

# Advice for women travelling abroad

If you're a woman travelling abroad, you should respect local dress codes and customs and avoid isolated areas, including beaches, when alone at any time of the day.



Travelling can be a great experience. But for women, travelling alone or with female friends can bring additional risks and challenges. Read up on general travel advice for information on the local culture and customs for the countries you are travelling to.

## Stay safe in your accommodation

- use your first initial and no title ('Miss', 'Ms' or 'Mrs') when checking in
- never leave your key where someone can note your room number
- don't leave your window open, especially if your room is on the ground floor or has a balcony
- lock your room door when you are inside the room
- if the door has a spy-hole or chain, use these before opening the door to unexpected visitors

## When you're out and about

- be respectful of local dress codes and cover up as appropriate
- in some countries, it helps to wear a ring on your wedding finger to avoid unwanted attention

- be aware that what might be taken for harmless flirting in the UK might be interpreted differently in some countries
- avoid walking alone in deserted areas, such as the beach, at night
- don't tell strangers where you are staying or details about your travel plans
- plan your daily itinerary: know where you're going and how to get back
- ask your hotel or hostel to recommend a taxi firm
- store the number and address of your accommodation on your phone in case you get lost

If you ever feel uncomfortable or in danger, don't be afraid to draw attention to yourself by shouting and making a fuss.

In English-speaking countries, you may receive more attention if you shout 'fire!' rather than 'help!'

## **Drug-assisted rape or 'date rape'**

Drugs are increasingly being used in rape. Once someone has added drugs to your drink, you won't normally be able to detect them. Rape drugs can also work in non-alcoholic drinks, such as coffee and tea. They are normally colourless and tasteless and can make you virtually unconscious and defenceless.

- drink responsibly: alcohol is the most frequently used drug in drug-assisted rape
- don't leave drinks unattended and don't accept drinks from strangers
- if you begin to feel strange, sick or drunk after only a couple of drinks tell a trusted friend. They should take you to a safe place, such as your hotel room
- if you're alone, phone the local police, a hospital or the your nearest embassy or consulate.