



# DIY traveller? Handy tips for a smooth trip!

**With an abundance of online travel booking websites there's a growing trend to DO IT YOURSELF instead of using travel agents. There can be benefits to booking your own travel but beware - it can be the small details that make or break a long awaited holiday if things go wrong.**

It's a travel agent's job to know about visas, vaccinations and local etiquette so if you are a DIY traveller here are our TOP TIPS to ensure smooth sailing:

## 1. Visa/passport requirements

Your passport should have at least six months validity on period of travel. Ensure you have visas for all countries you plan to visit/transit. See [www.visalink.com.au](http://www.visalink.com.au) to check visa requirements and apply online for most countries. Be aware that a visa doesn't assure entry. If you hold a dual nationality passport, check if you are considered a national of the country and if this has consequences once you enter the country.

## 2. Health

Check immunisation requirements by visiting [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au). See your doctor at least eight weeks prior to travel to allow vaccinations to take effect. Take enough medication for any pre-existing ailments - check local laws on travelling with medicines. If you wear eyeglasses take a spare pair! Your scripts may not be filled overseas.

## 3. Travel insurance

DON'T leave home without it! Check travel insurance comparison websites to compare and save on premiums. Confused? Download the Choice Travel Insurance Buying Guide at [www.choice.com.au](http://www.choice.com.au). If you're planning adventure activities make sure you have the correct coverage.

## 4. Stay in contact

Register your travel and contact details on [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) or at the local Australian embassy once you arrive.

## 5. Documents

Save copies of your passport, insurance policy, credit cards and visas to secure cloud storage. Leave a copy with someone at home as well. Explore travel apps such as **Tripit** and **Google Trips** to store your itinerary and alert you to changes.

## 6. Currency

Travel experts suggest pre-paid travel debit/credit cards loaded with required currencies. Load up in advance to take advantage of great exchange rates! Try to keep cash to a minimum but you will need it for purchases such as street vendors. Find out if you have to tip, how much and whether tax is applied to purchases.

## 7. Spare photos

Take extra passport size photos with you in case you lose your passport and need to replace it while overseas.

## 8. Calling home

Apps such as **Messenger**, **What's App** and **Viber** make keeping in touch easier than ever. Take advantage of WiFi where available to save your data – keep your phone on flight mode and use the hotel's WiFi for your emails. Global SIM cards are widely available but do your homework - a local SIM card may offer better rates and data.

## 9. Research

Research destinations. Translation apps such as **iTranslate** and **Google Translate** are fantastic for navigating the local language. Be conscious of and obey local laws. Consular aid cannot overrule local laws, even if they seem severe by our standards.

## 10. Watch out

Avoid being a target of crime. Watch out for scams, avoid wearing expensive jewellery and try not to carry too much cash.

## 11. Be safe at home too!

Create a closed group on Facebook or set up an iCloud photo library exclusively for those friends or family you want to be able to see your holiday pics. Sharing your holiday Facebook posts publicly will tell people you are away from home. Remember to alert your neighbours you are away, cancel newspapers and arrange for someone to collect your mail.

**And finally – have a wonderful time!**



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