



# FSA - Keeping You Safe

## 7 Safety Tips for Spring Break in Florida

Florida is a great place to spend spring break, from its warm sunny weather to beautiful beaches and interesting people. Like many places, however, it can be incredibly crowded during spring break, which means it's a good idea to take extra precautions when it comes to traveling safely. Here are seven safety tips to keep in mind if you're spending spring break in Florida this year.

### 1. Plan Ahead

It's always a good idea to do research before you travel on vacation, and that is especially true if you're planning to spend spring break in Florida. While it may be tempting to figure things out as you go, it's safer to make your plans in advance. Before you leave, know where you will be staying, whether you can park there and how you will be getting around during your trip. It's also a good idea to be familiar with local laws and emergency numbers before you leave. Note important phone numbers, such as the local sheriff's office, in your phone just in case you need them later.

### 2. Share Your Itinerary

Once you've made your plans for spending spring break in Florida, it's a good idea to share those plans with a trusted family member or friend. You don't need to give them a play-by-play, but for emergency reasons, it's safer for someone back home to know where you plan to be. This includes your travel dates, the address of where you will be staying and who you will be traveling with during your vacation. If you're flying, it might be a good idea to share the flight details, as well.

### 3. Stick Together

It might feel silly to use the buddy system as a teenager or adult, but it's an important safety tip for a reason. No matter where you go or what you are doing, it's always safer to stick with a friend. Whether your plans for spring break in Florida include a night out, a trip to the pool or a day at the beach, you should always plan to bring someone with you. Never go to any of these places alone, particularly at night. This is important when it comes to looking out for your friends, as well. Never let a friend wander off with a stranger that he or she just met.

### 4. Don't Overshare Online

One of the best parts of a great vacation is all the great pictures you get to share online, especially of the beautiful Florida beaches. Sharing too much online can be a safety risk, however. If you have a public social media account, it's not a good idea to be posting where you are staying, tagging your location or sharing any other details about your current whereabouts. This doesn't mean you can't share about your trip online, but you

For more tips please visit the Florida Sheriffs Association's Crime Prevention Tips: [flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention](https://flsheriffs.org/crime-prevention).

want to be smart about when and how you do so. Consider waiting to share the pictures until you return home, or making your account private for the duration of your trip.

## **5. Leave Valuables at Home**

Most people want to dress their best when traveling, but there are a few safety precautions to consider when packing your bag. Bringing valuables can make you a target for theft when traveling anywhere, and Florida is no exception. While some valuable items (such as a phone or other technology) are necessary for travel, items such as jewelry or expensive bags might be better left at home. It's also important to never leave your items unattended. It might seem OK to leave your bag on a pool chair or beach towel for just a few minutes, but that's all the time it takes for a thief to strike.

## **6. Drink Responsibly**

As with the rest of the United States, the legal drinking age in Florida is 21. That means if you are under that age, you should not be consuming an alcoholic beverage of any kind during spring break. Underage drinking is a second-degree misdemeanor in Florida and comes with serious consequences. Even if you are of age, you should not be providing alcohol to minors in any capacity. Buying alcohol for any individual under 21 years old is also illegal in Florida.

If you are of legal drinking age, always drink responsibly, know your limits and never get behind the wheel when have been drinking. Not only could your actions result in injury or death for yourself or others, drinking and driving in Florida can result in costly fines, license revocation and even jail time. It just isn't worth it. To enjoy spring break responsibly, plan ahead for a ride share service or designated driver.

## **7. Trust Your Instincts**

Finally, it's important to always trust your instincts when traveling. Gut feelings are there for a reason. If you feel uneasy at any time during your spring break in Florida, listen to your intuition and remove yourself from the situation. This could include a bad feeling about new friends you met at a bar, the hotel where you are staying or someone who will not leave you alone at the beach. It's better to err on the side of caution than to put yourself in danger. If you see anything suspicious, call 9-1-1 or contact local law enforcement immediately.

Spring break is a great time to have fun, experience new things and relax, but don't do so at the expense of your safety. Have a good time when spending spring break in Florida, but also be smart and stay safe.

Know when and how to contact local law enforcement to protect yourself and others in the event of an emergency. This includes knowing the location and phone number of the local sheriff's office for the county in which you are visiting. Visit [FLSheriffs.org](https://flsheriffs.org) for a handy directory of the sheriff's' offices serving each county in Florida.