

News Feed



JHU Campus Safety and Security

CSS reminds you to have fun, but stay safe on spring break!

It's hard to think about Spring Break when the weather is freezing, but it's NEVER too early to plan ahead! This is especially true if you're traveling with other students.

Besides, what better way to beat the slow days of winter than to dream of vacation?

Fun is only fun if you're smart about it. So, with the help of a little research and a bit of my own experience, I've come up with some ways that students like us can stay safe and have a blast over Spring Break!

Travel Safety:

Make sure that whoever will be driving has a valid driver's license. In fact, make sure that everyone does. Plans can change on a moment's notice. Make sure you are aware of exactly how to get to your destination and how to get back. Whoever sits in the passenger's seat should try to stay awake to keep the driver company. This is especially true if you'll be driving at night. Falling asleep can be kind of a contagious thing...have you ever noticed that watching someone else doze off often makes you more tired? Accidents are very easily caused by the driver falling asleep at the wheel.

If you'll be traveling out of the country, you'll need a passport and possibly a visa. Make sure that you know exactly what documents you'll need. Believe me; travel documents do not arrive quickly, so make sure that you put your application in about six months in advance. Just make sure to give yourself plenty of time.

Money /Valuables Safety:

If you can, always use the ATM at the hotel where you'll be staying. If there isn't one available there, always choose one in a well-lit location and go with a group. Take a complete 360 degree look at your surroundings before you use the ATM. If someone is creeping you out, use a different machine. Don't ignore your gut instincts. Also, I know you've heard this a million times, but always cover your pin number while you type it in!

Make sure you check your bank account regularly. You never know who may be lurking nearby waiting to try to take advantage of students. Check all the charges on your statement for legitimacy.

If you're going to be traveling overseas, tell your bank at home where you'll be going. If you don't, they may see foreign charges and shut down your card, which leaves you in another country with no money. This can happen even if you're traveling within the country. Just make sure to stop by the bank before you leave.

Don't wear or bring a lot of flashy luxury items. Especially overseas, lots of jewelry and expensive things attract attention when it's better for you to keep a low profile. Anything valuable should be locked in a hotel safe during the day, and the door to your room should most definitely be locked at night. Don't tell anyone who isn't in your group your room number.

If you'll be out of the country, try to get a passport holder which will hang around your neck under your clothes for your travel documents and cash. Keep it on you at all times. Even in the country or in "safe" places, keep an eye on your purse. Never leave it unattended.

Beach Safety:

Make sure you know the flag system used by beaches. A red flag means you need to stay out of the water because of rip tides and dangerous currents. Yellow means to use extreme caution because there could be dangerous currents present, and blue means that the water is safe (but definitely doesn't mean throw caution to the wind) Swim only in designated swim areas.

If you should get caught in a rip tide, don't swim against it. You won't get anywhere, and this only exhausts your body. Swim parallel to the beach until you get out of the current.

As much as you hated hearing this from your mom as a kid, you really do need to wear sunscreen and reapply every couple of hours. Believe me, vacationing stops being fun if you fry yourself.

Take extra care to cover the areas that you don't usually think will burn. This includes your ears, hands, and the tops and bottoms of your feet. Remember, you can still get sunburned if the sun isn't out!

Always know where you and your friends are going and how you're going to get back safely. Stay in a group, and always walk with purpose. People who look lost are easy targets.

Most of all, be smart and have fun. Safety isn't about being paranoid your entire vacation, it's about having the best time possible while staying out of trouble. Odds are, you'll return home with a load of great stories and be excited to do it all over again next year!

