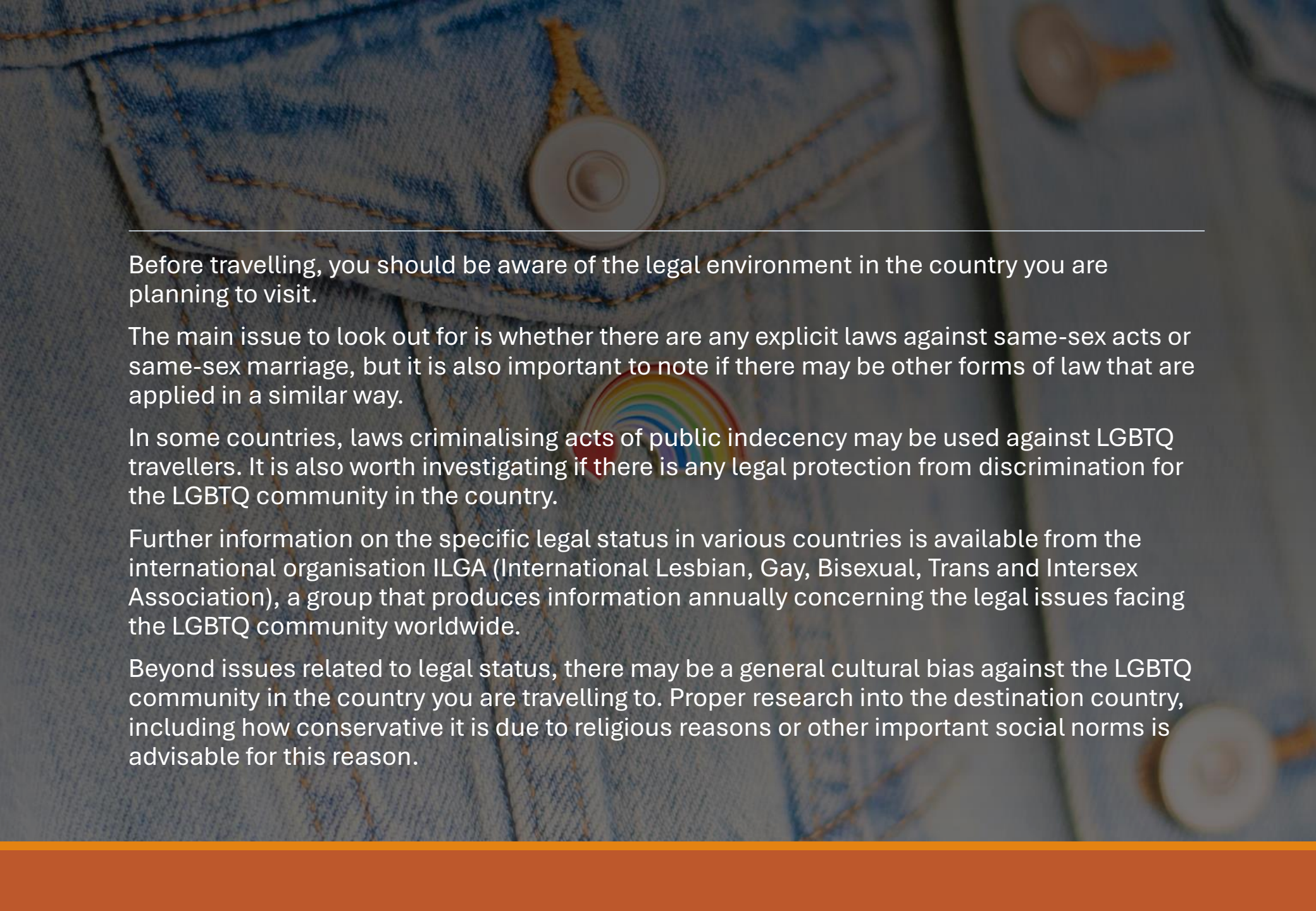
The risk of discriminatory practices while dealing with authorities or public services can also be higher for LGBTQ travellers in many parts of the world, and they are more likely to face issues in regular interactions with locals in a destination country.

According to a 2016 poll, by the British tour operator Virgin Holidays, one in three (33%) of the 1,000 LGBTQ travellers that took part in the survey stated that in their experience they had been treated differently due to their sexuality when on holiday. A HR Magazine study found that lesbian and gay expatriates give due consideration to living and working in dangerous locations by predetermining the extent to which they can safely express their sexual orientation.

Countries where sexual relations between men are illegal:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Botswana, Brunei, Darussalam, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Cook Islands (associates to New Zealand), Dominica, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Gaza(in the Occupied Palestinian Territory), Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Male, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Sudan, South Sumatra and Aceh Provinces (Indonesia), Sri Lanka, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Tanzania, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.



The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred image of a light blue denim jacket. A large, round, light-colored button is visible in the upper center. Below it, a small, colorful rainbow pin is attached to the fabric. The text is overlaid on this background.

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Before travelling, you should be aware of the legal environment in the country you are planning to visit.

The main issue to look out for is whether there are any explicit laws against same-sex acts or same-sex marriage, but it is also important to note if there may be other forms of law that are applied in a similar way.

In some countries, laws criminalising acts of public indecency may be used against LGBTQ travellers. It is also worth investigating if there is any legal protection from discrimination for the LGBTQ community in the country.

Further information on the specific legal status in various countries is available from the international organisation ILGA (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association), a group that produces information annually concerning the legal issues facing the LGBTQ community worldwide.

Beyond issues related to legal status, there may be a general cultural bias against the LGBTQ community in the country you are travelling to. Proper research into the destination country, including how conservative it is due to religious reasons or other important social norms is advisable for this reason.



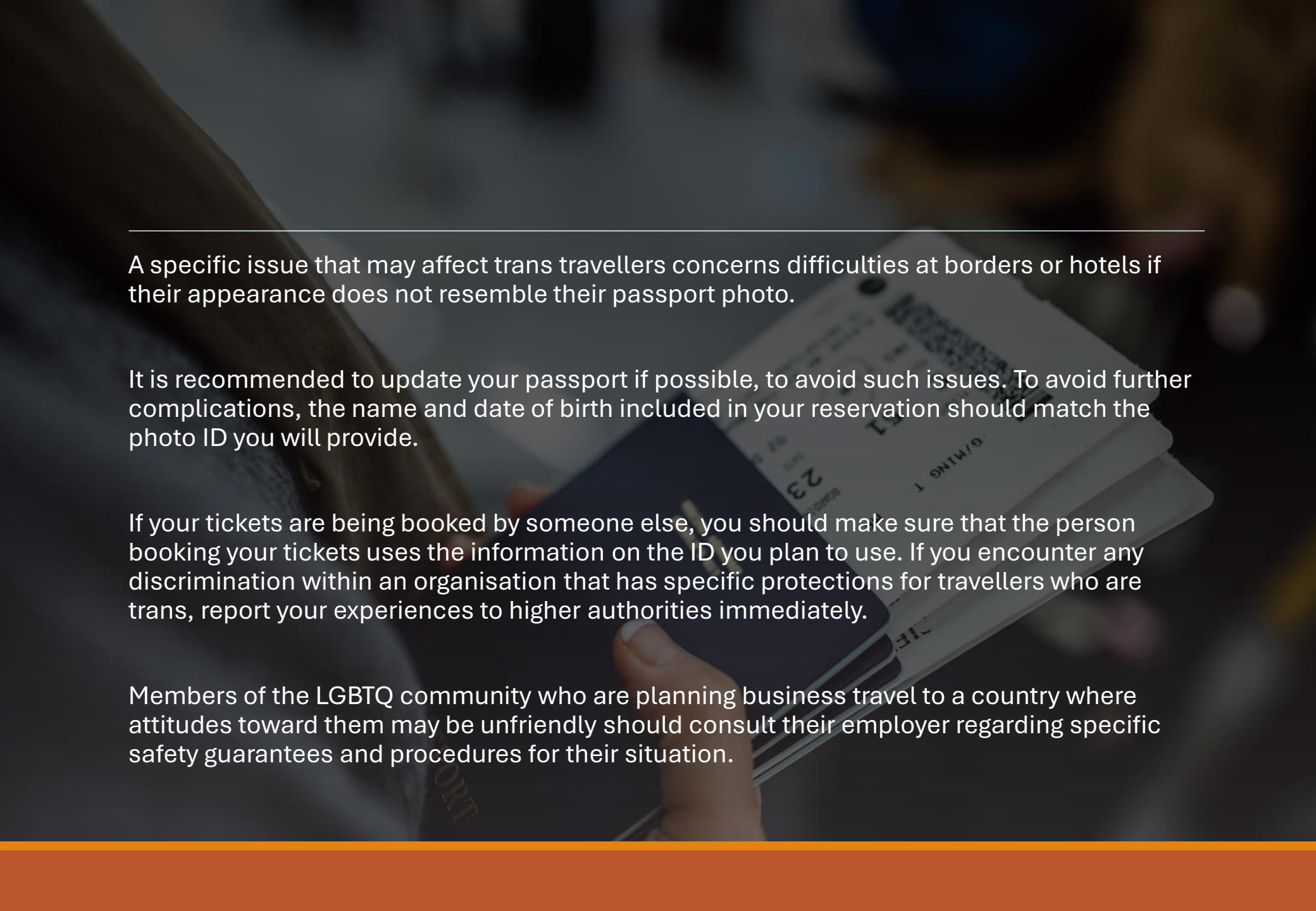


As a general rule, negative cultural attitudes toward the LGBTQ community are more prevalent in cultures signified by religious conservatism, although they may originate in other ideological and cultural structures as well.

To understand the situation in the destination country, it is a good idea to consult a variety of sources. Useful online sources include:

- State departments
- the CIA World Factbook
- International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA).

After doing your research on the country, it is also worth looking for local groups and LGBTQ organisations that may provide contacts and useful advice.

A hand is holding a dark blue passport and a white boarding pass. The boarding pass has some text and a barcode. The background is a blurred image of people, suggesting an airport or travel setting.

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A specific issue that may affect trans travellers concerns difficulties at borders or hotels if their appearance does not resemble their passport photo.

It is recommended to update your passport if possible, to avoid such issues. To avoid further complications, the name and date of birth included in your reservation should match the photo ID you will provide.

If your tickets are being booked by someone else, you should make sure that the person booking your tickets uses the information on the ID you plan to use. If you encounter any discrimination within an organisation that has specific protections for travellers who are trans, report your experiences to higher authorities immediately.

Members of the LGBTQ community who are planning business travel to a country where attitudes toward them may be unfriendly should consult their employer regarding specific safety guarantees and procedures for their situation.

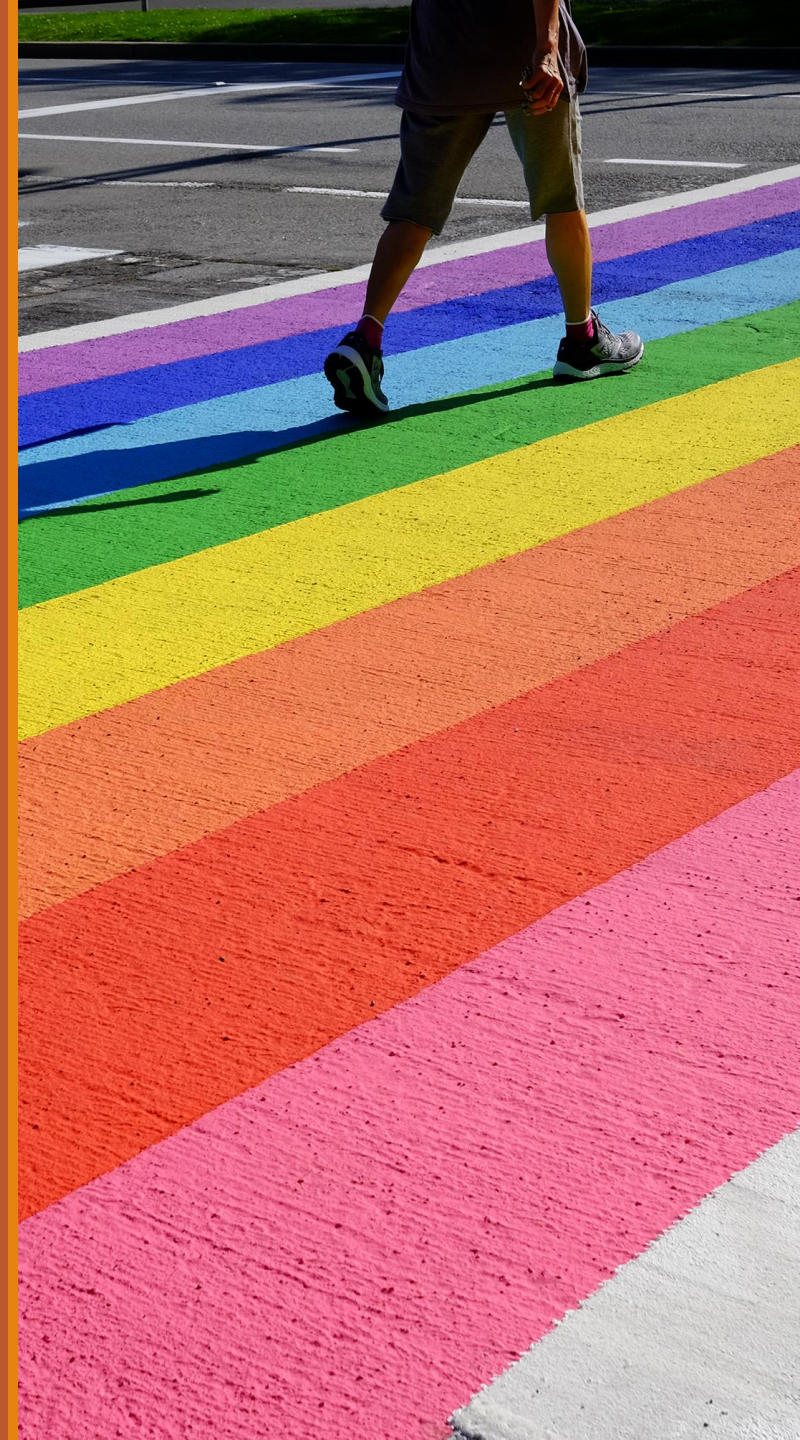


LGBTQ travellers should be aware of the increased potential for hate crimes in certain countries. During your trip it is recommended to always assess the local environment and consider the risks posed by being open about your sexual orientation. The attitudes you encounter can vary significantly within a country, especially between urban and rural settings.

*As previously mentioned, researching the destination is important and there are many useful internet resources to be found. This best practice should be applied both before and, if possible, during travel.*

In some countries websites that are considered to be pro-LGBTQ may be blocked by authorities. Using a VPN service (Virtual Private Network) can help you overcome such blocks and access information without restrictions. It also provides an extra layer of safety as it helps to keep your information private in areas where internet usage is monitored by the government.

Travellers should be aware that there may be risks associated with revealing your sexual orientation in a nontolerant environment. Whether in a private or business setting it is worth considering the situation and the company before deciding to disclose personal details.







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If you are noticing signs of tension and people directing unwarranted attention to you and/or your partner, it is recommended to leave the area immediately.

If you sense you may be being followed, try to find a place where there are other people around.

If you encounter harassment, you should also distance yourself from the situation as fast as possible.

Taking a confrontational approach and arguing with the person harassing you may lead to rapid escalation and the potential of violence.

In some countries where same-sex relations are outlawed, Police have been known to use gay dating services or meeting places to entrap and prosecute individuals. Similar methods can also be used by potential perpetrators of violent hate-crimes.

Avoid meeting people you do not know and cannot trust in secluded places, particularly at night.



# <sup>10</sup> Terrorism & Mass Casualty Attack

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Terrorism has been a serious threat to society for a long time.

Terrorist attacks are often directed against civilians to generate the greatest amount of publicity.

They aim to create a lot of suffering among those directly affected, their relatives, and society.



History's largest terrorist act was on 11 September 2001. Two planes were flown into the Twin Towers in New York, one crashed into the Pentagon, and another crashed into the Pennsylvania countryside after passengers fought for control of the aircraft to prevent an attack on the US Capitol.

At the World Trade Centre site 2,753 people were killed; 184 at the Pentagon; and 40 in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

A total of 2,977 people were killed.



Other terrorist acts that demanded many human lives are the attacks in Paris in November 2015 and in Brussels in March 2016, but most deaths occur in smaller attacks worldwide.

The definition of the crime of terrorism is on the negotiating table at the United Nations General Assembly's and reads as follows:

1. Any person commits an offence within the meaning of this Convention if that person, by any means, unlawfully and intentionally, causes:
  - a. Death or serious bodily injury to any person; or
  - b. Serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a State or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or
  - c. Damage to property, places, facilities, or systems referred to in paragraph 1 (b) of this article, resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a Government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act."

## The situation today

Frequency of major attacks has diminished in the last two years. This is mainly correlated to major setbacks for the Islamic State, as it may have lost some prestige as an influencer for those leaning toward a jihadist attitude and mindset. However, it remains the foremost firebrand of the global jihadist movement. Their ability to coordinate large-scale attacks are limited, although small-scale incidents such as vehicular, or knife attacks have continued to occur at a regular pace.

Radicalisation remains an increasing challenge in many countries across the globe, including both mainly Muslim countries and in Europe. Many former fighters for the Islamic State have returned to European countries and elsewhere. Increased political polarisation may lead to increase in activity of far right/far left extremist groups.





## Mass casualty attack:

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Research shows that violent crimes and mass murders have increased over the past several years.

The issue is receiving attention particularly following several large-scale incidents in the United States leading to very high number of casualties, such as the Las Vegas concert shooting (2017), the attack on the Pulse nightclub in Orlando (2016) and the Virginia Tech shooting (2007).

In 2017 alone, the United States had 346 mass shootings.

There is no unified and reliable profile, but generally mass shooters are young to middle-aged males who are often socially isolated and perceive themselves to be alienated from family or society.

They may also perceive themselves to be persecuted or bullied- a personal setback or loss can act as a trigger factor for high-risk individuals.

Most mass shooters do not have a significant prior criminal history.

## How to prepare

When travelling in countries or regions where there may be an increased risk of attacks, it is useful to consider the vulnerability of your surroundings.

As a general rule, the higher the vulnerability is for a specific target, the higher the risk is that an attack will succeed in generating serious damage and casualties. Therefore, it also leads to an increased risk that the specific target will be selected for attack.

*For example:* Does the hotel you plan to stay at have outer gates and walls that could mitigate the potential damage from a car bombing? How long would it take for security forces to respond depending on the distance to a police station?

It is also recommended to reconsider if you or your company may be particularly targeted in your working environment due to geopolitical factors.

You're familiar with your workplace and surrounding area, so you're ideally placed to spot when something is amiss. It is vital to remain vigilant, trust your instincts and report possible terrorist activity to the police. Look for anything that seems out of the ordinary, such as:

- People in stationary vehicles watching a building or structure.
- Vehicles moving slowly near public buildings, structures or bridges, or parked in suspicious circumstances.
- People using recording equipment, including camera phones, or seen making notes or sketches of security details.
- Someone suspicious paying close attention to specific entry and exit points, stairwells, hallways or fire escapes.
- People loitering at or near premises for long periods and watching staff, visitors and deliveries for no apparent reason.
- People asking detailed or unusual questions about buildings and business operations, facilities (such as room layouts), security or parking for no apparent reason.
- Challenge those in offices and 'off limits' areas, plant rooms and similar – report matters immediately to your security manager or emergency services.



## What to do if something happens

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- **Escape (if you can):** Locate the threat and move away from it, if possible. Alert others and prevent them from entering the danger area. You and other members of the public are a target.
- **Find cover (hide, if escape is not possible):** If you can't leave the location, find a place you deem to be safe and which provides protection. Keep away from doors and windows. Lock yourself in and barricade the entrance.
- **Pay attention** to what you see and hear. Silence your phone and don't make any unnecessary calls to people who may be present in the danger zone.
- **Call the Emergency Services:** It is the police's job to disrupt an ongoing attack.
  - Follow the instructions of the police.
  - When the police arrive on the scene, make sure you can't be mistaken for a suspect.
  - Don't hold anything in your hands that could be seen as a weapon.
- Be prepared for the possibility of another attack.



# 11 Carjacking





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Carjacking is a form of robbery where a criminal forcibly removes a motorist from their car and steals it. Perpetrators of carjacking are often wielding firearms.

In some parts of the world this form of crime is a pervasive problem, while largely unheard of elsewhere. Countries where the risk is considered higher include South Africa, Brazil, Russia, and the United States (mainly Albuquerque, Anchorage, and Detroit).

There are several tactics often employed by carjackers. One method is to approach target vehicles from the side of the road as they are stopped at red lights.

Another approach is to crash into the rear of a target vehicle. The driver of the target vehicle is then attacked after getting out of the car in order to inspect the damage and exchange insurance information.

Carjackers may also stage mock accidents or roadside breakdowns in order to lure unsuspecting 'Good Samaritan' drivers.

Consider if your vehicle may make you a target for carjackers.

As a general rule, well-known brands of older cars are most at risk. Any car that looks vulnerable and easy to hijack and sell for parts is a target.

Another scenario to be aware of is the specific targeting of vehicles used by NGOs in developing countries. Many NGOs use modern land cruiser type cars that are highly sought after.

Make sure that your insurance covers carjacking. If you are travelling to a major city, seek information on local high-crime districts. It is recommended to avoid these areas due to the risk of various crimes, including but not limited to carjacking.

It is also worth noting that particular methods of carjacking may be more prevalent depending on location.

For example, in some cities it may be more common that incidents occur at traffic lights, while the rear-crash tactic may be more prominent in others.







## What to do if something happens

Check for intruders before entering your car, and lock your doors and windows as soon as you get in. Stay alert and cautious of anyone following you. If another motorist crashes into the rear of your car or tries to signal to you that there is something wrong with your car, you should exercise caution since these tactics are known to be used by carjackers.

If you need to stop, it is best to do so at a service/petrol station or some other place where there are other people around. Also try to get a good look at who is in the car that hit you.

Exercise caution if someone tries to signal from the side of the road. Carjackers sometimes stage car breakdowns or accidents in order to lure motorists.

If a carjacker is approaching your vehicle with a visible weapon, you should not resist. Stay calm and hand over your vehicle. The main goal of the criminal is to take control of the car, not to cause bodily harm. However, the attacker may be nervous and react accordingly.

Take note of the perpetrators description and notify police as soon as possible. Stolen cars are often used in other crimes, so it is important to notify police with a detailed description of your car and the criminal.



## Kidnapping:

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The threat of kidnapping is a problem that can affect business travellers. The risk is more evident in countries that are characterised by political instability and weak public institutions, including law enforcement.

Kidnapping can also be the result of highly organised operations by criminal gangs or extremist groups such as Al Qaeda or Abu Sayyaf. Therefore, the risk is usually exacerbated in areas where such groups have a strong presence.

In recent years so called 'express kidnappings' have become increasingly common in some countries, particularly in parts of South America. This entails criminals abducting a victim and then driving them to several ATM machines and forcing them to withdraw cash.

Criminals have been known to cooperate with illegal taxis to find victims.

Another phenomenon which has emerged in recent years is referred to as 'virtual kidnappings'.

Generally, it involves criminals calling people and falsely claiming that a relative has been kidnapped. Often, criminals monitor social media to locate people who are travelling and attempt to extort money from their family.

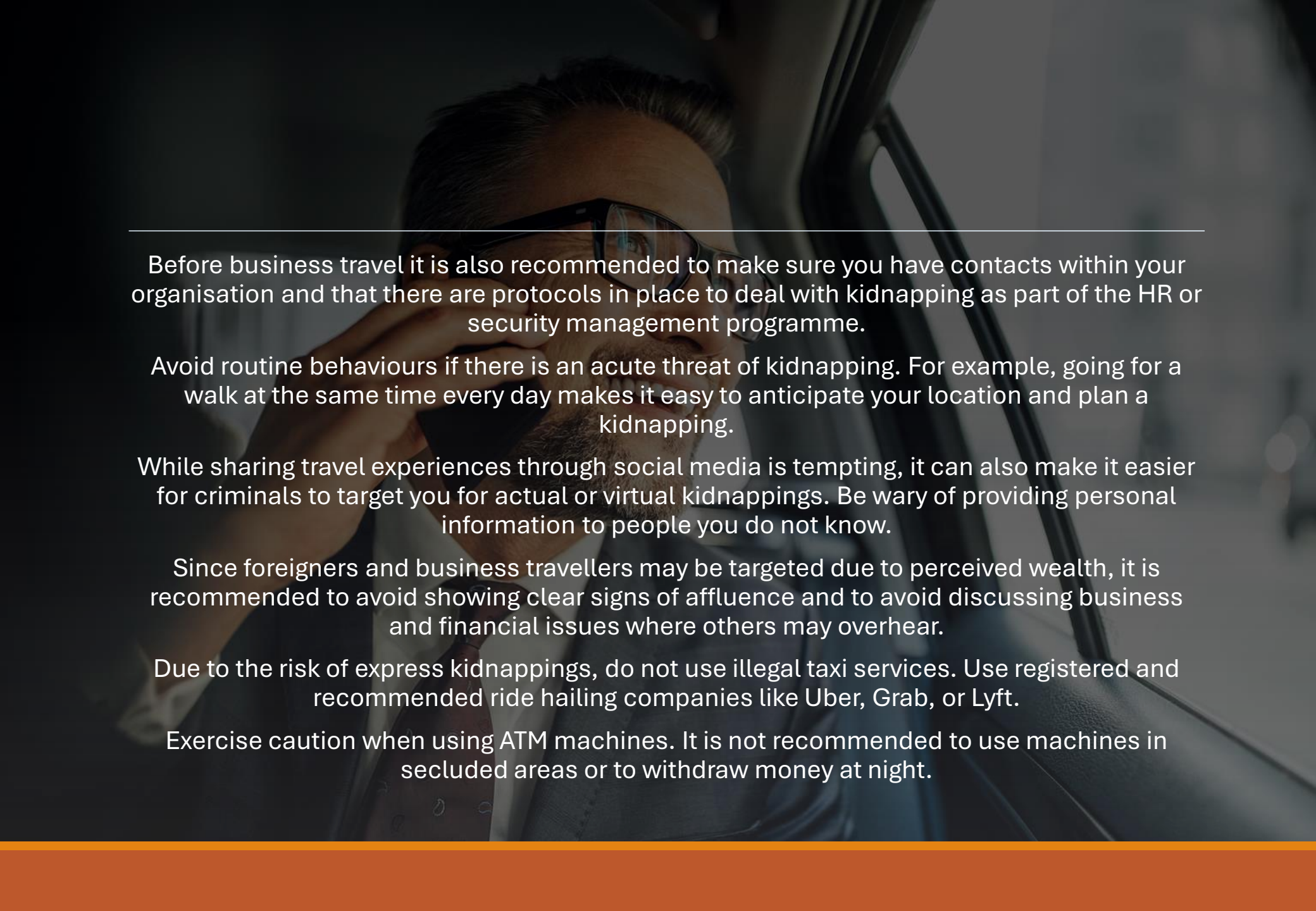


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Business travellers are particularly attractive targets for kidnappers in many countries, due to their perceived wealth. The companies they represent may also make them a target.

Individuals working for NGOs and aid groups may also be specifically targeted when operating in unstable environments. Search for information on current affairs in the country using available resources and be aware that certain regions within a country may be hotspots for kidnapping activity.

It is recommended to notify your family concerning your travel plans and inform them about any companions you may be travelling with.



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Before business travel it is also recommended to make sure you have contacts within your organisation and that there are protocols in place to deal with kidnapping as part of the HR or security management programme.

Avoid routine behaviours if there is an acute threat of kidnapping. For example, going for a walk at the same time every day makes it easy to anticipate your location and plan a kidnapping.

While sharing travel experiences through social media is tempting, it can also make it easier for criminals to target you for actual or virtual kidnappings. Be wary of providing personal information to people you do not know.

Since foreigners and business travellers may be targeted due to perceived wealth, it is recommended to avoid showing clear signs of affluence and to avoid discussing business and financial issues where others may overhear.

Due to the risk of express kidnappings, do not use illegal taxi services. Use registered and recommended ride hailing companies like Uber, Grab, or Lyft.

Exercise caution when using ATM machines. It is not recommended to use machines in secluded areas or to withdraw money at night.



## Kidnapping - Hostage taking:

Hostages are taken for different reasons. There are four phases of abducting a hostage.

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- **Abduction:** Do not fight back or attempt to aggravate hostage takers. Keep calm and obey orders. Take a pause and try to relax. Accept the current situation. Fear of death or injury is a normal reaction to this situation. Do not speak unless spoken to and avoid any heroics. This could trigger a violent reaction from the captors. If you speak the local language, do so. Do not make sudden moves; ask first. Try not to give up your I.D. or clothes.
- **Transport:** Be patient and try to rest. Request medication or aid you might need. Observe, without causing suspicion, where you are being taken.
- **Confinement:** Anticipate isolation and possible disorientation efforts (e.g., loud music, lack of sleep) by your captors. Try to maintain a sense of the time. Exercise daily. Eat and drink even if you are not hungry. It is important to maintain strength. Keep a low profile. Do whatever you can to maintain a positive frame of mind. Try to remain calm by focusing your mind on pleasant memories, movie or book plots.
- **Release or rescue:** A resolution may occur because of a negotiated release or by way of police or military rescue. During any rescue by force, immediately drop to the floor or ground and take cover. Keep your hands on your head and do not stand up. Do not move from the ground. Await instructions from your rescuers.

More than 50% of victims are taken from vehicles. The first 45 minutes of a hostage situation are the most dangerous. Be perceptive and follow any instruction from your captors. The captors are in a highly elevated emotional state, so there is an increased risk of violent response to any provocation.



# 12 High Risk Locations

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When travelling to higher and extreme risk locations there is a greater need for preparation.

War zones or former war zones, often called Hostile Environments, are distinctly dangerous.





A hostile environment could shortly be defined as:

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An area that is extremely volatile, with widespread conflict, localised insurgencies, criminal gangs, or ongoing violent civil unrest that are affecting businesses, visitors and the local population. Lack of health facilities and/or environmental factors limit movement or access in an area.

Foreign governments ability to provide consular assistance in high-risk areas are often severely limited, due to the lack of a functioning local government or authorities, or direct armed conflict. If a crisis occurs in a high-risk area, be ready to rely on local resources to resolve matters.

Landmines and unexploded ordnance: Unexploded ordnance, or UXO, are explosive weapons (bombs, shells, grenades, landmines, etc.) that failed to detonate as designed but remain volatile and can kill if touched or moved.





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Over 70 states are affected by landmines and unexploded ordnance remnants. In 2016, at least 8600 people were killed or injured by landmines or unexploded ordnance.

Approximately 80% of casualties are civilian.

In high-risk destinations, you may be confronted with the threat of landmines or unexploded ordnance. Anti-personnel mines and anti-vehicle mines can be used in static mine fields along national borders or in defence of strategic positions.



Take steps including:

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- Staying up to date with travel and safety information for the country or area that you are travelling to or residing in is highly important.
- Draft a will and a power of attorney.
- Discuss a plan with loved ones for guardianship of minor children, pets, distribution of property, non-liquid assets, funeral arrangements, etc.
- Establish a Proof of Life (PoL) protocol with loved ones, to be used if taken hostage, to confirm that a captive is alive and enables verification of captors' claims.
- Designate someone who can get access to your important documents, login information and points of contact if you are unavailable.
- Establish a personal security plan in coordination with employer, organiser or security organisation.




A Proof of Life is a document that contains confidential information that can be used to confirm whether a person is still alive in case of kidnapping, abduction or detention.

It can also be used to detail how that person would like their family members to be informed and / or if they have any special requirements, should something happen to them.

The person entrusted with this document will be responsible for communicating information with a lot of different people in the event that you're being held against your will. Giving them this information before you go on assignment will help them respond quickly and confidently, should something happen, and also help those who are trying to get you to safety.





Develop a communication plan and protocol with family and/or your employer or host organization so that they can monitor your safety and location. Leave your expensive luggage and possessions behind. Delete sensitive files, photos, and comments etc. from your phone and computer that could be considered controversial or provocative by local groups. Identify local resources in case of an emergency. Leave DNA samples with your medical provider.

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Remember to plan all activities to avoid mined areas.

Never attempt to handle or move landmines or UXO. Never go into areas marked by mine warning signs, wires, or tapes. Where and what to look for:

- o In general, places where fighting is ongoing or has taken place.
- o Trip wires.
- o Signs of recent road repair.
- o Signs of markers on trees, stakes or posts.
- o Dead animals and/or damaged vehicles.
- o Areas civilians avoid. Speak with locals why a track, path or area is unused.

*Mines, including improvised mines, come in many shapes, sizes and colours.*

Anti-vehicle mines are usually round or square and approximately the size of a larger frying pan (0,3 m).

Anti-personnel mines are smaller, and some have thin trip-wires connected on the top. Mines are usually green, grey, or brown in colour.

UXO are explosive weapons that have been primed or armed yet remained unexploded and possible very dangerous. They are predominantly in metal or painted in traditional military colours.

Improvised mines are types of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), which are homemade explosive weapons that are designed to cause death or injury. They are often found in conflicts involving insurgents or non-regular forces and be either of time bomb or booby trap design.

IEDs can take any shape or form.



A person wearing a light-colored, button-down shirt is holding a rolled-up document or book. The person's hands are visible, and they are wearing a ring on their left hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

## Training courses:

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Anyone planning a visit to a country that could be considered a hostile environment should have some professional training.

A course will normally cover all the issues covered here; increasing the understanding of proactive security and teaches the basic field measures to be undertaken before, during and after a trip to a hostile environment, but in far better detail and usually with practical exercises.

Examples could range from direct threats of violence to more subtle topics such as fire safety or radio communication. An internet search for “Hostile environment course” should provide you with the address of a local company.





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## What to do if something happens

***Weapons firing:*** Although you should always be aware of possible areas of danger, there may be times when you will find yourself under fire. Remember as an unarmed civilian that anything you do can get you shot, including nothing.

Some practical advice based on your situation:

- On foot with no cover nearby: Drop down and crawl to the nearest cover if available.
- On foot with cover nearby: Drop down and crawl to cover or hide behind something. Hedges, trees, and structures provide concealment, but may not provide protection.
- In a vehicle: Accelerate and drive through if possible. If forced to take cover behind a vehicle, put the engine block between yourself and the shooter. Alternatively, if there is better cover nearby, crawl to a ditch or cover.

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### ***What to do in a mined area:***

- ❑ On foot or in a vehicle, stop movement immediately after realising that you may be in danger.
- ❑ Call out warning to people around you and contact security.
- ❑ Do not move or drive from your position. Wait for qualified help to come and assist you.
- ❑ Reversing out is a last resort. But if you must leave the area, retrace your steps out.
  - ❑ Do not rush! It is better to spend several days in a minefield than to be maimed or killed.
  - ❑ Probe the ground very carefully, in many very small steps, with your hands, feet, knife or any other pointy object.
  - ❑ Avoid probing straight down, as personnel mines are usually activated by top-down pressure. Probe at an angle. Move carefully forward on your belly.



## Resources available

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- [Foreign Travel Advice](#)
- [Travel Aware Campaign](#)
- [World Travel Guide](#)
- [Travel Advisories](#)
- [Fit For Travel](#)
- [GHIC and EHIC](#)
- [LGBTQ+ Travel Association](#)
- [Mental Health Support NHS](#)
- Company policies and procedures
- HR Department or Team Leader