

Traveling While Abroad:

Good Ideas/Deals/Tricks/Traps

- When lost, ask directions only from authorized individuals, preferably policemen, firemen, hotel clerks, bank employees, etc.
- Beware of strangers who approach you, offering bargains or to be your guide. These are often scams.
- Be careful of pickpockets. Keep your personal belongings safely out of reach in a hidden pack which should always be with you. Even backpacks aren't always safe!
- Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand. **Know what the emergency contact number is in the country where you are (this is similar to 911 and varies by country).**
- Learn a few phrases in the local language so you can signal your need for help, the police, or a doctor.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back. Give up your valuables. Your money and passport can be replaced.
- When using ATM machines, use the same caution you would in the U.S.

Excursion Planning

Try as much as possible to avoid short cuts, narrow alleys or dark streets. Never travel alone at night, and limit night travel even in groups of two or more. **Use the buddy system, even during the day.** Be aware that in public places, such as crowded subways, tourist sites, market places, festivals, or public demonstrations, tourists are easily victimized. When making your travel plans, avoid sharing them with unknown or suspicious persons. Make sure you do share your plans with someone in your group if you are leaving on a weekend trip (and leave a contact number with the program director, home stay family, roommate, and family).

Packing

Students often have the tendency to pack more clothes than needed. As a rule, you should lay all the clothing you think you need, and then put half back in your closet. Keep in mind this short list of some suggested items for travel:

- A travel alarm clock or watch
- Two pair of shoes, one for walking and one for dressier occasions
- Pair of jeans to wear with several shirts and sweaters
- "Cathedral" dress for ladies – modest length skirt and shoulder covering blouse or scarf
- Casual, comfortable clothes
- Bathrobe
- Bathing suit
- Batteries, Calculator
- Books to read during spare time
- Camera and film/storage cards
- Family photos
- Address book or list/email addresses

Check with your airline for weight restrictions – going over can be costly. Most allow two checked bags; however, in Europe and other areas of the world internal flights may restrict you to one "free" checked bag. Keep in mind that you may have to carry your own luggage and pack light.

What to leave at home

- Don't wear clothing with U.S. flag emblems on them
- Expensive or heirloom jewelry
- Bulky clothing, new shoes, high heels (they will get stuck in cobblestones if touring around Europe)
- Checkbook, membership cards, credit cards you will not be using abroad.
- Expensive electronics that you do not want to lose.