

Steps to make your holiday swimming pool experience safe this year – to help you RELAX

This summer we want you to be able to RELAX in and around the swimming pool. Follow these simple steps to help you to RELAX:

RECCE the pool environment when you first arrive at your accommodation

Identify safety features, barriers, slides and chutes, deep and shallow end, whether there is a lifeguard if it's a shared pool and when they're on duty. Take a moment to enter the local emergency numbers into your phone when you arrive.

EYES on the kids – keep a look out always (whether it's you or someone you trust)

Lifesaving techniques. Make sure you or someone you are with knows how to save lives

There may not be a lifeguard where you are going, so learn some basic CPR. And even if there is a lifeguard, bear in mind they are not substitute parents.

ARMBANDS – If they are needed, make sure they stay on at all times. Children often want to go back in the pool even when the time for swimming is over.

EXPLAIN to children how to use the pool safely. Take time to do this. It's vital.

And for travel and tour companies and self-catering accommodation providers, we expect you to provide the right information and assistance to help people using the pool avoid getting into trouble, and to deal with an emergency if necessary.

Road safety for pedestrians checklist:

Things to remember when you're crossing the road

- ✓ **Find a safe place to cross where you can see and be seen by any traffic**
- ✓ **Make sure you look the right way for traffic as it may be coming from a different direction to the one you are used to**
- ✓ **Depending on where you are the road may be in poor condition so watch out for pot holes and other obstructions**
- ✓ **Look and listen carefully before crossing – the road may look quiet but traffic can quickly appear**
- ✓ **If you see traffic let it pass – mopeds and other vehicles may be travelling faster than you think**
- ✓ **Make sure any children with you know how to cross the road safely**

Water safety checklist:

If you plan to swim in open water, such as a lake or river, the Royal Life Saving Society offers the following tips:

- ✓ **Always look for warning and guidance signs**
- ✓ **Swim parallel to the shore and not away from it**
- ✓ **Avoid drifting in the currents**
- ✓ **Don't enter fast flowing water**
- ✓ **Be aware of underwater hazards**
- ✓ **Get out of the water as soon as you start to feel cold**
- ✓ **Never get in the water if you've been drinking alcohol**
- ✓ **Always take someone with you when you go in the water**
- ✓ **If you get into difficulty call for help**

Food and water safety checklist:

If you're worried about the food and water where you're staying here are some safety precautions.

Water

- ✓ **Don't drink or brush your teeth in tap water**
- ✓ **Only use filtered, bottled, boiled or chemically treated water**
- ✓ **Don't put ice in your drinks**
- ✓ **If you need to purify water, boil it or use purifying tablets**

Foods to avoid

- ✓ **Salads and uncooked fruits and vegetables unless you've washed or peeled them yourself**
- ✓ **Food that's been left out, such as in an open buffet**
- ✓ **Dairy products such as unpasteurised milk, cheese and ice cream**
- ✓ **Raw or uncooked shellfish or seafood**
- ✓ **Food from street traders, unless it's been recently prepared and is served hot**

Stag and hen party checklist:

Things to think about:

- ✓ **Make sure your passport is up to date and if there are any other entry requirements for where you're going**
- ✓ **Find out what the local laws and customs are on things like drink and dress**
- ✓ **Take out some travel insurance if you don't already have any**
- ✓ **Check the safety rules for where you're staying particularly if there's a pool or balcony**
- ✓ **Look out for your friends and make sure no-one gets separated from the group**
- ✓ **Make sure everyone has each other's phone numbers so you can always stay in touch**
- ✓ **Keep your money and plastic safe as pickpockets often target stag and hen parties**
- ✓ **Keep the volume down especially at night in residential areas – foreign police cells aren't a great place to spend the night!**

On the beach and in the sea checklist:

- ✓ **Choose a beach with a lifeguard if possible**
- ✓ **Read the beach safety signs**
- ✓ **Supervise children at all times both in and out of the water**
- ✓ **Make sure everyone in your party knows what to do in an emergency**
- ✓ **Never swim on your own**
- ✓ **Don't swim near or dive off rocks**
- ✓ **Stay close to the shore line and avoid going out of your depth**
- ✓ **Protect yourself against the sun**

Sun safety and dealing with sun burn checklist:

How to stay safe in the sun

- ✓ **Spend time in the shade especially when the sun is at its strongest - this is particularly important for children**
- ✓ **Keep babies under six months out of direct strong sunlight at all times**
- ✓ **Keep covered up with a wide-brimmed hat and loose-fitted clothing**
- ✓ **Wear sunglasses that have 100% UV protection**
- ✓ **Use sunscreen with at least a SPF of 30 and four-star UVA protection**
- ✓ **Apply sunscreen before you go out and reapply frequently while you're in the sun**
- ✓ **Drink lots of water**

Top tips on sun safety checklist:

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Pool safety checklist:

- ✓ **Supervise children in and around a pool at all times**
- ✓ **Read the pool safety rules**
- ✓ **Check if there's a lifeguard**
- ✓ **Check where the pool is deep and where it's shallow**
- ✓ **Only dive in the water if it's allowed and the water is at least 1.5 metres deep**
- ✓ **Never use the pool if it's dark, closed or you've been drinking alcohol**
- ✓ **Know where and how to get help in an emergency**

Balcony safety top tips:

Balconies are a great place to relax but they are one of the most common areas for accidents (sometimes fatal) to occur while on holiday. Here are some tips on how to stay safe on your balcony.

- ✓ **Take extra care on balconies if you or anyone with you has been drinking or taking drugs.**
- ✓ **Never stand on balcony furniture**
- ✓ **Never sit or lean over a balcony rail**
- ✓ **Don't try and pass items to someone on another balcony**
- ✓ **Don't try and climb from one balcony to another**
- ✓ **Never jump into a pool from your balcony**

Travel insurance checklist:

Things to think about when choosing travel insurance:

- ✓ **Cover for travel in Europe, worldwide excluding the US or Worldwide?**
- ✓ **Single-trip policy or annual policy?**
- ✓ **How long will your trip be?**
- ✓ **Is the policy just for you or other people as well?**
- ✓ **If you are over 65 or have a medical condition will the policy cover you?**
- ✓ **Are you going on the sort of holiday where you might need specialist insurance such as backpacking, winter sports or doing ‘dangerous activities’?**

Minimum cover requirements:

- ✓ **Medical expenses cover of £1m plus for Europe and £2m plus for the US including repatriation and a 24-hour helpline**
- ✓ **Cancellation cover if you have to cancel or cut short your trip**
- ✓ **Travel delay and disruption cover**
- ✓ **Baggage cover of at least £1,500**
- ✓ **Personal liability and legal expenses cover**

Carbon monoxide warning signs:

- ✓ **Black or sooty stains on or near a gas appliance**
- ✓ **Sluggish orange flames rather than strong, blue flames in a gas appliance**
- ✓ **A pilot light that frequently goes out**
- ✓ **A large amount of condensation in a room**
- ✓ **Smoke building up in a room from a coal or wood fire which could indicate a faulty flue or blocked chimney**

Driving abroad checklist:

Wherever you're driving here are some basic safety tips to help keep you safe on the roads:

- ✓ **Always plan your journey in advance and check the conditions and safety of the roads**
- ✓ **Make sure everyone in the car is wearing a seat belt**
- ✓ **Never drink and drive**
- ✓ **Never use a mobile phone while driving**
- ✓ **Avoid driving at night in areas with poor roads or lighting**
- ✓ **Don't overload your vehicle (if you've got a full car you should allow more time and distance for braking)**
- ✓ **Don't drive if you're tired**
- ✓ **If you're driving somewhere remote or hot take a bottle of water and some food with you in case you get lost or break down**

Tips for when you're out and about:

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office offers the following advice to women travelling abroad:

- ✓ **Dress appropriately and be respectful of the local dress codes so that you don't draw unnecessary or unwanted attention to yourself**
- ✓ **Remember that harmless flirting in the UK might be interpreted differently in other countries**
- ✓ **Avoid walking alone in deserted or unlit areas**
- ✓ **Don't tell strangers where you're staying or your travel plans**
- ✓ **Plan your daily itinerary so that you know where you're going and how to get back**
- ✓ **If you need a taxi ask your hotel or hostel to recommend a firm**
- ✓ **Be careful what you drink. As well as making sure any water you drink is safe, it's also worth keeping an eye on how much alcohol you drink. Not only can measures abroad be larger than in the UK but you're also more likely to have an accident or fall victim to a crime if you've been drinking**
- ✓ **Don't accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended. Drugs are increasingly being added to non-alcoholic drinks such as tea and coffee as well as to alcohol**
- ✓ **If you feel uncomfortable or in danger, don't be afraid to draw attention to yourself by shouting and making a fuss. In English-speaking countries it's recommended you shout 'fire!' rather than 'help!' as you're likely to get more attention.**

Self-drive holiday checklist:

Documents to take with you

- ✓ **Driving licence**
- ✓ **International Driving Permit (if required)**
- ✓ **Appropriate car and breakdown insurance**
- ✓ **V5 vehicle registration document if you're taking your own car**
- ✓ **Passport and entry visas**
- ✓ **Travel insurance**
- ✓ **EHIC if you're travelling in the EU, EEA or Switzerland**
- ✓ **Details of emergency helplines and contact numbers.**

Mosquitoes:

NHS Choices offers the following ABCD approach to avoiding malaria:

- ✓ **Awareness of risk** – find out whether you're at risk of getting malaria.
- ✓ **Bite prevention** – avoid mosquito bites by using insect repellent, covering your arms and legs, and using a mosquito net.
- ✓ **Check whether you need to take malaria prevention tablets** – if you do, make sure you take the right ones at the right dose, and finish the course.
- ✓ **Diagnosis** – seek immediate medical advice if you have malaria symptoms, including up to a year after you return from travelling.

Winter sports checklist:

Here are some tips from the FCO and the Association of British Travel Agents to help you stay safe on the slopes:

- ✓ **Take out comprehensive travel insurance with winter sports cover and check the details.**
- ✓ **Have a medical check-up before you go. One of the major causes of hospitalisation and death on the slopes is heart attacks.**
- ✓ **Don't drink and ski. Alcohol can affect you more quickly at high altitudes. If you drink before any activity on the slopes you may well invalidate your travel insurance.**
- ✓ **Watch your speed and distance. Most skiing injuries are caused by collisions with other skiers.**
- ✓ **Stay in your comfort zone. Don't attempt slopes you're not experienced or fit enough to tackle.**
- ✓ **Wear the right safety equipment including a helmet. Many insurers insist on this.**
- ✓ **If you plan to ski off piste make sure your insurance policy covers this. Go with a qualified guide and carry a shovel, probe and transceiver in case of an emergency.**
- ✓ **Make sure someone knows where you're going, and tell them of any changes to your schedule.**
- ✓ **Know how to contact the emergency services. Dial 112 in Europe and 911 in the US and Canada.**

Quad biking checklist:

ABTA offers the following tips if you plan to go quad biking:

- ✓ **Check your insurance – you may not be covered to hire a quad bike**
- ✓ **Always wear a protective helmet**
- ✓ **Always wear appropriate clothing and footwear**
- ✓ **Stick to organised off-road excursions and don't use a quad bike on main roads**
- ✓ **Make sure you have appropriate training to operate the bike safely**
- ✓ **Check the vehicle is in good condition and don't ride it if you have any concerns**
- ✓ **Watch your speed**
- ✓ **Do not allow anyone to ride pillion**

Cold climates checklist:

Save the Children offers the following tips on keeping children warm in cold climates:

- ✓ **Think layers. Put several layers of clothing on your child and make sure their head, neck and hands are covered. Dress babies and young children in one more layer than an adult would wear.**
- ✓ **Beware clothing hazards. Scarves and hood strings can strangle smaller children so use other clothing to keep them warm.**
- ✓ **Check in on warmth. Tell children to come inside if they get wet or if they're cold. Then keep watching them and checking in. They may prefer to continue playing outside even if they are wet or cold.**
- ✓ **Use sunscreen. Children and adults can still get sunburn in the winter. Sun can reflect off the snow, so apply sunscreen.**
- ✓ **Keep them hydrated. In drier winter air children lose more water through their breath. Keep them drinking and try giving them warm drinks and soup for extra appeal.**
- ✓ **Watch for danger signs. Signs of frostbite are pale, grey or blistered skin on the fingers, ears, nose, and toes. If you think your child has frostbite bring them indoors and put the affected area in warm (not hot) water. Signs of hypothermia are shivering, slurred speech, and unusual clumsiness. If you think your child has hypothermia call the emergency services immediately.**

Advice for LGBT travellers abroad:

The FCO offers the following advice for LGBT travellers abroad:

- ✓ **avoid potentially risky situations – don't do anything that you wouldn't at home**
- ✓ **excessive physical shows of affection, by both same-sex and heterosexual couples, are often best avoided in public**
- ✓ **if you intend to visit cruising areas or use a dating app, find out about the local situation and take sensible precautions if you meet someone; police have been known to carry out entrapment campaigns**
- ✓ **be wary of new-found 'friends' – criminals sometimes exploit the generally open and relaxed nature of the gay scene**
- ✓ **if you receive unwelcome attention or remarks it's usually best to ignore them**
- ✓ **you're more likely to experience difficulties in rural areas so it's best to exercise discretion**
- ✓ **some resorts can be quite segregated - when you are outside the 'gay neighbourhood' expressions of sexuality may be frowned upon**
- ✓ **some hotels, especially in rural areas, won't accept bookings from same sex couples – check before you go**