

# SOLO TRAVEL MADE EASY

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Traveling solo can be a great adventure. ***If you travel alone, you'll get to know yourself better and follow your own schedule.*** If you've been holding back, these tips will make it easier for you to head out alone. You'll learn how to deal with three of the most common concerns.

## Coping with Loneliness and Boredom

You may wonder about whether you'll get lonely if you travel alone. The truth is that learning to enjoy your own company makes solitude rewarding. On the other hand, you can surely find companions if you feel like mingling.

1. **Engage fully.** Be mindful of your surroundings. ***Getting caught up in new experiences as you travel will leave little time for boredom.***
2. **Take a tour.** A day tour is ideal for meeting new acquaintances. It's easy to strike up a conversation when you share the same interests with others and you're away from your usual routine.
3. **Dine out.** Look for places with communal tables or ask your hotel to recommend them. Eat at the bar if you feel conspicuous at a table.
4. **Stay at a bed and breakfast.** The owners of a bed and breakfast may be happy to talk about local attractions. Hostels are another good choice. There will likely be other guests and maybe even other solo travelers at these types of places.

5. **Frequent local businesses.** Visiting the same fruit stall every day will quickly turn you into a regular. Exchange greetings and let them know you appreciate any advice on what to see.

6. **Talk with new people. Approach your fellow travelers or locals who seem friendly and helpful.** Trains and coffee shops are two good places to start.

7. **Do volunteer work.** Sign up with a non-profit organization and perform group volunteer work. For example, travel to exciting places while building new homes through Habitat for Humanity.

8. **Pursue solitary activities.** Visit an art museum or lie on the beach with a good book. *Enjoy the peace and relaxation you get from being alone.*

## Protecting Your Safety

Security is an important concern for any traveler. Some basic precautions will reduce your risks.

1. **Blend in.** Looking like a tourist may leave you vulnerable. *Walk with confidence and step inside a hotel to check your map.*

2. **Be alert.** Observe what's going on around you. Ask your hotel to advise you about where it's safe to walk. If you're near an unsafe area, avoid unnecessary risks by taking a cab to your destination.

3. **Watch your money.** You may want to wear a shoulder bag strapped across your body or under a coat. Consider using a money belt or clip. *Solo travelers are often the perfect target for pickpockets.*

4. **Assess your fluency.** Language skills also matter. Ask yourself if you can communicate clearly in case of a medical emergency.
5. **Gather your documents.** Put a copy of your identification and health insurance in your pocket. Leave a second copy with loved ones at home.
6. **Check in at home.** Speaking of home, give your full itinerary to at least one person. Call or text them every few days to let them know you're okay. There have been way too many instances of travelers disappearing on a trip and nobody realizes it for quite some time.
7. **Pack light. *Leave your valuables at home.*** Traveling with minimal baggage increases your comfort and your ability to move quickly.

### **Sticking to Your Budget**

You may run into what's called "single supplements" on cruises and tours. This is when the venue charges single travelers extra to try and make up for the lack of a second customer. Still, there are plenty of ways to vacation affordably on your own.

1. **Save up in advance.** Put money aside gradually. Small amounts add up over time.
2. **Be flexible about timing.** You'll tend to find the best deals at the last minute or several months before your departure. Be open to traveling during the off-season for further monetary savings.
3. **Look for special bargains. *Check discount travel sites and look for deals. Some venues may even be willing to waive the single supplement.***

4. **Accept roommates.** Contact travel companies who specialize in solo travel. Ask to be paired up with another single traveler who is headed to your same destination.

Spend a whole week at a pumpkin festival or browse the Louvre at your own pace.

***Avoid being intimidated by the thought of traveling alone.*** Solo travel creates memories you'll treasure for life.