

Travel Safety Tips

Travelers' Survival Guide: Boarding a Taxi

*"The only reason people get lost is because it's unfamiliar territory."
- Anonymous*

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Write the address of your destination

Ask your concierge to write down the address especially when you can't write in a foreign language. Even if you think you know how to pronounce a name, chances are it will come out wrong.

For example: In China, most drivers do not read pinyin, so ask your concierge to write down the address in Chinese characters.

Look at the map

Arm yourself with a basic idea of the route. Nobody likes to be taken for a ride.

Find a Taxi Stand

Generally, only cabs authorized to carry passengers are allowed at these taxi stands.

Make sure the taxi drivers knows the way

In some countries, drivers are usually old-timers. In other cities, cabbies are often out-of-towners who just arrived yesterday. Some drivers will tell you flat out that they do not know where they're going. Others will just repeat the address endlessly. If the latter happens and you're in an unfamiliar city, do not take your chances and hop out.

Always take a taxi with meters

Often drivers will refuse to turn on their meters so do not board such taxis. **STAND YOUR GROUND!**

Having bad vibes? Get out and hail another one

Especially when you are a woman travelling alone, if the driver is asking too many questions, or is giving you the heebie-jeebies, get him to pull over.

Always make sure you have change on you

Some cab operators take credit cards and NETS but you might not have such luck in many Asian cities. So have a stash of bills in the smallest denominations.

Never leave without checking

Keep your belongings close to you and always check before you leave. In many common situations, they will swerve in the hopes that your valuables pop out unnoticed from your pockets.

Book over the phone whenever possible

In some countries, where cab drivers have an unsavory reputation, certain taxi companies offers reliable staff and clean cars. So be sure to book over the phone and always do your research on taxi companies especially if they are your main mode of transportation.

Look for a company name or know your colors

When you are hailing a cab off the street, (e.g in Jakarta) look for a company name emblazoned on the side as they are usually more reputable. In certain countries, cabs are differentiated by colors so do keep a watch out for them.