

FREE GUIDE

FREE SOUL TRAVELLER

SAFETY TIPS FOR SOLO TRAVELLERS

The things I **always** do when I land in a new country,
tested from Nairobi to the Albanian Alps.

BEFORE WE START

Hey, free soul 👋

I travel solo a lot: safaris in Kenya, desert tours in Dahab, hikes in Albania and Switzerland, horse rides by the sea. People often ask me how I stay safe on my own.

The truth? It's not about being fearless. It's about a few **simple habits** I never skip, no matter where I go.

In this guide I'm sharing them with you, so you can travel with more freedom and less stress.



“Freedom feels better when you know you're prepared.”

Elif
Free Soul Traveller



STEP 1 · THE MOMENT YOU LAND

At the airport, before anything else

1

ALWAYS withdraw some cash

Even if the ATM fees at the airport are high, **take out a little cash anyway**. You can withdraw larger amounts later in town at a better rate.

Card machines break, taxis and small shops often only take cash, and you never want to be stuck on arrival without a way to pay.

> **My rule:** the fees don't matter here. A small amount of local cash in your pocket is worth it, every single time.

2

ALWAYS get a local SIM card

For safety reasons, this has always been my **number one thing to do** when I arrive in a new country, even if it's more expensive.

- **Data**: so you can use maps, ride apps and message people at any time.
- **A local phone number**: drivers, hosts and tour guides can call you, and you can call them.
- **Ideally a physical SIM**: if something happens to your phone, you can put the card in another phone and keep your number.

> **Bonus:** a local SIM often unlocks local payment methods. In Kenya, my Safaricom SIM gave me access to M-Pesa, which is used everywhere.





STEP 2 · GETTING AROUND

Taxis & rides

3

Only book through official apps

Always order your ride through **Uber or a trusted local app**. You get driver reviews and your trip is traceable from start to finish.

4

Keep your bags next to you

Put your bags **on the seat beside you**, not in the trunk. If anything feels wrong, you can grab your things and get out straight away.

5

Always sit in the back

Sit behind, not in the front seat next to the driver. If a driver tries something inappropriate, it's **much harder** when you're in the back.

6

Let the driver know someone is waiting for you

When I get in, I sometimes take a photo of the license plate, making sure the driver sees me do it. Then I pretend to call someone: *"Hi, I'm in the taxi, I'll be at [destination] around [time]. I've just sent you the plate number."*

Even if no one is actually waiting, the driver now knows **someone expects you and can identify the car**. It's a small trick, but it makes a big difference.

STEP 3 · EVERYDAY HABITS

More little things that make a big difference

- **Share your live location** with someone you trust, especially on long rides or at night.
- **Download offline maps** of the city before you arrive, in case you lose signal.
- **Keep a copy of your passport** on your phone and in your email, separate from the original.
- **Split your money**: some cash in your wallet, some in your bag, a backup card somewhere else.
- **Try to land in daylight** when you can, so your first ride and check-in are easier.
- **Trust your gut.** If something feels off, leave. You never owe anyone politeness over your safety.

ARRIVAL CHECKLIST: CUT IT, SCREENSHOT IT, USE IT

- ☐ Withdraw some local cash
- ☐ Buy a local SIM (data + number)
- ☐ Download offline maps
- ☐ Install Uber / local ride app
- ☐ Share live location
- ☐ Bags next to me, I sit in the back
- ☐ Photo of the plate + “call” someone
- ☐ Trust my gut





NEVER TRAVEL ALONE, EVEN WHEN YOU TRAVEL SOLO

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Over 500,000 solo travellers share their journeys, tips and destination guides in our community. Come say hi!

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