

THE DINOVITZ SIXTH EDITION

THE KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY SAFE INITIATIVE PRESENTS

STAY SAFE IN ISRAEL

FREE!

A STUDENT HANDBOOK
(GREAT FOR TOURISTS AND CAMPERS TOO!)

Pack this handbook in your carry-on and look it over during your flight!

BY FRANK STORCH

ENDORSED BY



Updated with a Priority Checklist insert and Crowd Safety Information. This guide is also available for free download on Chesedfund.com.

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Welcome!

FRANK STORCH

25 Hooks Lane, Suite 312 | Baltimore, MD 21208 | 410-340-1000 | info@chesedfund.com

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Welcome to the sixth edition of *Stay Safe in Israel*.

Although this edition is for students already in Israel, pre-entry advice has remained in the guide for any of your future trips to Israel. You're about to embark on an exciting year of living, learning, and traveling in Israel. With G-d's help, you'll be growing spiritually and intellectually. No doubt you'll enjoy increased independence and many wonderful adventures. With that, it's important for you to be aware of your safety and security.

Stay Safe in Israel provides you with simple suggestions and important tips to help you be prepared and knowledgeable, just in case. Take your time reading through these pages. The handbook has lots of practical recommendations, but don't try to digest it all in one sitting as it may be a bit overwhelming. The goal of *Stay Safe in Israel* is to help you get a handle on potential risks before anything unfortunate happens.

So enjoy Israel, and have a safe year of growth and independence! If you have an emergency while in Israel, on Shabbos or Yom Tov, and can't reach your parents, call your local Hatzalah in America. They should be able to contact your parents if you can't.

Feel free to share your feedback and your own original ideas and safety tips for this guide to help us improve future editions. I can be reached at info@chesedfund.com or 410-340-1000.

Be safe,



Frank Storch

P.S. Tell your family and friends to download their free copy of this handbook at chesedfund.com.



The Keep Your Community Safe Initiative (KYCSI) began in 2013 with the publication of *Keep Your School Safe* in response to the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. KYCSI has also provided free security assessments to American, Israeli, and British schools, yeshivas, seminaries, and community organizations. *Stay Safe in Israel* is the first handbook written for post-high school students with a focus on safety in Israel. Over ten thousand copies of the handbook are being distributed internationally to Jewish high school students planning to learn in Israel during 2022–2023.

All KYCSI publications are available as free downloads at chesedfund.com.

Special Thanks

We are grateful to every contributor to *Stay Safe in Israel*. Your help and guidance made this handbook possible. Special thanks to Danielle Sarah Storch.

B.K. Blankchtein, President, Masada Tactical LLC

Simcha Fuld of The Yeshiva Seminary Guide

Debbie Fox, LCSW, author of *Seminary Savvy*

Dr. Joshua Gleis, President, Gleis Security Consulting

Paul Goldenberg and Mark Genatempo

Michael Masters, Patrick Daly, and the staff of Secure Community Network (SCN)

Joshua MacMillan, Assistant Director of Education,
SOLO Wilderness Medical School

Ariel Siegelman, President, Draco Group

ZAKA International and Home Front Command

Dedications

This edition is dedicated in loving memory of Mr. Benjamin M. Adler, ז"ל.

Our fifth edition was dedicated in loving memory of Rabbi David Meir Hyatt, ז"ל.

Our fourth edition was dedicated in loving memory of Mrs. Elaine Mintzes, ז"ל.

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Important Stuff to Do Before Your Trip



1. Know the Israel entry and COVID-19 Travel Requirements*

- ♦ As of August 22, 2022, Covid tests are no longer required at the airport of origin, or upon arrival at Ben Gurion Airport. This applies to everyone, regardless of your nationality and vaccination status. The Health Ministry is recommending people test though, so upon arrival you will receive a text encouraging you to test before you leave the airport. You are no longer required to be vaccinated to enter Israel. Masks are also no longer required to be worn on flights to or from Israel.
- ♦ Everyone is still required to submit Israel's online health declaration at <https://corona.health.gov.il/en/flights> within 10 days of departure to Israel.
- ♦ Since entry requirements are subject to change make sure to check the following websites for the most current requirements:
 - Ministry of Health-[Covid-19health.gov.il/en/abroad](https://health.gov.il/en/abroad)
 - Amudim-amudim.org/entrance-to-israel-advisory
 - Chaim V'Chessed-chaimvchessed.com
 - Yad L'Olim-yadlolim.org

2. Prep Your Credit Card and Cash

- ♦ Contact your credit card company to tell them you'll be in Israel. Some banks allow you to do this online. If you don't and your account has unexpected overseas activity, the company could freeze the card without warning you thinking it's being used fraudulently.
- ♦ Make sure your credit card has updated technology. Israeli credit card readers may require chip and pin technology.
- ♦ Plan ahead for accessing money in Israel.
 - Find out which banks and credit card companies don't charge foreign transaction fees (like Charles Schwab, Capital One). If you can't get a card that doesn't charge the extra fees, it's recommended you take out larger amounts of cash per withdrawal to minimize pricey transaction fees.
 - Check if your bank has an option to order foreign currency before your trip. Ordering money from your bank can take up to a week to arrive, so leave enough time.
 - Traveler's checks are safer than cash. Exchange them at a money exchanger or at an Israeli post office. They may, however, charge you a small commission fee.
 - Changes to laws regarding business and personal cash transactions have recently been enacted. Be aware that if you plan to make a large purchase at one store, cash transactions over 6,000 shekalim are now illegal. The law for personal cash transactions has also changed. This means that if you were going to cash a check with your relatives or friends so that you have shekalim in Israel the maximum amount you can now cash is 15,000 shekalim.

3. Check Your Insurance & Medication

As of August 22, 2022, you no longer need to present proof of health insurance coverage for treatment of COVID-19 in Israel.

- ♦ Confirm that your American medical insurance provides coverage in Israel, coverage for COVID-19 treatment, mental health services, and emergency transportation services.
- ♦ You can also purchase a plan through AIM, Harel, or EMA Care. These companies offer customer service and have English-speaking doctors. If you have significant or very specific medical needs, EMA Care is a medical concierge service to consider.



- ♦ Bring any medication in its original packaging, put your name on it, and also bring copies of any prescriptions you may need refilled, including for glasses and contact lenses. If you'll need to refill any prescriptions while in Israel, ask your doctor to provide you with all the necessary information. Medication names, dosages, and availability may be different in Israel.
- ♦ Make sure you're current on all your standard vaccines (hepatitis, meningococcal, etc.) and bring your vaccination card. Bring your COVID-19 vaccination card as well.
- ♦ Consider buying travel insurance. Check to see if your credit card company or homeowner's insurance offers free or discounted insurance. Make sure your insurance is in effect from the date you leave Israel through the date you arrive back home.
- ♦ Cancel or freeze your driver's insurance before you leave, to save money, if you're not planning to drive in Israel.

4. Get Device Advice

- ♦ Keep your cellphone service provider unlocked so you can switch cellphone plans. Check with your provider, as some companies lock their phones for the first year after purchase.
- ♦ You might want to buy an Israeli phone plan, since you will be in Israel for several months. Some Israeli companies offer plans with American phone numbers. This helps you, your family, and friends save money on long distance charges.
- ♦ As another option, your American provider may have a plan you can use overseas. If they don't, inform them about your travel plans and ask to keep your current American number available to you when you return. You can also set up a free Google Voice number to avoid paying for an American phone number while abroad.
- ♦ Remember to back up any devices you are taking with you to local/cloud storage.
- ♦ Bring extra memory cards for your digital camera, if needed.

Useful Information

- ♦ Don't book a flight with a stopover in a country with increased terror risk.
- ♦ Always check with your airline for the latest restrictions.
- ♦ 24 hours before your flight, confirm your flight number, flight time, seat, and kosher meal. Make sure to specify *mehadrin* or *glatt* if that is your preference. (Print out your boarding pass and keep your boarding passes and tickets in case you need to file a claim for missing luggage, missed flights, or delays.) Be sure to keep all purchase receipts from your flight.
- ♦ Visit Myzmanim.com to create a custom davening chart for free, since *zmanim* (prayer times) can be hard to calculate while traveling. In the continental US, you can also call 516-796-2646 and in Israel, call 02-650-ZMAN.
- ♦ Don't buy drinks before going through the security checkpoint, as you'll only have to throw them out at the checkpoint.
- ♦ Bring extra food, a cellphone battery pack, chewing gum (for cabin pressure), a small first aid kit, and good-quality earbuds or headphones for the plane ride. Also, make sure to drink often on your flight, as it's very easy to get dehydrated while flying.
- ♦ Secure your belongings between your feet, rather than on a vacant seat next to you when traveling so they'll not be easily forgotten or stolen.
- ♦ Be wary of overly friendly people. Avoid giving out personal information during the flight. If you are uncomfortable with the person sitting next to you, politely ask the flight attendant to switch your seat, if possible.
- ♦ Check that you have all your belongings before leaving the plane.
- ♦ Provide your family with Ben Gurion Airport's departure and arrival information: 03-972-3344, 03-975-5555, and 03-972-3331 or iaa.gov.il/en/airports/ben-gurion/flight-board/?flightType=arrivals

1. Luggage

- ♦ Never leave your luggage or backpack unattended.
- ♦ If you choose to take something to Israel for a friend or relative, let them know you will search it to ensure you are not transporting anything illegal such as drugs or large amounts of money.
- ♦ Don't accept packages or luggage from strangers, either before your trip or at the airport. If a stranger asks you to take a package in an intimidating or threatening manner, notify the police or airport security immediately.
- ♦ When packing, keep valuables at home. It's a good idea to pack your *siddur*, *tefillin*, *Tehillim*, jewelry, pain relievers, prescription meds, anti-nausea medications, phone chargers, change of clothes, etc., in your carry-on, in case your luggage is lost or delayed.
- ♦ Use uniquely colored luggage tags, or tape to recognize your luggage quickly at baggage claim.
- ♦ Take pictures of your suitcases and their contents in case they're lost or stolen and you need to file a claim. Make a packing list and pack a copy in your carry-on.
- ♦ Put your Israeli phone number on your luggage. If you don't have one, put your regular number. Put another tag with your number inside your luggage in case the outer tag gets damaged.
- ♦ Check your airline's website for luggage size requirements because suitcase, carry-on, and personal item size limits vary. Measure your luggage—manufacturer dimensions may be inaccurate. Use a portable luggage scale to avoid overweight baggage fees.

2. Important TSA Requirements

- ♦ Standard items forbidden in carry-ons include sharp objects, pointed ...scissors with blades longer than 4 inches, screwdrivers longer than 7 inches, knives of any sort, including penknives or army knives, or anything else that can be used as a defensive weapon.
- ♦ The TSA 3-1-1 rule for liquids in carry-ons is: gels, aerosols, liquids, creams, and pastes must be 3.4 ounces (100 ml) or less per container, and must be packed in a quart-size clear plastic ziplock bag, one bag per passenger.
- ♦ When leaving the US, you may pack solid food in your carry-on or checked luggage. However liquid foods or gels must comply with the TSA's 3-1-1 rule for liquids. Make sure to verify which foods may be brought into Israel. Certain types and amounts of foods may be subject to import laws and regulations.
- ♦ If purchasing merchandise at duty-free shops, don't forget you may need to declare the items on your customs forms in case taxes apply. Typically, the duty-free receipt will indicate whether declaring these items at customs is required. For sure, when you arrive at Ben Gurion Airport, it's better to skip the line and ask a customs agent directly.
- ♦ For customs, security, and weight regulations, check the Transportation Security Administration, Israeli Immigration and Customs, and your airline's requirements. Regulations may be different for transporting oversize sports equipment, musical instruments (in a hard-shell case for checked luggage only), and other items (like alcohol and tobacco products).
- ♦ Check US and Israeli customs law for carrying large amounts of money in any form (like cash, traveler's checks, bonds), valuables, gifts, and other items.
- ♦ Unlawful or undeclared items may be confiscated and/or destroyed at the customs official's discretion. Travelers found with such items may be penalized, blacklisted, and thoroughly searched every time they fly.
- ♦ Enroll in the TSA's Precheck, Clear, and/or Global Entry Programs to save time when leaving or entering the US. These programs have membership fees.

Get Your Papers in Order

- ♦ Make several physical and digital copies of your passport, ID, birth certificate, credit cards, traveler's checks, and any other important documents or items kept in your wallet or purse.
- ♦ Keep one copy at home, save one in a password-protected file, and keep one in your email.
- ♦ Make sure your physical documents are in designated folders and you have easy access to them as you go throughout the airport.
- ♦ Once you arrive, store the photocopies in a safe place, separate from your passport.
- ♦ Consider purchasing a small, portable combination lockbox before you leave to Israel to help you keep your valuables safe and handy. You can attach it to your bedframe. It also can be used to store medications for safety and privacy purposes.

1. Passport

- ♦ Your passport should have at least **18 months** of validity. If your passport will not be valid, get a new one from your government as soon as possible. If necessary, use an expediting service.
- ♦ If your passport is stolen, immediately report it to **travel.state.gov** to protect yourself from identity theft.

2. Visas

- ♦ Be in contact with your school about obtaining a student visa as you won't be able to stay in the country for a long period of time without one. If you enter as a tourist, then you need to update your status with the Israeli Ministry of Interior when you become a student.
- ♦ For visa Information, visit:
mfa.gov.il/mfa/consularservices/pages/visas.aspx

3. Army Exemption for Israeli Citizens

- ♦ Visit the Israeli embassy six months before your departure to get a draft exemption or deferment if you have dual citizenship. Schedule as soon as possible because there may be delays.

4. Other

- ♦ Renew your driver's license before your departure if it's set to expire during your stay in Israel.

5. Israel Emergency Numbers

Save these in your phone before departure:

- ♦ Police – 100
- ♦ Magen David Adom (ambulance) – 101
- ♦ United Hatzalah – 1221
- ♦ Fire – 102
- ♦ Poison Control – 04-777-1900 (emergencies – 052-263-4757)

Download these important apps on your phone before departure:

My MDA (Magen David Adom)

- ♦ Comes pre-programmed with all of Israel's emergency numbers. When used, it sends out a distress call to police, ambulance, and your emergency contacts, and it tracks your location. This app isn't available to phones without internet access.

Navigation Apps

- ♦ Gett
 - The Israeli equivalent of Uber. On the Gett app there is an option for "Gett Mehadrin," which only dispatches taxi drivers who are shomer Shabbos (observant of Shabbos)
- ♦ Google Maps
- ♦ Moovit
 - Known to be slightly more accurate for bus times/schedules than Google Maps
- ♦ Waze

RavKav App

- ♦ Lets you fill up your bus pass with trip credits using your smartphone.

Ramzor

- ♦ Provides everything Israel/Covid-19 related.

MyZmanim

- ♦ Tells you the halachic times for davening in Israel.

Google Translate

- ♦ Also lets you add a Hebrew keyboard to your phone.

Fast Israeli Shekel Converter

- ♦ Lets you figure out how much you are spending in dollars when you use shekels.

Home Front Command

- ♦ Allows you to receive alerts for emergencies (like a rocket attack, earthquake).

I24

- ♦ News app in English

Be Arr Happy

Handy Dandy Traveling to Israel Tips:

- ♦ Have at least one emergency contact in Israel before you leave! Your parents should identify one family who is very reliable, in case you have an emergency and need immediate help.
- ♦ Save your destination address in your phone and also keep a written copy. In case there's a flight delay or your phone isn't working, you'll be able to ask a taxi to take you where you need to go without any issues.
- ♦ Pack *shekalim* (Israeli currency) in your wallet or purse for pocket change or for taxi fare when you arrive. Although it's easy to exchange money at the airport, banks and professional money changers typically have better rates.
- ♦ Purchase converters and adapters to use your electronic devices in Israel without risk of fire. Converters change Israeli current (220 volts) to American current (110 volts). Adapters allow you to plug American devices into Israeli sockets, but they don't convert the voltage. Adapters can be bought in Israel, but make sure not to buy the small, cheap ones. Safer adapters can be found for just a few shekalim more. For cellphones and laptops, it is recommended to buy charging cords in Israel.
- ♦ Order your linen from companies such as Blanket Express Plus that will deliver to your Israeli address. Buy toiletries in Israel to save on luggage space and weight.
- ♦ Check the weather in Israel before your flight, wear comfortable clothes, and pack a sweater just in case.
- ♦ Register with the State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) www.step.state.gov for overseas travelers, which provides security updates and enables the US embassy or consulate to contact you in case of an emergency.
- ♦ Familiarize yourself with Israeli law and customs, as they may differ from those of other countries.
 - For all information about Israel's policies for declaring items, visit gov.il/en/departments/guides/guide-tourist-customs
 - If you're returning with *arba minim* purchased in Israel, US customs law requires a sticker from the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture. The sticker can be obtained from most established *esrog* dealers. Check for press releases from Agudath Israel to make sure your *esrog* won't be subject to fines and/or confiscation.



Handy
Dandy
Tips

After Landing in Israel

- ♦ Make sure to choose the appropriate customs line to avoid problems. In general, it's much wiser and safer to ask if you need to declare an item than to risk appearing as if you're trying to bring something into the country illegally or to sell.
- ♦ If you want a minyan, there's a shul at Ben Gurion Airport.
- ♦ Set up your cellphone service right after leaving the airport so you have phone access for any immediate needs.
- ♦ Let your parents know you've arrived safely.
- ♦ Your school may arrange transportation from the airport. Otherwise, options include a *monit* (taxi), a *sherut* (shared shuttle), train, or a pre-arranged driver. If possible, make your plans beforehand.
- ♦ Drink bottled water for at least the first week after arriving in Israel, especially if you have a sensitive stomach. Minerals in Israeli water can cause sickness, especially if you're not accustomed to them. Consider investing in a SteriPEN or a water bottle with a built-in filter and replacement filters.
- ♦ For those arriving during the summer, give yourself time to acclimate to the heat. Avoid extensive outdoor physical activity for your first two weeks in Israel.
- ♦ Stash your cash in your school's safe as soon as possible.

Welcome to Yeshiva/Seminary

Keeping Safe and Sound

Always remember, even if you think there's nothing you can do in a given situation, you can always daven.

1. Dorms and Dirahs (apartments)

- ♦ When you first arrive, ask your roommates and *madrish* or *madricha* (dorm counselor) for their phone numbers and save them to your phone. Share the contact information with your parents so they can reach them in case of an emergency when your parents can't reach you.
- ♦ Don't use your school's bomb shelter as a storage unit! It needs to be accessible so it can protect the maximum number of people in the event of an alert.
- ♦ Dorms and *dirahs* are not the safest place to keep money/valuables. Most schools have a safe where you can store valuables and important documents.
- ♦ Allow visitors into the dorm or *dirah* only if the school allows and they can be vouched for. Don't assume everyone is trustworthy, even if they're religious.
- ♦ Tell delivery men to leave deliveries at the door. Don't let them inside.
- ♦ Label your personal belongings, especially valuables.
- ♦ Make sure your dorm or *dirah* is equipped with a working fire alarm, fire extinguisher, door, and window locks.
- ♦ Have a "last-person-out" policy, where the last person to leave makes sure all doors and windows are locked.



2. General Health

- ♦ Inform appropriate staff and dorm or *dirah* mates of any relevant medical conditions. Consider wearing a medical bracelet if needed.
- ♦ Try to eat responsibly and in balance. Unhealthy extremes can be signs of eating disorders, which can have serious, lifelong consequences. If you or your friends are in distress, seek help from a trusted adviser.
- ♦ If you have food allergies, alert your school (including kitchen staff), read labels carefully, and beware of cross-contamination.
- ♦ If you have dietary restrictions, look out for red circle stickers on food packaging which will indicate whether the product is high in salt, sugar, or oil.
- ♦ If you have a physical disability or handicap, know that Israeli accommodations may differ from those required in the US (like handicap accessible bathrooms, elevator accessibility).

3. Mental Health

- ♦ Israeli culture may be very different from the culture you are used to. It's normal to be homesick while adjusting to being away from familiar people and things.
- ♦ Keep in contact with your family, especially if there are, *chas v'sholom*, terror attacks, to let them know you're okay.
- ♦ If you or someone you know is suffering from trauma, addiction, or mental health issues, contact Amudim for guidance at amudim.org.il/.
- ♦ If you or someone you know is in a relationship with a friend or mentor that feels unsafe or unhealthy, seek guidance from appropriate school staff members or a trusted adult.
- ♦ Some schools designate a staff member, who may be a licensed social worker or psychologist, to deal with emotional or social issues that arise. Find out if someone you trust holds that position in your school and develop a relationship with him/her.
- ♦ If you are looking for therapy, Get Help Israel offers native English-speaking mental health professionals who are experienced in working with the gap year student population. They can be reached at 072-397-6500.

4. Fire Prevention

- ♦ Unplug electrical appliances when not in use.
- ♦ Don't cover your bedside lamp with any material.
- ♦ Never leave lit candles unattended. If you're lighting in your room for Shabbos, use tea lights and light in a sink, or in an area that's safe and nonflammable. Make sure there's a fire extinguisher nearby. Watch out for sleeves, scarves, and hair.
- ♦ Be cautious with hot plates and blechs (a metal sheet designed to cover the stove-top for Shabbos). Some can get dangerously hot.
- ♦ Know where your fire extinguisher is and how to use it. Remember to activate it by pulling the pin.
- ♦ Keep an emergency flashlight handy to avoid needing to use candles during a power outage.

5. Fire Safety

In the event of a fire, immediately yell for help, warn others, and leave the premises. Don't try to put the fire out yourself.

- ♦ In case of a fire, leave everything behind! Don't re-enter the room or building for any reason! Get yourself and others out of the building immediately and close the door behind you.
- ♦ If any part of you or your clothing catches fire, don't run or try to put out the fire with your hands. Cover your face and stop, drop and roll.



Israel Safety & Security

1. Street Safety

- ♦ It's very easy to become dehydrated in Israel, especially if you're not used to a desert climate. Drink often, even when you're not thirsty and avoid being outside in the summer between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm. Wear a hat and reapply sunscreen often whenever outside, even when it's cloudy, as you can still get sunburned.
- ♦ Always make sure you have emergency cash on you to get a taxi when buses stop running (approximately 11 pm for certain lines, later for others), or if you're in a dangerous area.
- ♦ Be sure to always know where you are. If exploring any new or unfamiliar cities or neighborhoods, take a map with you (or make sure your phone is able to access a map application) and be cautious. If you get lost, seek help from IDF police, soldiers, Jewish individuals, or people speaking Hebrew or English. Otherwise, call someone rather than attempting to get to your destination by yourself.
- ♦ Always use the Sha'ar Yaffo (Jaffa Gate) entrance when entering Jerusalem's Old City by foot or in a taxi. Go with a friend and **don't enter the Arab Shuk when walking to or from the Kotel**.
- ♦ Be extra cautious when visiting popular or prominent locations such as museums and religious, or historical sites.
- ♦ If someone in a car asks for directions, don't get too close. Even if they're very convincing or they threaten you, don't enter the car. Run in the opposite direction and get help.
- ♦ When renting a car, don't pick up hitchhikers, regardless of how normal they look. You don't know who they really are or what their true intentions are.
- ♦ If you have no choice but to hitchhike, don't enter a car unless the driver can answer a Torah-related question to verify that he or she is Jewish (like, what parsha it is).
- ♦ When driving, if you're unsure of what route to take or think you may be lost, don't hesitate to pull over to a safe location, such as a well-lit gas station in a safe area.
- ♦ There are a lot of missionaries in Israel, many of whom speak perfect Hebrew. Yad L'Achim, an anti-missionary organization, can be reached in Israel 24 hours a day at 1-800-620-640.
- ♦ If you're in a building or house when an earthquake begins, immediately leave the building and go outside to an open space. If you can't leave the building easily, enter a secure place like a stairwell or doorway. If you can't get to a secure space, take shelter under a heavy table or in the corner of the room.
- ♦ **Going Out** If you are ever concerned for your safety, call someone and stay on the phone until you feel secure.
- ♦ Stay Alert!
 - Wearing earbuds, anything that displays your name, or fancy clothing can make you an easy target. If you're dressed up for an occasion, be extra vigilant.
 - Limit using your phone and earbuds on the street. They distract you and interfere with your ability to stay alert. If earbuds are needed while out, use only one earbud.
 - If you go running, go with a friend and try to stay alert. Avoid becoming lulled into a "zone." Wear reflective clothing or items when running at night.
 - Avoid unfamiliar neighborhoods, alleyways, and unlit areas. Be mindful of your surroundings and walk purposefully.
 - Be very careful when walking around active construction sites.
- ♦ Keep a well-charged cellphone and fully charged external battery pack. If your school has a no-cellphone policy during the zman (semester), borrow or rent one during the bein hazmanim



(semester break) if the school allows it.

- ♦ Ask a reliable individual about the safety of your destination before traveling.
- ♦ When going out at night, always go with a friend. It's a good idea to create a buddy system with your friends. Always tell each other where you're going and when you expect to return. If plans change, it's crucial to keep your travel buddy updated. You can always use the WhatsApp Live location feature for your friends to know where you're located.
- ♦ When you enter a shul, shopping mall, or other building, identify the exits in case of emergency.
- ♦ When crossing the street, look both ways and cross only at designated areas. Follow street crossing signals, and don't jaywalk or you may get fined. Look out for scooters, motorcycles, and bikes. Also, when walking be alert to the many tripping hazards near construction sites throughout Israel.

2. Hafganot (demonstrations): **DO NOT PARTICIPATE!**

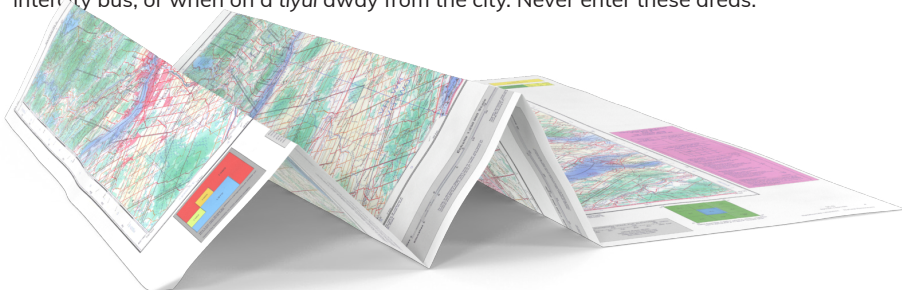
- ♦ *Hafganot* are demonstrations (usually for political reasons) which can get violent very quickly and may include rioting in the streets and setting trash cans on fire. Try to avoid a *hafganah* at all costs.
- ♦ If you can't take another route to avoid a *hafganah*, don't take pictures or get involved, as innocent people have been arrested for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. If the riot becomes very disruptive, policemen will target the area with a foul-smelling spray to break up the demonstration.

3. Chafetz Chashud (suspicious object)

- ♦ Never leave bags, packages, or luggage unattended. They may be mistaken for a *chafetz chashud*.
- ♦ Be alert to any *chafetz chashud*. If you see a *chafetz chashud*, notify the police immediately and don't touch it. Move a considerable distance from the object before calling the police, since some explosives can be triggered by a cellphone signal.

4. Security

- ♦ Pay attention to people's behavior and mannerisms. People who dress in religious garb may not necessarily act within religious boundaries. Be aware that in the past, terrorists have dressed up as Orthodox Jews.
- ♦ Look out for cars driving erratically and, if possible, walk on the sidewalk facing oncoming traffic to avoid a car-ramming attack.
- ♦ In times of heightened security, whenever possible, avoid travel, large crowds, and high-profile areas (Ben Yehuda, Geula, Machane Yehuda shuk).
- ♦ The following Jerusalem neighborhoods are unsafe and should be avoided: Ir David (the areas around the Old City), anywhere in East Jerusalem and the neighborhoods of Shuafat and Bet Hanina (the two stops after Givat HaMivtar on the light rail). The Jewish quarter of the Old City is safe, provided all routes to get there are via Egged, and not through East Jerusalem.
- ♦ White and green license plates denote a West Bank Palestinian vehicle. Yellow and black license plates denote Israeli vehicles. Be familiar with the difference.
- ♦ The West Bank is divided into three "areas," which are distinguished by their governance. Area A is administered by the Palestinian National Authority, Area C by Israel, and Area B under joint control. Common "Area A" cities include Bais Lechem (Bethlehem), Chevron (Hebron), Ramallah, Yericho (Jericho), and Shechem. Jewish *yishuvim* (small towns/settlements) in the West Bank are almost always a part of Area C. Do not travel to, or through, Areas A and B.
- ♦ Black-colored water tanks on tops of buildings generally denote a predominantly Arab population (versus red-colored ones in Jewish neighborhoods). You're most likely to see them when on an intercity bus, or when on a *tiyul* away from the city. Never enter these areas.



Getting Around Town

1. Taxis

Use your school's list of reputable taxi companies and always try to order, rather than hail, a taxi. We highly recommend using Gett Mehadrin, or using a Jewish taxi service over hailing a taxi on the street, so there's a record of where you are and who your driver is. If you have to hail a taxi, make sure to use one from the companies your school recommends. Never enter a taxi that has no taxi license displayed.

Don't Just Get In!

- ♦ The number one thing to keep in mind is that taxi drivers DO NOT normally do favors. Here are some example scenarios in which you should walk away and find another taxi:
 - You are outside in the freezing cold, and he offers to drive you for free...
 - He gives you his number and tells you to call him anytime you need a taxi...
 - He pulls up next to you and asks you where you're going, and then tells you he's going there anyway and can give you a free and/or very cheap ride...
 - You tell the driver that you're going somewhere very far (like from Yerushalayim to Netanya), and he gives you a very cheap price...
- ♦ Don't get into a taxi if there's someone else already in the car.
- ♦ Try not to take taxis alone, especially if traveling to other cities or at night.
- ♦ If a driver makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in any way, take down his license plate number, taxi company name, and any other pertinent information and report him to the police, his company, and your seminary or yeshivah.
- ♦ Be prepared to pay a higher rate than the moneh (meter) if you have luggage.
- ♦ Be prepared to pay more than the normal rate on Erev Shabbos. The driver may not want to use the moneh due to the time constraints of Shabbos.

2. Once in the Taxi

- ♦ Don't sit in the front seat. Buckle up. Keep your cellphone and wallet/purse close to your body.
- ♦ Don't be overly friendly with the driver.
- ♦ If the driver is driving unsafely and won't change his driving method after you ask him to, exit the taxi as soon as it's safe to do so.
- ♦ If you're in a taxi and the driver tells you he wants to make a quick stop or pick up someone else, tell him firmly that you don't want him to do so.
- ♦ Put your directions into Google Maps/Waze/Moovit and monitor the driver's routes. Make sure he's following the directions and tell him to take main roads instead of side streets.
- ♦ If you feel uncomfortable, call someone on the phone and tell them where you are and what your situation is. **STAY ON THE PHONE UNTIL YOU GET OUT OF THE TAXI.** If you don't know where you are, look for street signs, ask the driver, or send someone your live location on Whatsapp.



3. Don't Get Ripped Off

There are many ways that taxi drivers try to get more money out of their customers, especially if they know you aren't Israeli and aren't familiar with the usual fares.

- ◆ Don't allow the taxi driver to haggle you into a "bargain rate" or convince you his moneh is broken—it's not. If he offers you a specific rate, tell him you want to use the moneh (sometimes located on the left side of the taxi) and make sure to count your change before you leave.
- ◆ Always ask for a receipt since it provides all kinds of information about the taxi company or driver.
- ◆ Sometimes taxi drivers will cover the moneh with something so that you can't see it (like a receipt, their phone, etc.). If this is the case, tell him that you want to watch the moneh.
- ◆ When leaving the taxi, make sure to gather all your belongings, including those in the trunk. When retrieving things from the trunk, leave the car door open so that the driver doesn't drive off with your items.



4. Buses

Well-lit and well-populated buses, trains, and light rails are generally safer than taxis.

- ◆ Bus Stops
 - Only travel on green-colored buses in Jerusalem. Blue and white-colored buses are Arab-owned and go to the West Bank. Don't board these buses.
 - Be alert to any oncoming vehicles veering too close. Terrorists have targeted bus, train, and light rail stations with car-ramming attacks.
 - Avoid waiting at bus stops alone at night. If someone drops you off (like from a Shabbos visit), ask them to wait with you until the bus comes.
 - If you have a kosher phone, you can find out when your bus is coming by dialing Kal Kav at 170-070-7050, press 1, then the bus stop number which can be found on the wall of your stop, and then press the pound sign twice.
- ◆ Don't travel in an empty bus, light rail, or train car. If you are the last one on the bus, get off the bus, if it is a safe area, and wait for the next one, rather than staying on the bus alone with the driver.
- ◆ Avoid bus, train, and light rail routes that travel through Arab neighborhoods. Sit in an aisle seat if the route you are traveling is subject to rock-throwing attacks.
- ◆ Try to sit in an aisle seat so you can move easily if needed. Don't be afraid of offending someone by getting up and switching seats quietly. Safety comes before courtesy.
- ◆ If you notice something suspicious or feel threatened, alert the driver and exit as soon as possible.
- ◆ On intercity buses, there is often a luggage compartment under the bus. Remember to tell the driver to open the luggage compartment so you can retrieve your luggage when you get off at your stop.
- ◆ On long bus rides, the driver may sometimes stop to fill up on gas. Take advantage of this time to use the restroom or stretch your legs.

5. Paying for Transit

You can't pay for buses/trains/light rail with cash/credit! You need to buy a bus ticket, a rav-kav, or pay through Moovit's QR code feature.

- ♦ Buying a Rav-Kav
 - You can buy a discounted student rav-kav, but just note that when using that rav-kav it will only allow you to pay for yourself. If traveling with someone else they need their own rav-kav. Rav-kavs may be purchased at many makolets (small stores) around the country. If they offer rav-kav purchases, a sign with a picture of a rav-kav will be displayed in the front of the store. Just note that unused balances on these cards may not be redeemed for cash.
 - You can buy a rav-kav in Yerushalayim at the third floor of the Tachana Merkazit (Central Bus Station) with your picture on it if you bring your passport or Israeli ID. Having your picture on a rav-kav allows you to buy a monthly or yearly pass. It also helps you transfer your balance onto a new card if your rav-kav gets lost or stolen.
- ♦ To avoid a fine, make sure you scan your rav-kav every time you enter a bus/light rail. Although it will beep every time you scan it, you will not be charged again, if you already scanned it within 90 minutes.
- ♦ You can fill up your rav-kav at any light rail station, and at many kiosks, gas stations, and general stores. At these locations, you have the option of choosing from bulk discounts like day passes and week passes.
 - For those with smartphones, the Rav-Kav Online app allows for easy reloading wherever you are.
 - Until recently, when purchasing a rav-kav you were provided with an extra 25% more than what you paid for. This will no longer be provided. Now, if you purchase 30 shekalim on your rav-kav you only get 30 shekalim worth.
 - Other recent rav-kav changes include that a bus ride is now calculated based on the distance of the trip. There is also an unlimited monthly bus pass available that allows you to travel nationwide. Lots more details about various restrictions and student discounts are available on chaimvchessed.com.
- ♦ You can use your rav-kav to buy train tickets at the train station.



6. Personal Safety

As a general rule, when you feel concern for your safety, trust your instincts. Be aware of your surroundings and remember, "If You See Something, Say Something®."

- ♦ Write down and memorize important phone contacts and addresses (like friends, taxi company, dorm or dirah address, family member in Israel). Always carry the information with you so that if your phone loses power you can use someone else's phone instead.
- ♦ Don't lend your phone or give your phone number to anyone you don't know. Your phone can be used for criminal activities and you may be implicated.
- ♦ Always carry Benadryl with you in case you, or someone you're around, has an allergic reaction. It's so simple, and can really save lives. Also, carry an inhaler/EpiPen, if needed.
- ♦ Never leave your drink unattended. Ever.
- ♦ Keep tissues, band-aids, pain relievers, and hand sanitizer with you at all times.
- ♦ Limit conversations with strangers, and don't be overly friendly or share personal information. Don't give out any personal or credit card information in public to keep anyone from using the information.

- ♦ Beware of people who try to be your friend in order to take advantage of you. They may pressure you into actions you would not normally commit, by using gifts, guilt, blackmail, or other tactics.
- ♦ While far from home, you'll develop closer relationships with extended family and friends. Politely and firmly establish boundaries, including *yichud* and *negiah* (men and women avoiding seclusion and touching). Rehearse possible scenarios in your mind or with a friend, and decide the best way to respond ahead of time.
- ♦ If you are in a bad predicament, even if you think it is your fault, reach out to a trusted adult for help. Even if you feel guilty or embarrassed, your safety is more important than anything else.
- ♦ Leave plenty of extra time to be back for curfew if you plan to go out at night. The later the hour, the more dangerous it can be. If you see you'll be late for curfew, don't panic. Try to think clearly. It's better that you call your *madrich* or *madricha* and explain your situation than choosing to do something dangerous, maybe making the situation even worse.
- ♦ When planning a *tiyul* (trip) with friends or going to a large event, check with appropriate staff to make sure your plans are safe (in terms of location, communication, supplies), and that the trip complies with school rules. Tell the staff when you expect to return. If your plans change, update them. Don't travel outside the country without approval from your school and parents.
- ♦ If you're drinking alcohol on *Purim*, make sure to drink responsibly and have a designated driver.
- ♦ Being far from home can inspire greater courage and self-reliance, but use your common sense. Avoid peer pressure and think before you act. Long-term goals may be ruined by one wrong decision.

General Transportation Safety and Tips

- ♦ At many light rail stations, there's no barrier between the train tracks and pedestrians. Don't get too close to the tracks and remember to look both ways before crossing.
- ♦ If you're unsure how to get somewhere, call *8787 and a real person will tell you which route to take! The service is most likely in Hebrew, but you can ask for an English-speaking representative.
- ♦ Check relevant schedules before departing to ensure that the bus, train, or light rail you need will be available (bus schedules often change late at night, Erev Shabbos, Erev Shabbos Chanukah, Erev Shabbos before Lag B'omer, etc.) On Erev Yomim Tovim—especially Erev Yom Kippur and *Purim*—getting a taxi is extremely difficult. When planning to travel by taxi make sure to plan your departure well in advance.
- ♦ If you lose something on a bus, Egged has a lost and found you can call at *2800.
- ♦ The intercity train does not work on Fridays and has less available times on Motzei Shabbos. Check accordingly.
- ♦ If you're unsure if the bus is going the right way, or which direction you should be going, ask the bus driver. Most bus drivers are helpful and obviously know the bus routes well. When traveling to an unfamiliar neighborhood, sit close to the driver's seat.
- ♦ Don't discuss personal information with your friends or on the phone while using public transportation/taxis.
- ♦ For safety reasons, avoid the new central bus station in Tel Aviv especially after dark!
- ♦ Keep your belongings with you at all times to prevent theft. Check that you have all your belongings before you exit any vehicle.

Play it Safe, Seriously!

Follow your school's safety rules! They were instituted to keep you as safe as possible. If a specific situation dictates otherwise, follow common sense.

7. Self-Defense

Be wary of anyone with suspicious behavior like darting eyes, excessive sweating, or other signs of nervousness, being overdressed, wearing bulky clothing, or carrying large packages. If you see someone behaving like this, call the police. Trust your instincts.

- ♦ Request that your school host basic self-defense, CPR, and first aid courses.
- ♦ Remain alert and prepared to defend yourself in a hostile situation. Think strategically and creatively and use whatever is easily accessible to defend yourself (like keys, pens, chairs, etc.).
- ♦ If you are attacked or grabbed, scream for help and run away, if possible. Activate your My Mda app, alert the police immediately, and file a report. Notify your school and parents.
- ♦ If someone tries to attack you with a knife, run in the opposite direction, if possible. Try to create a barrier between you and the attacker. Use a backpack, table, chair, etc. If you have no choice but to fight the attacker, try to defend yourself and block the knife as much as possible with your forearms.
- ♦ If someone tries to rob you, toss your wallet or purse to the side and into the robber's line of sight and run in the opposite direction. Notify the police and file a report.

8. Money

- ♦ Avoid carrying large amounts of cash on you. If you must, store it out of sight and securely on yourself.
- ♦ Keep your wallet or purse close to your body at all times. If you must place it in a backpack, don't put it in an outer pocket where it can be easily pickpocketed. Pay attention to your surroundings when pulling out your wallet.
- ♦ Avoid using ATMs at night. When using an ATM, make sure no one is standing too close or loitering nearby. When entering your PIN, cover the screen and make sure you're logged out before walking away.
- ♦ Credit card information and personal data can be stolen when making payments online. Use only secure websites and WiFi.
- ♦ Find out your school's tzedakah policy and keep pocket change handy. If giving someone tzedakah, move slightly away from the person when opening your wallet or purse.



Going Out for Shabbos

1. Leave Early!!

- ♦ It takes much longer to get to places on Erev Shabbos because of traffic, bus schedules, and crowds. Leave as early as you can, especially when Shabbos comes in early.
- ♦ On Fridays, the train doesn't operate and buses stop approximately one hour before candle lighting.
- ♦ If you see you won't get to your destination before Shabbos, get to a safe place. Contact your hosts and inform them. If you can't reach anyone, call 100 (police) and let them know you are safe to avoid a search party on Shabbos and prevent *chillul* Shabbos (Shabbos desecration).

2. Safety

- ♦ There have been many stories of seminary and yeshiva students going places for Shabbos without checking them out first and having a very uncomfortable Shabbos at best, and at worst, a traumatizing experience.
- ♦ Only go to people you know personally or if you know a previous guest personally who can vouch for them safety/kashrus-wise. DO NOT just call numbers from a list without any references.
- ♦ Tell someone—either a dorm counselor, or a few friends—where you are going for Shabbos and give them the host's contact information.
- ♦ Check that the route to your host is safe, especially during times where security is heightened. Bring cash with you in case you miss the last bus and will need a taxi.
- ♦ If there's an issue regarding the family you're staying with, or you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in their house, go to the nearest shul and look for the rabbi/ rebbetzin and stay there until after Shabbos. After Shabbos, notify your school about the issues you had so the family can be taken off any lists given to students.
- ♦ Know your boundaries. Offer to help your hosts, but don't be afraid to politely say no if they ask you to do something you're not comfortable with.

3. Guest Tips

- ♦ Make sure your host knows before Wednesday night that you're coming for Shabbos, as people often shop for Shabbos early in Israel.
- ♦ Offer to bring linen with you to your host. It's common for people to host seminary/yeshiva students every week, and you'll save them from having to wash so much linen.
- ♦ If you, or anyone accompanying you, has any allergies, make sure to let your host know so they can cook accordingly. Bring basic snacks just in case.
- ♦ Bring either a dessert, wine, or flowers to your host as a gift. It doesn't have to be expensive, 10 shekalim or more is standard.
- ♦ Your host is doing you a huge favor by having you for Shabbos. Show how much you appreciate it by arriving a couple of hours before Shabbos and offering to help with the kids, setting the table, etc., rather than showing up 10 minutes before Shabbos.
- ♦ Don't EVER light candles in a guest bedroom.
- ♦ Throughout Shabbos, make a point to talk with the host rather than just sitting at the table talking with your friends.
- ♦ Help clean up after Shabbos!



Crowd Safety

Preparation and awareness can save your life!

Before You Go

- ♦ When going to crowded events (like concerts, burials, group events, etc.), always bring a fully charged phone, portable charger, a small pocket flashlight, ID and any urgent medical devices or medication.
- ♦ Always go to large events with a friend as two people can spot potential issues better than one. Choose a meeting place with your friend in case you get separated.
- ♦ At indoor venues, check that exit doors aren't blocked. If they're blocked, notify staff to remove the items. Make sure emergency exit doors can be pushed outward, not pulled inward.
- ♦ Don't wear anything that can pull you down or get snagged. Wear comfortable shoes with securely tied laces.

At an Event

If a crowd feels too crowded or chaotic, go with your gut and leave before it becomes dangerous.

- ♦ When entering a venue that is anticipating or has a very large crowd at the front, it's safer to not be part of the first group of people going inside.
- ♦ If the entrance to the venue is an open space, try to remain on the periphery or edge of the crowd instead of in the middle so you can leave easily if needed.
- ♦ Maintain adequate space between yourself and the people next to you.
- ♦ Seek out emergency exits and medical security stations, and plan a potential escape route if necessary.
- ♦ Don't sit or stand on stages or bleachers that feel unstable or if people are jumping on or pushing them.

- ♦ Be careful on wet, slippery terrain, especially when going down any stairs. Use handrails or banisters, if available.
- ♦ If you smell smoke or hear an alarm, leave promptly and don't panic. Follow directions from security staff or emergency responders.

Crowd Crush

The most important thing is to try not to panic and to remain calm so you can think clearly and make the right decisions.

- ♦ **Do**
 - Try to stay on your feet.
 - Keep your arms at chest level to maintain your personal space and keep your balance.
 - Stay away from barricades, fences, or walls since they could potentially trap or crush you.
 - Use the emergency exit doors instead of the main entrance if you are leaving a building.
- ♦ **Don't**
 - Bend down to tie your shoes or for any other reason in an unsafe crowd. If you drop something, DO NOT pick it up. It's not worth your life.
 - Stop to take pictures or videos of an unruly or dangerous crowd. Focus instead on getting out safely.
 - Stand still or go against the flow of the crowd. Instead, keep moving calmly and quickly in the direction of the flow without injuring others or causing panic. Take any opportunity to get to an open space or outside the venue.

How to Survive a Crowd Crush

- ♦ If you fall, lie on your side in a fetal position and cover your head. Don't lay on your back or stomach since your goal is to protect your head, lungs, heart, and other vital organs. Save your oxygen; don't scream.

This page is dedicated in loving memory of the 45 victims who tragically lost their lives in a crowd crush in Meron on Lag B'Omer 2021 and those who lost their lives in a bleacher collapse in Givat Ze'ev just a few weeks later.



Safety Alerts

Before an alert, learn where all the miklats, (bomb shelters, safe rooms), also known as a mamad or mamak, are located in your school buildings, dorms, or dirahs. Don't make assumptions but instead follow instructions!

If you hear an emergency siren, you have between 15 seconds and three minutes to find shelter depending on your location (see pages 16 and 17).

1. If you are in a building:

- ♦ Enter the miklat or interior stairwell and close the door and windows.
- ♦ Lock the door and ensure that the iron and aluminum windows are shut.
- ♦ Don't shelter in a kitchen, bathroom, or shower because of the risk that porcelain, ceramic, mirrors, and glass will shatter as a result of shockwaves from the blast.

2. If you are in a vehicle:

- ♦ In a car – stop at the side of the road and run into the nearest building. If there's not enough time to reach a building, get out of the car, distance yourself from it, lie on the ground, and protect your head with your hands.
- ♦ On a bus – the driver will stop by the side of the road and open the doors so you can go to the nearest building. If there are no buildings, you must duck under the window line and protect your head with your hands.
- ♦ On a train – the driver will slow the train to 30 kilometers per hour for 10 minutes. You must duck under the window line and protect your head with your hands.

3. If you are outside

- ♦ Run into the nearest building. If there is no building in sight, sit on the ground and protect your head with your hands.

Stay in your location for 10 minutes after an alert or an attack. Israel's Iron Dome defense system does not provide a complete defense so you must make sure to remain in a safe location. If you see a rocket, missile, or unidentified object on the ground, stay away from it and notify defense officials. Don't congregate near the object since debris may still fall.

Instruction on what to do during an alert

During transit

Stop on the side of the road

Exit from the vehicles

Go inside the closest building

Lie down - If you can't - lie on the ground and protect your head with your hand



On public transport

on city bus

Exit and enter the closest building

On intercity buses and the train

Duck under the window line and protect your head with your hands



In a building

Go inside the Mamad/Mamak/Shelter

Close the windows

Lock the door



Outside

In a built - up area:

Enter the closest building

In an open area:

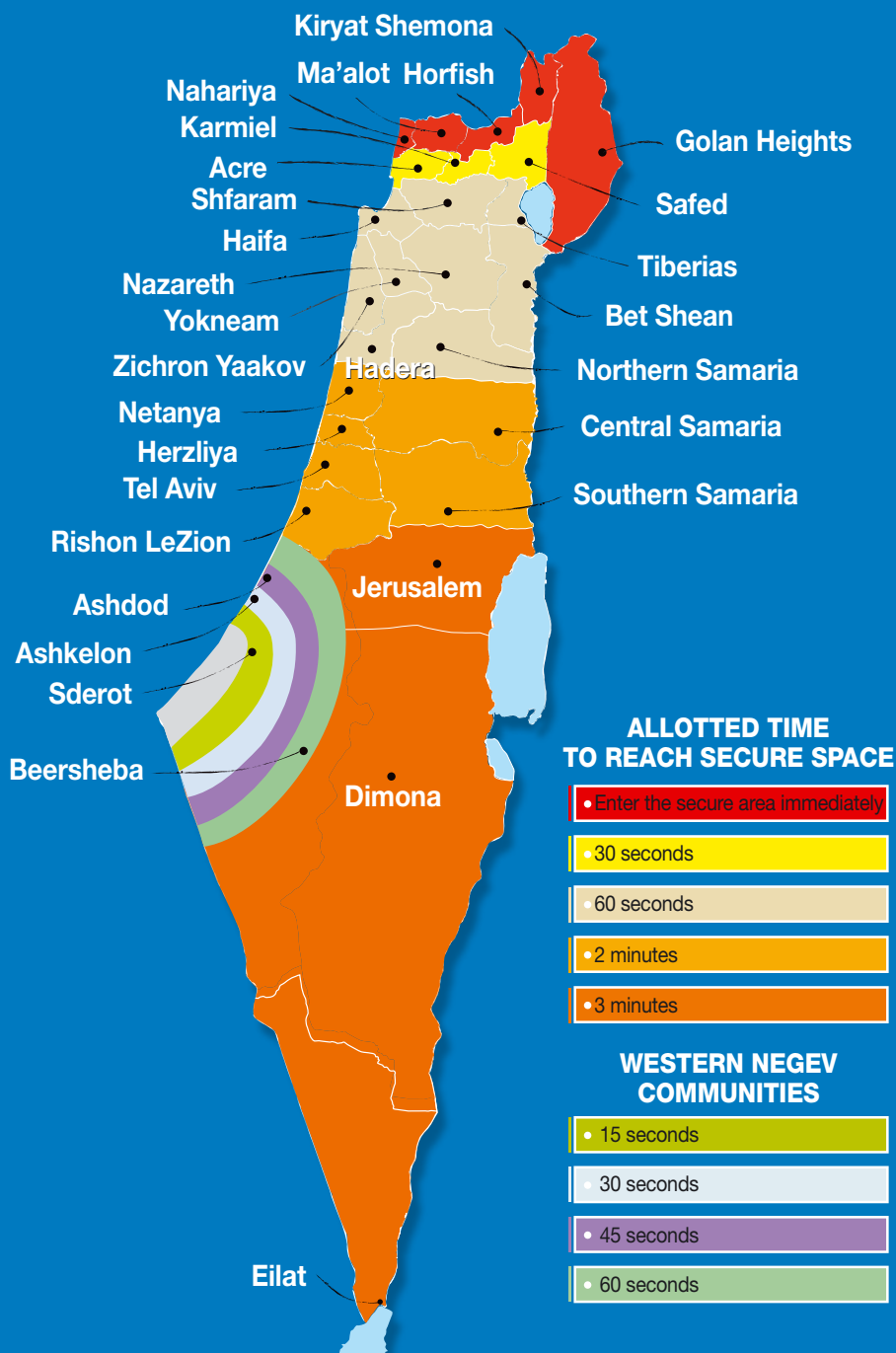
Lie on the ground and protect your head with your hands



Wait 10 minutes!



MAP OF REGIONS BY WARNING TIME



Reprinted with permission from Home Front Command's Guide to Emergency Preparedness



HOW SHOULD YOU CHOOSE A SECURE SPACE?

Choose your secure space based on the amount of time you have to get there from the time the alarm is sounded, in the following order of priority (from most preferred to least preferred option):

- A reinforced secure room in a house/apartment (mamad) or reinforced secure room on the same floor in an apartment building (mamak) are the preferred options.
- Bomb shelter
 - **Bomb shelter in a multi-dwelling building** - A shelter inside a building that can be reached through an interior stairwell without concern for the warning time limit, since the surrounding stairwell walls provide protection.
 - **Public bomb shelter** - A shelter that can be reached within the warning time limit, according to the map of regions by warning time.

If you do not have a reinforced secure space in your home, on your floor, or quick access to a bomb shelter:

- If you are on the top floor of a building that does not have an internal bomb shelter, go down one flight of stairs and remain in the stairwell.
- If you are not on the top floor, select an internal secure space in which there are few external walls, windows, or openings/doorways.

Do not choose a kitchen, bathroom or shower because of the risk that porcelain, ceramic, mirrors, and glass will shatter as a result of shockwaves from the blast.



RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTH:

Residents of communities that directly border Gaza and have a 15 or 30 second warning time should choose a secure space in the part of the house that is furthest from the source of the attack (the Gaza Strip)

Trip and Hiking Safety

One of the most important things to keep in mind when hiking in Israel is the intense heat and the possibility of dehydration. Since Israel is a desert, it's extremely easy to get dehydrated, especially if you haven't hiked in Israel before. Bring lots of extra water (not soft drinks) and drink continually throughout the hike. If someone exhibits dehydration or heatstroke symptoms, call for help and use the My Mda app. If there is no cellphone coverage, have a medically skilled person stay behind with the dehydrated person while two others seek help.

1. Before your trip

Familiarize yourself with dehydration and heatstroke symptoms before your trip. Even mild dehydration can lead to heatstroke, which can be fatal, so stay alert for anyone exhibiting any symptoms, including yourself.

Dehydration

- ♦ Profuse sweating
- ♦ Dry mouth
- ♦ Dark-colored or no urine
- ♦ Tiredness
- ♦ Dizziness
- ♦ Headaches or lightheadedness
- ♦ Fever
- ♦ Impaired judgment
- ♦ Moving oddly and stumbling

Heatstroke Symptoms

- ♦ Temperature greater than 104°F (40°C) and dizziness
- ♦ Headaches and confusion or feeling "out of it"
- ♦ Nausea/vomiting
- ♦ Diarrhea
- ♦ Loss of muscle function, balance, or staggering
- ♦ No sweating
- ♦ Weakness
- ♦ Dehydration
- ♦ Rapid pulse and/or breathing

♦ Weather

- Check the weather forecast and temperature before you leave and postpone the tiyul if it's too hot, or there'll be severe flooding. Keep yourself updated on any weather or security changes before and throughout your trip. Be prepared to end the tiyul early to ensure everyone's safety.
- Don't begin a hike in the late afternoon. Sunset and nightfall occur very quickly in Israel, and it's easy to get lost or injured. Avoid midday hiking in summer or, at a minimum, greatly extend the length and frequency of rest periods during the hottest part of the day. Before planning your hike, make sure everyone is acclimated to the heat. Rest in the shade when possible.
- When traveling in areas prone to flash floods, especially in southern Israel, check frequently for weather warnings to avoid unnecessary risk to life. Flash floods most commonly occur in winter and early spring. Severe weather changes can happen suddenly and rapidly; Ten students were tragically killed during a flash flood just a few years ago. If you are caught in a flash flood, move to higher ground immediately. It is usually safer to be on foot than in a vehicle during a flash flood. Don't walk through moving water and don't touch electrical equipment.

♦ Do Your Research and Be Prepared

- Get advice from people who have gone on that hike or similar type of tiyul before. If your school allows, join reputable Facebook and WhatsApp groups for hiking tips and safety information. Ensure the route to/from the hike's location is safe and the level of difficulty is appropriate for all those hiking. Don't overestimate your abilities.

Hiking Packing List

- 2 extra liters of water per person
- A hat with a brim is a **MUST** when hiking in the desert. Be careful not to expose any skin to the sun. You can use a cotton/polyester scarf to protect from the sun as well, or flip up your shirt collar.
- Sunscreen is a **MUST** and should be reapplied every few hours (even when it's cloudy it's possible to get badly burned).
- Extra nutrient-rich high calorie food – You may not be able to buy extra food/water in the area you are hiking.
- Fully charged cellphone, charger, and extra battery pack – Your phone's GPS may be used as a locator if you get lost.
- Watch
- Compass
- Portable fire extinguisher
- Maps
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Waterproof matches or portable fire extinguisher
- Everyone should have a whistle for emergency purposes.
- 2-way radio and a Satellite Emergency Notification Device (SEND)
- Proper hiking boots/foot gear
- Reflective clothing/belts for night or bike trips
- Any medications or medical devices you may need (like antibiotics, asthma inhaler, EpiPen, insulin). If possible, make sure all hikers know how to administer the medications or devices.
- List of emergency numbers
- Siddur/Tefillin for an overnight hike
- Loose-fitting clothing with long sleeves and long pants/skirts for hikes to increase circulation/airflow, but tight-fitting clothing for bike trips. Pack an additional change of clothes.
- First Aid Kit
 - Band-aids
 - Thermometer
 - Ace bandage
 - Antiseptic wipes
 - Pain reliever
 - Antihistamines/Benadryl
 - Oral rehydration salts
 - Flashlight
 - Multipurpose tool



- When biking and hiking, check to make sure the path is well maintained, has appropriate signage, and is well lit.
- Review main roads/paths of the tiyul area beforehand with someone who knows the area well to avoid driving through dangerous neighborhoods. If you're hiking outside a national park, it's very important to have a *mapat simun shvilim* (extremely detailed map of the region). This can be invaluable for general navigation, avoiding getting lost, and finding your way back if you lose your way. All hikers should take a copy of the map.
- When hiking somewhere far, make sure you have the number of a taxi company in that area in case of an emergency.
- Make sure at least two people download the SOS My Mda app in case of an emergency.
- Sleep at least 6-8 hours before the hike. Inadequate sleep for two or more nights in a row is dangerous, especially if the hike will take more than one day.
- Tell someone who won't be on the hike the details of your trip (expected travel routes, contact information, expected return time, etc.). That way, if you get lost, they'll have your trip details and can provide them to authorities.

2. On the Hike

- ♦ **Never hike alone.** Go as a group of at least four people and don't split up.
 - You should establish a buddy system and hire a guide from a reputable tour company, and preferably an armed security escort as well.
 - Designate an experienced hiker to lead the group in front, and a responsible person should follow in the back to ensure no one is left behind. In your hiking group, you should have at least one medically skilled person with first aid, CPR, and survival training if possible.
 - If you, or someone in your group, is sick or injured, keep them hydrated and sheltered, and monitor his or her airway, breathing, and pulse. Control bleeding with direct pressure. Call for help with cellphones and/or the My Mda app. If there is no service, leave the sick or injured person behind with the medic while two or more people seek help.
- ♦ **Stay hydrated.**
 - **DRINK!** Listen and pay attention to your body. Keep in mind that the urge to drink is delayed. Drink 2-3 cups of water (not soft drinks!) an hour even if you are not thirsty. It is difficult to overhydrate and water in your body is more useful than water in your bottle.
 - Stop for 5-10 minutes for every hour hiked. After 2-3 hours stop for at least 30 minutes. Eat, drink, and rest in the shade. Sit on the ground, as sitting on hot rocks can dehydrate you.
- ♦ Be extra vigilant not to get lost. If anyone is missing, even for a short time, use the My Mda app.
 - Stay on marked paths and don't take shortcuts! If you are unsure of where you are, stop immediately at the nearest safe location.
 - Make sure all groups have a two-way radio and a medic in the event your group ever splits up.
 - Designate an assembly point for your group for emergencies (if someone goes missing).
 - Take head counts of your group before and after leaving an area.
- ♦ If you are lost
 - Don't panic, stay calm, and try to think logically. Breathe through your nose slowly and calmly. Find shelter.
 - Use your phone's My Mda app, call police (100), and/or emergency contacts.



Stay in one location so you can be found more easily. If there is poor internet, try texting someone.

- Change the voicemail message on your phone, if possible, to tell people what your situation is so that anyone trying to find you will be able to hear it when calling, even if your phone loses power.
 - Use a whistle to attract attention, or shout for help intermittently.
 - If you don't have a cellphone, try to spot trail markers and follow them to safety.
 - Look for a stream. In summer, streams dry up, so look for a very sandy path with indentations that run in a flowing motion. If you find even a small stream or path, follow it. Often they lead to larger streams or paths, which may be close to roads. Once you find a road, seek help.
 - If it is getting dark and you are still lost, if practical, climb a tree to be out of reach of wild animals. Don't try to seek help at night, given the many dangers.
- ♦ Safe Hiking Practices
- Never move rocks with your hands, as snakes or scorpions could be underneath. If someone is bitten, don't take chances—seek immediate medical attention.
 - Don't enter minefields (generally marked clearly), which can be found throughout Israel.
 - When arriving at a fork in a path, one hiker should stay at the fork and direct the rest of the group toward the correct direction.
 - Don't take selfies near cliffs and other dangerous areas. Unfortunately, many people have died this way.
 - Camping tents should be set up only in a *chenyon layla* (night camping area). Sleep only in a tent, never sleep outside unprotected.
 - When making campfires, do so only in approved areas, never close to plants or trees.
 - Check footwear left outside overnight for bugs or animals.
 - Check before, during, and after your hike to ensure that you have all your belongings.
 - Make sure to extinguish a campfire thoroughly before going to sleep or leaving the area.



♦ Water Safety

- Never swim alone or in unguarded waters!
- Don't go swimming in bad weather, such as lightning, thunderstorms, or heavy currents.
- Wear waterproof sunscreen.
- When boating, or doing any water sports, wear a life jacket and water shoes with good traction.
- Make sure everyone in your group can swim and use a buddy system.
- Open bodies of water may have undercurrents that can tire or drown even a strong swimmer. Get out of the water if you start to feel tired, cold, or experience muscle cramps.
- Never dive or jump into the water, since you can't know how deep the water is or if there are underground rocks. In addition, jumping into cold water may cause shock or severe muscle cramps.
- If you receive a deep cut or puncture wound while swimming, immediately get out and call for a medic or lifeguard. Clean the affected area with bottled water, use antibiotic ointment, and bandage the wound. See your doctor when you get back.
- Unless you are a lifeguard, don't attempt to rescue someone who is drowning. Amateur rescue attempts can lead to additional deaths. Summon a lifeguard immediately. Use your My Mda app and call for help.

Nitty-Gritty Stuff About Israel

1. Kashrus

Ask your school or rabbi how best to familiarize yourself with the standards of kashrus in Israel. Fruits and vegetables need extra attention during the shemittah year.

2. Hospitals and Clinics

- ♦ Bring your passport, money, and your insurance card/information when visiting a hospital or clinic.
- ♦ Prepare for long wait times. Most clinics have English-speaking staff if you don't speak Hebrew.

3. Money

- ♦ Money changers usually have better exchange rates than banks. Count your money before you leave.
- ♦ Not all Israeli ATMs accept American ATM cards. (Bank Hapoalim is one exception.) There's a charge for using an international credit card at an Israeli ATM, plus in many cases, a commission fee. The charge may vary based on banks, networks and ATM owners. Make larger, fewer withdrawals to save money.
- ♦ Check your credit card and bank statements for fraudulent charges or mistakes.

4. 'Good to Know' Tips

- ♦ You can order Artscroll books at Artscrollisrael.co.il, and they will deliver straight to your door! You can also call or WhatsApp: 02-656-4112 (Hebrew) or 053-541-2575 (English).
- ♦ Follow your school's guidelines on internet use. Be careful what you post, as social media has many pitfalls and the internet is forever.
- ♦ To rent a car in Israel, you must be 21 or older, have a valid license, and have or obtain appropriate insurance. Always lock the car doors and wear a seat belt. Insist your friends wear seat belts as well. Remember, Israel's speed limits are in kilometers, not miles. Look out for changing speed limits. Also, be aware that Google Maps and Waze may take you through dangerous areas. Be sure your route is safe before you travel.
- ♦ If you are renting a hotel or motel room, or Airbnb, research it beforehand to make sure it's safe and bedbug-free. Confirm reservations before leaving for the trip.
- ♦ Israel has a large feral cat population. Don't try to befriend or interact with them. If you get bitten or scratched, seek medical attention.

Useful Safety Terms

- ♦ Bidud (בידוד) - isolation
- ♦ Bedikat Corona Nugdanim (בדיקת קורונה) - COVID-19 test/antibody test
- ♦ Chisun (חיסון) - vaccine
- ♦ Chafetz Chashud (חפץ חשוד) - abandoned or suspicious package or suitcase
- ♦ Hafganah/Hafganot (הפגנה) - demonstration/s
- ♦ Mishtara (משטרה) - police
- ♦ Beit Cholim (בית חולים) - hospital
- ♦ Aish (אש) - fire
- ♦ Alergia (אלירדיזיא) - allergy

Phone Numbers

Important Numbers

Police

Emergency: 100 | Non-Emergency: 110

Magen David Adom (ambulance)

101

United Hatzalah

1221

Fire

102

Emergency services on mobile

112

ZAKA (rescue and recovery)

1220

Home Front Command

1207

Health Ministry

5400

Sexual Assault/Rape Hotline

Female: 1202 | Male: 1203

Emotional Crisis Hotline (ERAN)

English Speaking

1201

Amudim

Organization providing comprehensive crisis assistance and travel information.

Israel: 02-374-0175 | US: 516-636-0175

For life-threatening emergencies:

646-517-0222 ext 999

Terem Urgent Care Centers

1-599-520-520 | www.terem.com

Locations in Ashdod, Be'er Sheva, Beit Shemesh, Bnei Brak/Ramat Gan, Carmiel, Eilat, Jerusalem, Kiryat Gat, Maaleh Adumim, Modiin, Nahariya.

Poison Control

04-777-1900

Maier Solomon Referrals

Medical referrals and emergency medical evacuation (24/7)

054-583-4413

Helpful Numbers

Health Ministry

5400

US Embassy – Tel Aviv

03-519-7575 or 03-519-7475

US Embassy – Jerusalem

02-630-4000 or 02-622-7230

Tahel Crisis Center for Religious Women & Children

02-673-0002

Ezra L'Marpeh (Rabbi Firer)

Medical Referrals

03-577-7000

Tvunot Family Resource Center

02-651-6837

Chaim V'Chessed

Resource organization for students and foreigners to assist navigating Israel governmental, travel, and health services.

Israel: 072-243-7733 | US: 718-407-2448

Oleh Pay

Easy and convenient way to send money to and from Israel without bank fees.

Israel: 02-376-2028 • olehpay.co.il/

Zmanim

02-650-ZMAN

Egged (bus service)

2800

In the United States

Poison Control

1-800-222-1222

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

A service of the US Department of State; Provides the latest security updates and enables the US embassy to contact you in case of emergency. Requires registration online.

www.step.state.gov

Dedicated in memory of R' Zalman Angster, OBM

Getting to Know Israeli Currency

Below is a guide to Israel's bills and coins, which are in New Israeli Shekel (NIS), with denominations in shekalim and agorot. The exchange rate, which changes daily, will determine how many shekalim you will receive for every dollar you exchange. The approximate values in US currency below will reflect this range.

Images shown are of old and new bills, which are both currently in circulation.



₪ 200 Bill
(Value: \$61.29)
Largest bill in circulation.



₪ 100 Bill
(Value: \$30.64)



₪ 50 Bill
(Value: \$15.32)



₪ 20 Bill
(Value: \$6.13)



₪ 10 Coin
(Value \$3.06)



₪ 5 Coin
(Value \$1.53)



₪ 2 Coin
(Value 61¢)



₪ 1 Coin
(Value 31¢)



₪ Half Shekel Coin
(Equal to 50 Agorot : Value 15¢)



10 Agorot Coin
(Value 3¢)

Information verified as of August 23, 2022 and is subject to change. 3.22 NIS=\$1.00.

Before You Go Back

1. Passport

- ♦ Be sure your passport is current. If it isn't, renew it at the American Embassy in Tel Aviv (053-519-7475 or 03-519-7575), which has a very helpful staff, or at the American Embassy in Jerusalem (02-630-4000 or 02-622-7230). These appointments should be made months in advance. Don't wait!

2. COVID-19 Requirements

- ♦ Check the latest COVID-19 requirements for flying at these up-to-date sites:
 - Ministry of Health- Covid-19health.gov.il/en/abroad
 - amudim.org/entrance-to-israel-advisory
 - chaimvchessed.com
 - yadlolim.org

3. Check your flight's status by checking with your airline.

- ♦ You can also visit the private website busy-tlv.co.il which provides pre-flight information at Ben Gurion Airport.

4. Customs

- ♦ US Customs is particularly strict regarding nuts and flower seeds from other countries. All food must be declared.
- ♦ Be especially careful if you have stopovers in countries with unusual regulations. Check local laws.
- ♦ Although most import taxes don't apply to items purchased in Israel, you must declare anything purchased or acquired outside the US upon your return.

5. Last Minute Pre-Flight Advice

- ♦ The Fourth Amendment, prohibiting unreasonable searches and seizures, does not apply at international borders so your belongings may be searched without a warrant. Be prepared.
- ♦ Review "Important Stuff to Do Before Your Trip," on the Priority Checklist Insert Card and page 5 of this guide.
- ♦ Know that if you purchase bullet-type souvenirs, you may be stopped by security. It's not worth it. Don't bring them on the plane.

CUT OUT AND KEEP WITH YOU.

Emergency Contact Information

Fill out and keep in your wallet or purse.

Name _____

Address _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Parents' Names _____

Address _____ Cell _____

Email _____

School Name _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____ Cell _____

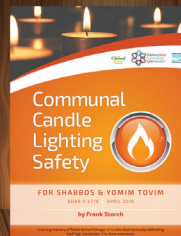
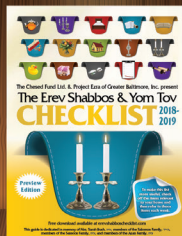
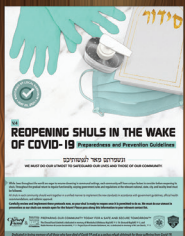
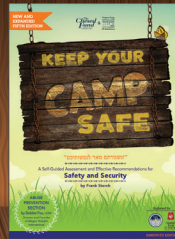
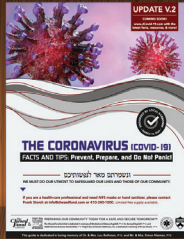
Email _____

Emergency Contact in Israel _____

Cell _____ Email _____

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