

7 great travel tips to help keep your identity safe



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How to prevent identity theft when you're away from home

Whether you're hitting the open road or flying overseas, travelers who've logged the most miles have a few routines that help keep them safe while away from home. Here are a few habits worth developing when you make plans for your next getaway.

1. **Let your bank know you're leaving.** Before you go, call your bank and credit card companies and let them know you'll be traveling. Include dates and destinations if possible. This helps them monitor your accounts and potentially stop fraudulent charges if your cards are used somewhere you are not. This also lets them know you're the one making charges far from home and prevents them from possibly putting your card on hold.
2. **Put your mail on hold.** A full mailbox lets thieves know you're away from home, plus your mail can contain many kinds of personal information that's valuable to an identity thief. Visit the United States Postal Service online at usps.com/holdmail, or visit your local office in person.
3. **Take only the cards you need.** The less you take, the less you take a chance on losing credit cards, security access cards to your job, and any other items you carry daily. Clean out your wallet and/or purse and leave all unnecessary cards at home.
4. **Choose ATMs wisely.** Generally, ATMs located inside bank lobbies are safer than ones found in gas stations or convenience stores, because they're less likely to have devices used to capture debit card information. Follow general safety rules wherever you are: check for skimming attachments above or below the card slot, and be sure to cover the keypad when you type in your code.
5. **Limit information on your bag tags.** It's important to identify your luggage in case it gets lost; however, only your name and phone number are needed. If you put your full name and address on the tag, a thief will have your information—and know you're not at home.
6. **Take an envelope for receipts.** Slip an extra envelope into one of your bags to collect all ATM and credit card receipts. Everything will be in one handy space when you get home, and you can easily verify charges on your credit card and bank statements.
7. **Save social media posts for after you return.** While it's fun to share your photos with everyone back at home, it's safer to wait and save the posts until you're back. You're not in complete control of who sees your posts, and it's not safe to let everyone know your house is empty.

Taking the time to add a few new habits to your travel ritual can go a long way toward keeping you and your personal information safer.

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