

Student Travel Safety Guide

How to get an “A” in travel safety
on your well deserved vacation.

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This document features excerpts from our exclusive e-book “*The College Safety Guide*”,
a comprehensive resource about having a safe campus experience.

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Student Travel Safety Tips

With war looming and the very likely threat of terrorist attacks continuing against Americans both home and abroad, student travel safety has never been more important. Terrorists will strike where there are large crowds and where an attack will have the greatest psychological impact. This could be many different popular vacation spots. Additionally, people from many countries around the world are unhappy with US policy and may take it out on American citizens traveling in their country. Sadly, not everyone going to the most popular destinations this year is going there for a tan and a chance to party. Thieves, rapists and other unsavory types also go to popular vacation destinations to take advantage of the party atmosphere and the lowered inhibitions.

A special note on potential terrorist attacks: Keep vigilant and be alert. It was the vigilant alertness and tremendous sacrifice of the passengers of Flight 93 on 9/11 that saved the lives of countless people on the ground. Keep an eye out for suspicious behavior, and unusual activity.

Be alert to unusual chemical smells. It may be a chemical terrorism attack, an illegal drug lab, a chemical spill or one of the frat boys with intestinal problems, all of which can be dangerous. Cover your mouth and nose with a towel, shirt or other fabric and move out of the area quickly.

Look out for the unusual. Report packages, briefcases, backpacks, etc. that are left in public areas, or areas of concern such as train tracks, bridges, power transmission towers, buildings or communications networks. At tourist areas, they were probably were left by someone to far gone to remember, but they might contain a bomb. Do not touch them. Ask loudly if anyone owns them and then ask everyone to move away.



The purpose of this safety guide is to allow you to bring back home the best of vacation memories instead of bad dreams. CollegeSAFE.com wants you and your friends to have the best vacation ever. You've worked hard all semester and you deserve that. Have fun. Get a tan. Meet new friends. Just read this first.

*Go and have fun
and come back with
the best memories
possible.*

Follow the advice in this guide and chances are that you'll have a great time without all of those horror stories to tell. And - all of these stories could have been prevented! You know the ones.

Vacation Hall of Famers – A Distinction to Avoid

- ❖ The story about the guy who partied too much and passed out on the beach only to wake up with a painful glow in the dark sunburn. He spent the rest of his vacation in agony, holed up in the hotel room covered in body lotion.
- ❖ The girl who accepted a drink from this cute guy and the next thing she remembered was waking up in a strange room with a bunch of naked ugly guys.
- ❖ The guy who hopped up on a hotel railing and fell seven stories to the sidewalk below
- ❖ The girl that was dragged under the beach boardwalk and sexually assaulted.
- ❖ The guy that was beat up by a street gang and robbed of all he had.
- ❖ The girl that drank from the sink tap in Mexico and spent the rest of the time in the hotel bathroom.
- ❖ The guy that was drinking and driving and got in a car wreck and spent a week in the hospital and then two months in a Mexican jail.



- ❖ The girl that came back from a great vacation to find that her apartment had been broken into and all her stuff gone.

Let someone else come home with these stories to tell. Stay safe and come back with stories about all the hotties that you met and how much fun you had. Remember what goes on at vacation stays on vacation – except the diseases, bad memories, sunburn, psychological damage, and injuries.

Before You Leave – Prepare!

Where else can a thief go, knowing that just about everyone is gone. Most campuses are practically deserted at spring break and college vacation times. Thieves can go to just about any campus in America during these times and take what they want without worrying about witnesses or someone stopping them. Many campuses step up patrols by campus security, but you really can't

Lt. Richard Herrman of the Kansas State Police says, "Any valuables you may leave behind - make sure they are secure enough so that things don't get stolen from you while you are out of town".

count on this. Take a few precautions and chances are that your stuff will still be there when you get back. Here is a safety checklist.



- ❖ Lock up or remove all valuables (jewelry, computers, stereos, televisions, etc.). They should all be engraved with your Social Security or other identifying number. Some colleges have engravers that can be borrowed.
- ❖ Make sure that all windows are closed and locked. Close all shades, drapes and blinds. Lock and bolt entrance doors to rooms or apartments. Get **window** and **door alarms** to sound an alarm if anyone tries to break in.
- ❖ Put your lights and maybe a radio or television on timers, so that they come on periodically to make it look like someone is there.
- ❖ Don't leave a message on your answering machine that says that you are gone. This is like saying to anyone who calls, "Hey I'm not home right now; feel free to come over and take all my stuff..."
- ❖ If you live alone, have a message that gives the impression of several occupants. For example, "We're not available to take your call right now". Don't use your name(s).
- ❖ Make sure the lights outside work and turn all lights on. Ideally, exterior lights should be on **motion sensor**, a timer or photoelectric cell. Don't give these guys darkness and shadows to hide.
- ❖ The **Strobe Security System** is a perfect burglar alarm system for the dorm or apartment. It is wireless, easy to set up; it is not permanent; you can take it with you if you move and it scares away burglars.
- ❖ One of the most obvious signs people are out of town is the collection of mail outside. Have the post office stop mail delivery, or get someone to pick it up regularly.
- ❖ Keep in mind that crime increases before spring break and vacation times, because other people are looking for the cash to go on these trips, too. Protect anything of value that can be pawned or sold.

Foreign Travel Preparations

- ❖ Make a copy or record of your passport, credit card and traveler's check numbers. Put them in a sealed envelope and leave it with Mom, Dad or a **trusted** friend for safekeeping. In an emergency you can call them and have them open the envelope to give you the information.
- ❖ If you are going to Mexico, the Caribbean or some other country, you must have proof of citizenship and proof of identity. A passport is the best, but a birth certificate with a raised seal, not a photocopy, and a driver's license will also work for Mexico. If you are under 18 you

also need written parental consent to enter another country and it has to be notarized (sorry you can't have your buddies forge this one).

- ❖ Check out the US Department of State's updates at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/> for the background information on the country that you'll be visiting or <http://travel.state.gov/studentinfo.html> for information helpful to students traveling.

Driving Trip Preparations

- ❖ If you are taking a vacation road trip check out all belts, hoses and tires on the car. I once spent the weekend, hundreds of miles from home, camped out in the parking lot of an auto parts store waiting for it to open up on Monday.
- ❖ It's a good idea to have a spare tire, **tools**, a cellular phone, a **first aid kit**, a **flashlight**, an AAA card, **fire extinguisher**, water and snacks just in case the car breaks down.
- ❖ Keep the doors locked to prevent someone jumping in to hijack the car or worse, to attack you.
- ❖ Make sure you have enough gas and money. Remember to bring your health insurance card and allergy bracelets.
- ❖ Let your family and trusted friends know when you are leaving, when you'll get back and how you are getting there and back.
- ❖ Go with friends, stay together, and watch each other's back.
- ❖ Remember, new "friends" are still strangers.
- ❖ If you are traveling by bus, rail or air, don't bring along magazines with your name and address on them. Tear off your address label. The last thing you need is for a bunch of people who know that you are away from home to know where you live.



If You're going to Drink

Be aware of the legal requirements where you are going. For example, both Florida and Texas State Laws requires that you must be 21 to buy, drink or have alcoholic beverages. Keep an eye on your friends for alcohol poisoning and have them watch out for you. According to a University of Wisconsin study, 75 percent of college males and 43.6 percent of females reported being drunk on a daily basis during spring break.

Almost half of the guys and more than 40 percent of the girls drank enough to vomit or pass out at least once during the break. It is hard to protect yourself or your friends when you're passed out on the floor. Excessive drinking

Recent studies show that alcohol is a factor in 46% to 75% of date rapes among college students.

also causes car accidents and arrests for drunk driving, public intoxication, disturbing the peace, public indecency, vandalism, accidental drowning, sexual assault, and a whole bunch of bad stuff.

Remember that heavy drinking may cloud your judgment on a date. Recent studies show that 78% of college women report experiencing sexual aggression on a date, and most of these included heavy drinking or drug use.

If you are going to drink...

- ❖ Eat something first, don't drink on an empty stomach, otherwise your stomach will empty itself all over your shoes or those cute new sandals that you just got.
- ❖ Carry a brochure for your hotel so that if you get lost, drunk, or both, a taxi or someone can help get you there.
- ❖ Before you go out plan what and how much you will drink.
- ❖ Figure out what you'll say once you reach your limit.
- ❖ DON'T DRIVE. Have a designated driver or use public transportation.
- ❖ A fake ID is not worth it. Most popular vacation areas in the US have undercover sting operations to catch fake IDs.
- ❖ Alcohol causes dehydration and dehydration causes really bad hangovers. Alternate alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, like water or juice, to stay hydrated and to keep from getting drunk too fast, you'll be glad you did the next morning.
- ❖ If you are drinking, don't drive or swim, and don't sit on the hotel balcony railings
- ❖ Because date rape is most often linked to alcohol and drugs, stay sober on dates. If your date has been drinking too much or using drugs, stay around other people and call a cab or friend to take you home.

"Most students don't realize that possession of a fake I.D., in many cases, is a felony charge," says UF police Sgt. Nicholas Vellis.

Safe Drinking - Avoid Date Rape Drugs and Have a Plan

- ❖ At parties and clubs, never leave your beverage unattended, and never take drinks (alcoholic or non-alcoholic) from strangers. Since Rohypnol and GHB, two "date rape" drugs, are odorless, and often colorless and tasteless, they can get slipped into drinks easily and go unnoticed. Only accept drinks from bartenders or waiters, and try to watch them pouring. At parties, pour your own.
- ❖ Date rape drugs are easy to get in Mexico and along the Mexican border. Watch out for yourself and keep an eye on your friends. If anyone suddenly looks or acts a lot drunker than they should be, they might have been drugged.

- ❖ To be safe - check out your drinks with **DrinkSafe test strips**. Just place a drop of the drink on the test areas of the test card and it will turn blue if anyone has slipped a date rape drug in your drink.
- ❖ Sometimes bartenders and waiters will slip a date rape drug into the drinks of unsuspecting women. The only way to be sure is to test the drink with **DrinkSafe test strips**.
- ❖ Go to parties and clubs with trusted friends. Make a plan -- in advance -- on how you'll watch out for each other.
- ❖ Make sure to go home or back to the hotel together. You can always get together later with people you've met when you are sober and more rational.



- ❖ Don't let a friend go off with strangers or new friends by themselves.
- ❖ If someone starts acting strangely, they may have been slipped a drug or have drunk too much. Keep an eye on them.

Keep an Eye out for Signs of Alcohol Poisoning or Date Rape Drugs:

People can die from too much alcohol or date rape drugs. This happens every year at campuses across the US, at spring break and during off campus vacations. Women are even more susceptible because of their smaller body size. Alcohol poisoning and drug overdose is a medical emergency. Look for the following signs and you can save the life of a friend.

- ❖ If someone passes out, either briefly or for longer periods, beware, this can turn into a coma.
- ❖ Check their breathing. If their breathing is less than 10 breaths per minute or more than 8 seconds between breaths get emergency help.
- ❖ Check their pulse. If their heart rate is less than 40 beats per minute get emergency help.
- ❖ If their skin is cold, clammy, pale, or blue they are not getting enough oxygen, get emergency help.
- ❖ Position the person on their side with their knees bent. If they are on their back they could choke to death like a rock star if they vomit
- ❖ Make sure that they can breathe by loosening clothing around their neck
- ❖ Check their mouth and the back of their throat for any foreign objects to make sure nothing is in there choking them
- ❖ Test their drink with the **DrinkSafe test strips**. If it tests positive save it as evidence.
- ❖ DO NOT LEAVE THEM ALONE. Often, passed out people are raped, robbed, beat up, stripped, humiliated or tortured. Protect your friends.

Date rape drugs such as Rohypnol and GHB act as a sedative, slowing motor skills, creating memory loss, muscle relaxation, and sleep. These symptoms will start within minutes or an hour after taking. People under the influence often will not remember anything that happened while they were drugged. They might feel hung over, dehydrated and foggy headed, but they won't remember a thing. Many victims of drug induced date rape report that they wake up in a strange place, with clothing missing and torn, knowing that they've been raped and not being able to remember anything.

Safety at the Hotel/Motel

People know that people on vacation just want to have fun. You want to get away from all the pressures of school and blow off some steam. You aren't concerned about safety. Frankly, I didn't care about safety until I hopped up to sit on the railing, slipped and started to fall to a nasty 150-foot drop. If it weren't for the quick reactions of the people around me, my vacation would have been very different. I was lucky - I should have been smart. Check out these common sense tips for safety at the hotel/motel.



- ❖ Keep your door locked and use the chain or bar latch if there is one.
- ❖ Bring along an alarm such as the **doorstop alarm** or the **door alarm** to let you know if someone tried to get in at night. You don't know if everyone who ever rented the room always returned their keys.
- ❖ Check the peephole whenever someone comes to the door. If it is a stranger don't open it. Tell them to go away.
- ❖ If someone at the door claims to be staff and you are not expecting them, call the front desk for verification. Criminals have posed as staff members of hotels/motels including maintenance,

housekeeping, and yes, even security! Most hotels will not send a male employee by himself to a female's room, but always double check.

- ❖ It is better to be a bit paranoid than to be a victim.
- ❖ Don't leave valuables in your hotel or motel room. Have the hotel lock the stuff in their safe. Make sure to get a receipt that lists and describes everything they store for you, or use the safety deposit boxes in your hotel room if you have one.
- ❖ You can hide stuff in your room from the cleaning staff and your roommates in a **book safe**. This looks like a normal book, but it has a secret compartment for hiding stuff inside. Trust me, on vacation; no one is going to pick up a boring looking book to check it out.
- ❖ Use the buddy system whenever you go out. Go partying with trusted friends that you can rely on. Stay together and watch each other's back. Pay extra attention to friends who appear

It's never a good idea to let strangers know where you're staying or to give out personal information.

intoxicated.

- ❖ Hotel elevators can be overloaded if packed with too many people and /or luggage. You'll spend vacation trapped in a small box, listening to bad elevator music.
- ❖ Take it from me - DO NOT CLIMB on balconies or sit on balcony rails. You don't want to spend your hard earned vacation in the hospital.

Safety with Sex & Violence

According to a University of Wisconsin study, women who drink are more likely to be the victim of a sexual assault.

- ❖ Don't drink too much - most sexual assaults involve drinking by the victim, the perpetrator or both.
- ❖ Don't go with anyone to an isolated location.
- ❖ Don't walk or go out alone. Go with a buddy and carry a **personal alarm**.
- ❖ Never leave a party or a club with someone you just met. More women are raped in cases like this than by strangers.
- ❖ Attend parties with one or more friends and leave with the same friends.
- ❖ Don't leave your drink unattended. Don't accept open drinks from strangers.
- ❖ Flashing wads of cash or flaunting expensive jewelry can be an invitation to a mugging. Be safe and leave valuables in the hotel safe.



Personal Belongings

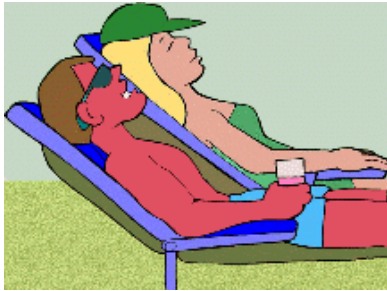
- ❖ Take care of your personal belongings, especially at the beach. If you don't immediately need them, leave them at the hotel or locked in the trunk of your car.
 - ❖ Keep track of the stuff that you brought with you. If you are in a group, sharing one room, with other people coming and going, you can count on your loose stuff disappearing.
- ❖ Pack only the stuff that you'll need.
 - ❖ Lock up your suitcase, even if it is empty. If there is stuff inside a thief can't easily get to your stuff. If it is empty they can use the suitcase to carry your stuff out of the hotel without arousing suspicion.
 - ❖ According to Beach Patrol, wallets, purses, keys, clothes, backpacks, portable stereos and surfboards

Don't forget to bring an emergency/safety kit containing things such as aspirin, bandages, disinfectants, sun block, insect repellent, etc.

are the types of things thieves like to steal.

- ❖ Keep your keys in a zipper pouch, on a string around your neck, or safety pin them, don't leave your keys in or around your vehicle.
- ❖ Lock valuables in vehicle trunks. Roll up windows and lock the doors and use a car alarm that can be used even for rental cars.

Sun, Sand & Surf



Nothing ruins the fun in the sun more than a painful case of “glow in the dark” sunburn. Let's face it; it's too easy to get distracted checking out all the hotties while you're partying and dancing on the beach. And then, before you know it, people start looking at you with that “Ohooo” pained expression on their face whenever they look at you. The key is to stay protected, and get your friends to look out for each other. Chances are that the more people working together on keeping the group protected from the sun, the fewer

cases of sunburn. Here are a few tips to help you enjoy a pain free, fun in the sun, vacation.

- ❖ Stay out of the sun during the hottest hours of the sun's rays – between 10 AM – 2 PM.
- ❖ Give your body a break, periodically get in the shade. Sunscreen doesn't prevent sunburn, it just lets you play or lounge in the sun for a longer time before you burn.
- ❖ Yes, you CAN get sunburned on a cloudy day.
- ❖ Use sunscreen with a SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of at least 15. Apply the sunscreen before you go out into the sunshine.
- ❖ Pay attention to the face, nose, ears and shoulders – areas most likely to burn. But remember, on the sand, the sunlight is reflected and amplified and just about anywhere can burn. I once forgot to put sunscreen on my feet and sunburned the tops of my feet – very uncomfortable when wearing shoes.
- ❖ Re-apply sunscreen every couple of hours and immediately after swimming and sweating.
- ❖ Wear a hat or use a beach umbrella.
- ❖ Wear sunglasses with UV (Ultraviolet) Protection.
- ❖ To avoid heat stress, drink plenty of water, non-carbonated, and non-alcoholic drinks, even if you are not thirsty.
- ❖ Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothes

Treatment of Sunburn

- ❖ If you do get burnt, drink plenty of water, this will help to re-hydrate your skin
- ❖ Take a cool bath or place cool, wet cloths on your skin
- ❖ Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) for pain and fever
- ❖ You are going to peel, as ugly as it is, it is part of the healing process, use lotion to help reduce itching

Carry a valid ID with you wherever you go, and the name and number of an emergency contact person who is not on break with you.

Seek Emergency Help if These Signs are Present

- ❖ Dry, flushed skin, confusion, changes in consciousness are signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke
- ❖ Severe sunburn blistering occurs
- ❖ Fever greater than 102 degrees Fahrenheit
- ❖ Vision problems or are dizzy after cooling off

Beach Safety

- ❖ Many beaches have hazards, such as sharks, poisonous jellyfish, riptides and submerged rocks. Stay in the marked swimming area and where the lifeguard can keep watch.
- ❖ Don't swim alone.
- ❖ Check for warning flags
 - Red Flag**: Means stay OUT of the water – dangerous current, strong undertow and riptides.
 - Yellow Flag**: Means use CAUTION while swimming - some undertow and riptides possible.
 - Blue Flag**: Means calm water – go and enjoy.
- ❖ Be aware of rip currents that want to take you out to sea. If you get caught in a current, swim parallel to shore until clear of the current or diagonally to the shore. You'll wear yourself out fighting the current by swimming straight to the beach.
- ❖ If the waves look dangerous, crashing down powerfully... they probably are.
- ❖ Stay away from jellyfish; many will cause an intense stinging and burning pain, worse than a wasp or yellow jacket. If stung, go to a lifeguard station or send someone. The lifeguards will have first aid to reduce pain and swelling.
- ❖ Leave the beach in a storm. The waves and the tide become far more dangerous. Beware of lightning. Lightning like to strike the tallest objects on the beach, don't let it be you.

- ❖ Some beaches allow people to drive their cars along the beach - watch out for traffic.
- ❖ Many popular beach areas are clamping down on “public indecency”. The “Girls Gone Wild” crew has been threatened with arrest along with anyone who flashes. This is at more than one beach this year. Some beaches are designated as clothing optional - most are not. Know before you show - unless you don’t mind being cited or spending time in jail. Also, remember that mom and dad, your aunts, uncles, grandparents, and neighbors see those ads for the “Girls Gone Wild”.



Vacation is kind of like Social Darwinism, only it is the smart ones that survive and prosper. The not so bright ones are the ones that come back with horror stories - when they come back. Create incredible memories and take lots of pictures.

Be smart, be safe and have an incredible time.

**Know a friend who could use this guide?
They can download it at <http://www.collegesafe.com/travel>**

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