

GOING ON HOLIDAY IS EXCITING!

New surroundings, experiences and cuisine.

While relaxing and letting your guard down is all part of the holiday experience, you may encounter difficulties that could affect your enjoyment. This leaflet gives you some useful pointers to help you enjoy your holiday and avoid some possible pitfalls. Please read the information and ensure all the members in your party are also aware.



HAVE A GREAT HOLIDAY!

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) Travel Advice

- Read the FCO travel advice for the country that you are visiting. It provides essential information including entry requirements, health advice, safety and security, local laws and customs and much more.

Travel Insurance

- Never travel without insurance.
- Make sure you have valid travel insurance with sufficient cover for your holiday and check any winter sports activities are covered before participating.
- Take a copy of your policy and the emergency assistance contact number with you.
- Remember the free European Health Insurance card (EHIC) only entitles you to basic state medical care in participating countries, and it does not cover you for repatriation.

YOUR JOURNEY

Plan and pack for a safe journey

- Leave your travel details with your next of kin or an emergency contact.
- Pack according to the climate and follow the luggage policy of your transport provider.
- Carry a supply of medication in your hand luggage.
- Check if there are restrictions on medication you intend to carry.
- If travelling with children, carry baby formula, nappies etc. and items such as books or a game to keep children occupied.
- Keep a copy of your ID pages of your passport somewhere safe throughout your holiday.
- Allow sufficient time to get to the airport/port/station.

ACCOMMODATION

When you arrive

- Check out the accommodation facilities and the safety features.
- If you notice any defects or hazards at your accommodation, report them to reception and your travel provider, representative or their local agent.
- Familiarise yourself with the escape routes and locate the fire exit nearest to your room.
- Read the instruction notice displayed in your room.

Be aware and safe

- Never leave children unsupervised.
- Take extra care in bright sunlight as it may not be obvious whether the windows or patio door are open or closed.
- Surfaces such as tiles or marble floors can be very slippery.



ACCOMMODATION continued

- If you're self-catering, check how the cooking appliances work and ensure they are switched off when you leave your apartment or go to bed.
- If smoking is permitted, ensure that all smoking materials are safely extinguished and never smoke in bed.
- If your property has an open fire, use with care and use the fireguard. Do not dry clothes by placing them near an open fire.
- Keep your key by your bed when sleeping or leave the key in the inside of the door whilst locked.
- If you smell gas, report it. Black sooty marks or stains, lazy orange flames and excessive condensation in the room could indicate a faulty gas appliance.

If fire occurs

- Evacuate the room/area immediately – don't stop to collect personal belongings. Use the nearest escape route.
- Close any doors behind you.
- Raise the alarm.
- Go to the assembly point.
- If you can't leave your room, close all doors, put wet towels or clothes round the door seals, telephone reception and shout for help from the window.

Balconies, corridors and walkways

- Beware of snow and ice on balconies and walkways, making surfaces slippery.
- Take care when walking along corridors and walkways.
- Never leave children unsupervised on balconies.
- Don't climb or stand on balcony furniture. Keep all furniture away from the balcony wall/railings.
- Never lean over, sit or climb on the balconies or walkway wall/railings.
- Don't leave skis or other equipment on the balcony.
- Don't try to pass items to someone on another balcony or climb from one balcony to another.
- Before closing the door whilst on the balcony, check that there is a handle on the outside.

ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS

- If you or one of your party fall ill or have an accident during your holiday, seek medical advice and report it to the reception, your travel provider, representative or their local agent.



SECURITY

- If available, use the safety deposit box for your money, travel documents, passports, jewellery and other valuables.
- Lock your door even when you're inside your room.
- Don't leave windows or patio doors open.
- Exercise caution when opening the door to a visitor and ask them to identify themselves.
- If you see someone or something that looks suspicious, report it to reception or a member of staff immediately.
- Follow the advice and instruction of the staff or local authorities.

If a security incident occurs

If you are caught up in an incident and are not sure what action to take, follow the guidance to 'Run, Hide and Tell' which can be applied to many places and situations both at home and overseas.

RUN HIDE TELL



Run to a place of safety. If there's nowhere to go, then...



it's better to hide. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can...



then finally and only when it is safe to do so... call the police.

FOOD AND DRINK

- Where appropriate, drink bottled water and avoid ice in drinks.
- Drink non-alcoholic fluids initially after a day's skiing and before après ski activities.
- Be aware that alcohol measures abroad may be larger than in the UK – drink in moderation.
- Make sure your food has been thoroughly cooked and is still hot when served.
- Avoid any uncooked food apart from fruits and vegetables or food that can be peeled or shelled.
- Ask for information on meal ingredients if you have food allergies.
- Eat breakfast before going on the mountain, and take snacks with you.
- Be aware that fondues, raclettes and hot stones can be served at very hot temperatures.



SWIMMING POOLS AND SAUNAS

Swimming pools

- Read the pool rules before you swim and remember, most holiday accommodations do not employ lifeguards.
- Always obey the facility rules and signage.
- Check the pool layout to know where the deep and shallow ends are, especially before jumping or diving in. Never dive into water less than 1.5m deep.
- Shower before entering the pool.
- Don't jump or dive from any raised features or from poolside furniture.
- Don't swim if suffering from an upset stomach. Leave 48 hours before entering the pool following a stomach-related illness.
- Don't swim immediately after a meal and never swim when you've been drinking alcohol.
- Check the hours of pool operation and never use the pool when it is closed.
- In the event of an emergency, know how and where to get help.
- Children in and around the pool area should be supervised by an adult at all times and never left unattended even if a lifeguard is present.
- Don't change nappies at the poolside.
- Young children and babies should wear appropriate swimwear e.g. rubber-lined swimming trunks.
- In the event of a faecal accident in or around the pool, report it immediately.

Sauna and spa pool facilities

- Follow all instructions for using the sauna and spa pool facilities.
- Do not use the sauna or spa pool if you are pregnant or suffer from high blood pressure or heart conditions.
- Drink plenty of water and rest after a sauna to avoid dehydration.



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OUT AND ABOUT

Be aware of snow and large icicles falling from gables and the top of buildings.

- Take care when walking on icy and slippery roads and paths.
- Do not walk across frozen lakes, ponds or streams.

Care in the sun

- The sun is much stronger at altitude. Ensure you apply a high factor sunscreen to your face, neck and ears regularly even on a cloudy day and reapply frequently.
- Take extra care with children in the sun.
- Always wear sunglasses or goggles to protect against snow blindness.

Care in the cold

- A base layer is advisable on the piste and out in resort. Hat, gloves and appropriate clothing is essential.
- Skiwear may be fitted with avalanche finders; check your ski gear for RECCO reflectors inside and out.
- Take note of cable car, lifts and funicular closing times, and avoid being stranded far from your accommodation.

High altitude acclimatisation

- Some ski resorts are situated at such a high elevation that the humidity and limited oxygen available can cause a variety of symptoms and illnesses such as shortness of breath, fast heartbeat, dehydration, constipation, nausea, fatigue, insomnia, headache.
- If travelling to high altitude resorts you should allow sufficient time to acclimatise. Generally the symptoms of altitude will disappear as the body adjusts.
- For the first couple of days, eat lightly and drink plenty of liquids (two or three times more water than usual), avoid alcohol and caffeine, get plenty of sleep, limit salt and increase carbohydrate consumption.
- The use of hot tubs and saunas will accelerate the dehydration process.
- If you feel unwell, seek medical assistance.

On the piste

- Whether you are a beginner or not, ski or snowboard lessons can help everyone to improve their skills and confidence.
- It is advisable to wear a helmet. If you don't own a helmet, you can hire one in resort. Helmets are mandatory in some countries.
- Check the forecast and snow conditions at the lift company or tourist office before hitting the slopes.
- Choose the piste suitable for your ability.
- Exercise and altitude can leave you dehydrated, drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- Always take a piste map, a mobile phone and money with you on the mountain. If on the slopes alone, tell someone where you are planning to go.
- Take a break when you feel tired; many accidents happen at the end of the day.



OUT AND ABOUT continued

The International Ski Federation's FIS Rules of Conduct

1. Respect for others: A skier or snowboarder must behave in such a way that he or she does not endanger or prejudice others.
2. Control of speed and skiing or snowboarding: Every skier or snowboarder must move in control. He must adapt the speed and manner of skiing or snowboarding to his personal ability and to the prevailing conditions of terrain, snow and weather as well as to the density of traffic.
3. Choice of route: A skier or snowboarder coming from behind must choose his route in such a way not to endanger skiers or snowboarders ahead.
4. Overtaking: A skier or snowboarder may overtake another skier or snowboarder above or below and to the right or to the left provided that he leaves enough space for the overtaken skier or snowboarder to make any voluntary or involuntary movement.
5. Entering, starting and moving upwards: A skier or snowboarder entering a marked run, starting again after stopping or moving upwards on the slopes must look up and down the slopes that he can do so without endangering himself or others.
6. Stopping: Unless absolutely necessary, a skier or snowboarder must avoid stopping on the piste in narrow places or where visibility is restricted. After a fall in such a place, a skier or snowboarder must move and clear the slope as soon as possible.
7. Climbing and descending on foot: A skier or snowboarder either climbing or descending on foot must keep to the side of the slope.
8. Respect for signs and markings: Skiers and snowboarders must respect all signs and markings.
9. Assistance: At accidents, every skier or snowboarder is duty bound to assist.
10. Identification: Every skier or snowboarder and witness, whether a responsible party or not, must exchange names and addresses following an accident.

Excursions

- Always book excursions through a reputable supplier; ask your representative or travel provider for more details.

Pedestrians and driving

- Be aware that in some countries traffic isn't required to stop at pedestrian crossings.
- Carry a torch when walking on unpaved or unlit roads during the hours of darkness.
- Ask the car hire company about the traffic laws and any specific local rules e.g. carrying a breathalyser in France, and a spare pair of glasses in Spain before driving.
- Check that your car hire insurance is adequate for the driver and all passengers.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Always carry emergency/breakdown telephone numbers.
- Never drink and drive.
- It is strongly advised that you don't hire mopeds or motorbikes.
- It is strongly advised that you don't independently hire quad bikes.

PERSONAL SAFETY

- Avoid carrying too much money or wearing excess jewellery when you're out and about.
- Keep all valuables, wallets, bags etc. close to you at all times.
- Avoid poorly lit areas and if possible never walk home alone.
- If you're out as part of a group, look out for one another.
- Consider very carefully whether you should leave a pub, club or event with someone you've just met.
- Do not invite strangers back to your room.
- In busy bars and clubs take time to check for fire exits and follow all emergency instructions in the event of an incident.
- If you feel threatened, stay calm and try to be firm and direct.
- If you feel uncomfortable or in danger, don't be afraid to draw attention to yourself.
- Shout, make a fuss and make people aware that you feel threatened.
- If you are the victim of a crime, report the matter to your travel provider and the local police immediately.

Alcohol and drugs

Be alert to personal safety issues and remember that alcohol or drug use may increase the risk of accidents and injuries and can invalidate travel insurance claims.

- Drinking to excess in high altitude and low temperatures can put you at risk of exposure e.g. frostbite or hypothermia and at greater risk of slips and falls on icy terrain.
- Remember the effects of drinking alcohol increase with altitude and your judgement, coordination and reaction times may be affected.
- Never accept drinks from strangers or from anyone you don't completely trust.
- Do not share or exchange drinks.
- Keep your drink with you at all times or nominate a friend to watch your drinks.
- Avoid using recreational drugs – they're likely to be illegal in your holiday destination.
- The quality of local imported spirits varies greatly, buy well known brands where possible.

Using a taxi or minicab

- Never accept a lift from an unlicensed taxi, a stranger or someone you don't completely trust.
- Try to share a taxi with a friend.
- Always sit in the back of the taxi, and if you chat to the driver don't give them any personal details.

How to have a safe and healthy holiday in the snow

