

There are many ways to keep your valuables secure while traveling. Most are simple actions most of us take wherever we are. Then, when on the road, at sea or in the air, we merely need to practice those basics with maximum attention to our surroundings and need for personal safety.

1. Your credit card is one of your most valuable possessions. It's not only because you can use it instead of carrying large sums of cash while traveling, but in the wrong hands, a stolen credit card can cost you dearly.

Use your credit card only when you're absolutely sure of its security, such as when paying for air travel and hotels. For many other purchases, such as at retail stores, taverns and restaurants, especially when away from home, it is much safer to use cash.



2. When you check into a hotel, to protect valuable jewelry and/or large amounts of cash, have the staff member put them in the hotel safe. If the hotel furnishes room safes, use them. When dressing up for an event, wear inexpensive jewelry. When shopping, especially in busy tourist areas, carry only the amount of cash you'll need for that day.
3. Before you go to your room for the first time, ask the front desk clerk for all hotel and local emergency phone numbers, and keep them with your cell phone for quick reference. If you feel you're in danger of robbery or other crime, 911 is the usual emergency number to call. However, sometimes calling emergency numbers within the hotel may bring quicker response.
4. Don't answer your hotel room door to any visitor, including those identifying themselves as hotel employees. Through the peep hole, ask for name, department and job title, and then call the front desk for verification that the person was specifically sent to your room. If you have valuables and/or extra cash in your room safe, don't open it if any stranger, including a hotel staffer, is in the room with you.
5. When returning to the hotel late at night, and especially if you have jewelry, cash and other valuables with you, stay in well-lighted areas and use the front entrance only. When in the parking lot or garage, be alert to any suspicious people nearby. In dark, unfamiliar areas anywhere, keep your cell phone on and in your hand, ready for instant use. For any time you feel unsafe in the hotel garage and elevators, call the front desk to send a security guard to escort you to your destination.
6. When in your hotel room, always close the door securely and lock it behind you. When retiring for the night, use the extra locking devices for best security. Keep your cell phone on and next to you on the night table.
7. Keep your hotel key or key card in a secure place on your person throughout the day. If you need to show it to security, front desk or anywhere else, be sure it is returned and safely put away.
8. When in shopping areas, restaurants and any other crowded public places, keep your wallet or handbag and their contents securely in your control. Wallets should be in inside pockets, preferably zipped in. Pocketbooks should be with tight straps securely around a shoulder and tucked under an upper arm.
9. Don't call undue attention to yourself, to be observed as an arrogant tourist by loud talk and flashing lots of cash and jewelry during your travels. Dress comfortably and modestly, and always be alert to your surroundings. Too often, frightened-looking people attract thieves. Travel in unfamiliar areas with at least one other companion.
10. If you see unauthorized people within the hotel property or any other potentially suspicious behavior nearby, report it immediately to the hotel front desk, security or police. It's better to look foolish than to look into the barrel of a gun.