Staying Safe During Summer Outdoor Activities Abroad

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https://internationaltravel.wisc.edu
Enjoy the Outdoors Responsibly

- Summer is a great time to travel abroad and enjoy the outdoors. But many summer activities come with increased risk, especially in an unfamiliar place. Good planning will help mitigate those risks.
- These slides offer great reminders as you plan outdoor activities. These recommendations are not meant to be exhaustive – we encourage you to give intentional thought to your plans and try to translate the spirit of these tips into your own activities.
General Considerations

• Always remain in groups!
• Always tell someone where you are going, how you will get there, and when you will return.
• Safety should be a priority when engaging in any kind of activity. Ensure you have the right skill level and fitness to meet the demands.
• Use a reliable guide, instructor, or host organization for your planned activities.
General Considerations

• Always have the necessary safety equipment for your activity. Know how to use it and follow all safety protocols.

• If hiking, take the very best map you can find and take a small compass with you – *and know how to use it*!

• Always have a way to communicate in case of emergency – both within your group and with others.
General Considerations

• Create a medical plan. If you can, learn or review First Aid before you travel. Before you take part in an activity, know how you can get emergency medical help if you or someone in your party becomes ill or injured.

• Eat well and stay hydrated. Avoid caffeine and alcohol and never undertake potentially risky activities while intoxicated.

• Prepare for the heat – take plenty of water, wear sunscreen, and know the signs and symptoms of heat illnesses.
General Considerations

• Understand the weather risks and natural hazards in your region or locale.

• Monitor the weather. If severe weather is possible, reschedule. While you’re out, have a reliable means to get early warnings (a charged phone, weather radio, etc).

• The weather can change rapidly in many places – especially at high elevations!
General Considerations

• Always be prepared for rain and/or temperature drops – hypothermia can occur if someone becomes overexposed, wet, and chilled, even in otherwise warm weather.

• Respect the environment and minimize your impact on natural areas. Some countries have strict laws about littering, trespassing, and building open fires.

• Understand local regulations and laws associated with your activities. These often are in place for your safety and violating them could lead to legal consequences or serious injury.
General Considerations

• Always wear a helmet and other protective equipment if you’re biking, taking part in mountaineering activities, or doing anything that has a high risk for injury.

• Inspect your equipment and make sure it fits correctly and functions as intended before you go out.

• Be honest about your capabilities and your comfort level and do not take unnecessary risks!
General Considerations

• Respect wildlife and keep your distance – they can react aggressively toward you without warning.

• Animals, even animals that are typically domesticated, can be aggressive and carry diseases. You are better off leaving animals completely alone when traveling abroad.
Staying Safe During Activities Abroad

Visit the UW-Madison International Safety and Security website for more resources, tips, and linked information:

International Safety and Security – UW-Madison
International Division – UW–Madison (wisc.edu)

Enjoy a fun and safe summer!