



# YOUR TRAVELGUIDE

PLAYING IT SAFE



# YOUR INTERNATIONAL SOS MEMBERSHIP

## CONTENTS

- 3 Your International SOS membership
- 7 Traveller safety tips
- 13 Your pre travel checklist
- 15 Your questions answered

AS A STUDENT TRAVELLER, SAFETY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND DURING YOUR TRAVELS ABROAD.

With International SOS membership, you have access to 24 hour expert advice and assistance before you travel, whilst abroad, or in an emergency.

These services are for your everyday assistance needs as well as any emergency assistance needs such as:

- » You are in your hotel in Shanghai and you need help finding a doctor to treat a cold or a minor cut.
- » You would like some medical advice on vaccinations and travel safety tips before a study trip to Brazil.
- » You are injured in a car accident in Malaysia.

International SOS is ready to listen to you in your own language and to advise and respond to your request.



Review your International SOS membership card to identify the services available to you

# BENEFITS OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

## MEDICAL MEMBERSHIP

- » Online information: medical and travel, medical email alerts
- » Travel assistance
- » Medical assistance
- » Access to International SOS clinics\*\*

## SECURITY MEMBERSHIP

- » Online information: security, security email alerts
- » Security assistance

## COMPREHENSIVE MEMBERSHIP

- » Online information: travel, medical and security, medical and security email alerts
- » Travel assistance
- » Medical assistance
- » Access to International SOS clinics\*\*
- » Security assistance

### TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

- » Embassy and consular information.
- » Emergency message transmission and translation.
- » Loss of document advice and assistance.
- » Advance of emergency personal cash.

### ONLINE INFORMATION: TRAVEL, MEDICAL AND SECURITY

- » Essential travel, health and personal safety advice.
- » Important security risk analysis and advice covering 200 countries, including daily reporting on emerging security issues.
- » Email alerts with information and advice on emerging medical and security issues.

### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- » Medical advice by International SOS doctors.
- » Referrals for medical or dental treatment.
- » Help to obtain medications and medical equipment.
- » Medical monitoring if you are hospitalised.
- » Assistance with appointments and ambulance transportation.
- » Guarantee of payment for medical expenses.
- » Emergency medical evacuation / repatriation.
- » Compassionate visit and family travel assistance.
- » Repatriation of mortal remains.

---

## SECURITY ASSISTANCE

---

Before you go, find out all you can about the city and country you're travelling to.

In the event of threatening situations such as civil or political unrest, or acts of terrorism, we will provide support to secure your personal safety.

- » Our security specialists provide advice and assistance on travel, domestic and personal security.
- » 24 hour support during crisis situations, including evacuation planning and evacuation to an international safe-haven.

---

## ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL SOS CLINICS\*\*

---

Healthcare for you and your family in 35 clinics across Africa, Asia and CIS, offering primary and emergency care services, as well as dental treatment, laboratory, x-ray, pharmacy and complimentary talks on family medicine and first aid training.

*\* Security services provided by a joint venture of International SOS and Control Risks. Medical services provided by International SOS.*

*\*\* Services available are subject to the terms and conditions in force at each respective clinic.*

# TRAVELLER SAFETY TIPS

FOLLOWING THESE SAFETY TIPS WILL INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF HAVING A HASSLE-FREE TRIP.

HAVE FUN, BE SAFE, AND ENJOY!

International SOS receive over 4 million calls a year for assistance... accidents and crime can happen anywhere and no one is immune.

Following these safety tips as suggested by International SOS medical and security specialists will increase your chances of having a hassle-free trip.

---

## BEFORE YOU LEAVE

---

### MAKE A LIST

- » Make a two-column list of items you will need for your trip. Place items you're intending to pack in your suitcase in the first column and items you plan to place in your carry-on in the second. Check each item off as you pack it and check your list twice.
- » Ensure you have your tickets, money, passport, visa, emergency information and any necessary medicine in your carry-on bag.



## PACK WISELY

- » Pack clothing that you will be comfortable wearing and which will not draw unwanted attention. Remember, styles that are viewed as acceptable in some countries may be seen as inappropriate in other countries. For example, if you are travelling to Indonesia, do not pack a suitcase full of revealing clothes such as midriffs or singlets.
- » Leave valuables like expensive jewellery, watches and designer handbags or clothing at home as they may increase your chance of being robbed.
- » Pack comfortable shoes. You will likely be doing a lot of walking. Closed toe shoes are recommended, as they will protect you from fleas, ticks, and other parasites.
- » Pack an extra pair of eyeglasses, contacts and sunglasses.
- » Bring any prescription drugs you may need. It's best to get your prescriptions refilled just before leaving. If you will be out of country for a long time, it's a good idea to ask your doctor for a spare prescription under a generic name.
- » Remember to carry all prescriptions in their original packaging, with an accompanying letter from your doctor, and place it in your hand luggage in case your luggage goes missing.

- » Pack a medical kit, a small, high-powered flashlight, mobile phone, and a phone card just in case. The kit should include aspirin, bandages, insect repellent, sunscreen, antacids, and anti-diarrhoea medication.

---

## OTHER WAYS TO PREPARE FOR YOUR TRIP

---

### DO YOUR RESEARCH

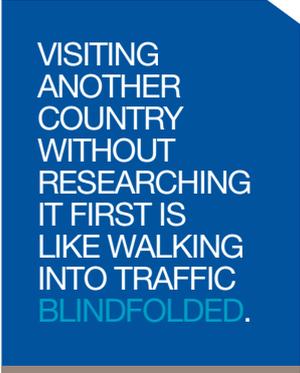
Many students are so excited at the prospect of travelling that they forget to research the location they're visiting. But visiting another country without researching it first is like walking into traffic blindfolded. International SOS Country Guides help you get acquainted with the country and people you are visiting before you set off, as well as providing crucial health and safety information.

- » Familiarise yourself with the local customs, laws, and climate of the country you are visiting.
- » Know what events and festivals are happening at your destination during the time you're travelling.
- » Understand the currency and exchange rate in the country you intend to visit. This way, you will not over-pay or fall victim to a scam.

## HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

A pre-trip health check, complete with any necessary vaccinations and a dental check-up, is a must for any traveller. Travellers who have diabetes or other chronic conditions should consult with their doctor before leaving on a trip.

Pay special attention to local regulations concerning syringes and insulin transportation, and if you have questions call the International SOS assistance centre and speak with a medical professional.



VISITING  
ANOTHER  
COUNTRY  
WITHOUT  
RESEARCHING  
IT FIRST IS  
LIKE WALKING  
INTO TRAFFIC  
BLINDFOLDED.

### LEARN THE LINGO

It is a good idea to learn key phrases in the language of the country you're visiting so you can communicate on a basic level. Making an effort to speak the language instantly ingratiates you with people in your host country.

- » Learn how to say "hello", "goodbye", "thank you", and "I need help".
- » Pocket-size phrase books and easy-to-follow audiotapes are helpful and easy to carry in your backpack.
- » Practice a few key phrases with your travelling companions on the plane.

### TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS

It's a good idea to make copies of your passport, credit card(s), the serial numbers of your travellers' checks and your insurance policies, as well as your itinerary, flight information and the telephone numbers of hotels, hostels, or the host family where you will be staying. Leave copies of the documents with your parents or a friend for safekeeping and take copies with you. Another good idea is to also email copies of these documents to yourself to have them available at all times, but make sure your email account is secure or you encrypt the documents.

- » Make a copy of the first pages of your passport and keep it in your carry-on bag.
- » Keep key emergency contact information with you at all times, including full names and telephone numbers of your parents and close friends – store them as 'mum' and 'dad' or in your favourites.

- » Carry your International SOS membership card with you at all times.
- » Pre-program the International SOS assistance centre number into your mobile phone and download the International SOS mobile app.
- » While on the plane eat lightly and drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol as it will dehydrate you and get you off to a rough start. Sleep if you are able to. Be sure to stretch your limbs on long flights and move about when possible. Lack of movement and alcohol increase your chances of DVT.
- » Carry at least four passport photos.
- » Memorise your passport number and expiry date.
- » Obtain a lock to secure your luggage – preferably Transport Security Administration (TSA) approved.
- » Any labels on luggage should be able to be covered so as not to overtly display your name or nationality.

## WHILE ABROAD...

Even when you take the right precautions, there is still a possibility that you will be a target for, or a victim of crime. It is important to be aware of your surroundings, particularly at locations where large groups of people gather such as

around outdoor shows, near street performers, transport interchanges and crowded markets as these areas tend to attract petty crime such as pickpocketing, but can also attract scam artists and armed criminals. Avoid situations where you may become isolated and be aware of your surroundings at night, especially after long flights or bus trips when you are tired.

### A LITTLE RESPECT GOES A LONG WAY

It is important to respect the culture of the country you are visiting in the way you dress, speak and act. Try to fit in with your new surroundings without drawing attention to yourself.

- » Be aware of and obey local laws and customs. Your civil rights can vary greatly once outside your home country.
- » Refrain from discussing politics or criticising lifestyles.

### PAIR UP

- » Use the “buddy system” and try to travel in groups and try not to travel alone.
- » Never hitchhike.

### HOTEL SAFETY SAWY

- » If you have a choice, select a room between the third and sixth floors of your hotel, and never take the room closest to the exits. This ensures your room cannot be easily accessed from the ground, you are not so high up that fire

equipment will not reach you and you’re room is not targeted for robbery due to the proximity to the exits.

- » Familiarise yourself with the nearest exits, evacuation procedures and other surroundings immediately after checking in. Always check the window and door locks of your room and if they do not work properly insist on another room.
- » Place a doorstop under your door for added safety.
- » Do not let anyone into your room unless you know them or are satisfied with their identity and purpose.
- » Put a “do not disturb” sign on your door and leave the TV or radio on when you’re out at night.
- » Use authorised transportation from the airport or rail station to your hotel.

### BE “STREET SMART”

- » Stay away from drugs entirely. Most foreign countries have extremely strict laws regarding even small quantities of drugs. In certain countries there is an automatic death sentence for possession of drugs, no matter what the amount.
- » Women from more liberated countries may be perceived as “sexually promiscuous” in certain parts of the world. Respect local dress codes by covering up and

**RESPECT THE  
CULTURE OF  
THE COUNTRY  
YOU ARE  
VISITING IN  
THE WAY YOU  
DRESS, SPEAK  
AND ACT.**

dressing modestly. Ensure your behaviour is also modest.

- » Never carry bags or packages for anyone else, especially those not known to you.
- » Get into the habit of conducting a check of your essential equipment and items before you head out for the day. At a minimum you should ensure you are carrying:
  - Mobile phone fully charged (emergency numbers saved to the phone)
  - Cash (small denominations)
  - Notebook and pen
  - Watch
  - Pen-light torch
  - Copy of passport and visa
  - Water bottle
  - Hat
  - Sunglasses
  - Sunscreen
  - Day pack

## AVOIDING CRIME AROUND TOWN

- » Never carry all of your money with you. Leave some cash and a credit card in the hotel safe.
- » Carry your wallet on the inside of your coat or front pocket of your pants.
- » Consider carrying a 'robbery' wallet or purse in your pocket or handbag. The robbery wallet should have your daily cash needs, an expired credit card and old photos. This wallet should be handed over if you are robbed. Keep a credit card and some extra cash in a pocket, but use the robbery wallet as your daily source of cash.
- » Don't flash your money on the street. Be smooth and swift in your transactions and put your money away quickly.
- » Women should carry their handbag on the opposite side from passing traffic. This reduces the risk of thieves on motorcycles snatching your bag. Never wear the strap across your body, as this could put you at risk of being dragged along with a passing vehicle.
- » Avoid walking unless you are confident of the security situation.



- » Where possible watch your drinks being poured when you are out and do not leave your drinks unattended. Do not accept drinks from strangers.
- » Know in advance whether it is safe to take taxis or public transport by calling International SOS prior to travel.
- » If a victim of armed robbery do not resist.

## DRIVING KNOW-HOW

- » If you plan to drive, be sure you have adequate insurance and familiarise yourself with road rules for the location in which you will be driving.
- » Be certain that you always have at least a half tank of fuel.
- » Make sure your seat belts, lights, signals, and horn work before you set off.
- » Avoid driving after dark especially in rural areas.
- » Roll up your windows to within a few inches of the top, always lock the doors, and wear your seatbelt, even for short trips.
- » When parking, seek a well-lit area and always lock your doors. Never pick up hitchhikers.

# YOUR PRE TRAVEL CHECKLIST

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

- Travel approval received
- International SOS membership card - contact your internal International SOS representative or download a soft copy card on the portal
- Download the free International SOS assistance app
- Passport(s) valid (minimum 6 months) - contact your local immigration office
- Visa(s) - contact the immigration office of the country(ies) you are visiting or International SOS assistance centre
- Ticket(s) correct
- Hotel bookings confirmed
- Flight(s) confirmed
- Credit cards
- Travellers cheques/money/foreign currency(ies)
- Itinerary prepared/circulated - email copies of your itinerary to your family, self, host at destination country etc
- Photocopy travel documents and store at home, office and with luggage - Passport, visa (s), letters of invitation, travel itineraries, contact details, International SOS membership card

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Go to [internationalsos.com](http://internationalsos.com) and enter your membership number to:
  - Review country risk rating(s) and medical and security information
  - Sign up for medical and security alerts
- Travel brief  
If you have additional questions or are travelling to a high or extreme risk location, call an International SOS assistance centre for a travel brief
- Vaccinations - call an International SOS assistance centre for advice
- Prescription medication - have adequate stocks of any prescription medications packed with a copy of the prescription
- Health check - have a health check prior to travel
- Transport arranged to the airport
- Transport arranged on arrival
- Anyone meeting you on arrival(s)
- Flight details sent to host
- Prepare wallets  
Primary wallet: small amounts of cash and other non-critical items for easy access; fake wallet: sufficient amounts of cash, credit cards and copies of documents
- Communication  
Become familiar with the communication facilities in your destination country(ies) including landline, mobile phone (activate international roaming) communication options. Go to [internationalsos.com](http://internationalsos.com) for information.

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## What do I do if there is a medical emergency?

In case of emergency or hospitalisation, you or the person with you must contact one of the 24/7

International SOS assistance centres all around the world. A doctor will take your call and you will be able to communicate in your own language.

## What do I do if I have an accident or I'm suddenly unwell?

In an emergency situation, you must be treated as soon as possible by the local emergency assistance services (ambulance, fire services or emergency medical services). You or your family, colleagues or medical staff should immediately contact one of our assistance centres. They will take over and, depending on your state of health, follow up on your treatment or hospitalisation and / or evacuate you to an appropriate medical centre of excellence (medical evacuation).

## Do I contact International SOS only for emergencies?

No. You can call International SOS at any time to ask for advice or up-to-date information on your destination either before you leave

or while you are travelling, but also in the event of hospitalisation or medical emergency.

## I'm concerned about going to see a doctor who does not speak my language as well as the quality of local healthcare. Can International SOS help me?

Yes. International SOS will direct you to a doctor who speaks your language or, if necessary, will provide translation services. We also manage clinics that provide healthcare to international standards. If you are too far from an International SOS clinic, our doctors will guide you to a service provider listed in our global network of accredited professionals. If there is no appropriate local medical structure, we will recommend a transfer to an appropriate service provider.

## What should I do in the event of a security emergency or a crisis?

Contact those in your education institution who are responsible for security immediately or one of our security experts based in the International SOS assistance centres for more information and assistance.

The assistance centre phone numbers are listed on your International SOS membership card. To ensure a prompt response when calling, please be prepared to provide the following information:

- » Your name
- » Your educational institution
- » Your International SOS membership number (as printed on your card)
- » Telephone number(s) where you can be reached
- » The nature of your request and the name of your doctor if necessary

**Remember, before you travel, you should log on to the members' section on the International SOS website to access essential medical, travel and security information by entering your membership number in the login field.**

[internationalsos.com](http://internationalsos.com)

T +61 2 9372 2468

*The information included in this brochure contains guidelines that International SOS suggests you follow when travelling. International SOS will not be held responsible should they fail to protect you or your personal property. The information contained herein may not be printed or reproduced in any way without the express written permission of International SOS.*

*Printed April 2013*

**Worldwide reach  
Human touch**

The logo for International SOS, featuring the word "International" in a smaller font above "SOS" in a larger, bold font, with a stylized globe icon to the left.