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South Africa

Official Name: *Republic of South Africa*

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Embassy Messages

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Quick Facts

- **PASSPORT VALIDITY:**
30 days
- **BLANK PASSPORT PAGES:**
2 consecutive empty visa pages per entry
- **TOURIST VISA REQUIRED:**
Not for U.S. citizens, if visiting 90 days or less
- **VACCINATIONS:**
Yellow fever, at least 10 days before arrival is required for travelers originating from or transiting through [WHO-designated yellow fever countries](#).
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR ENTRY:**
ZAR 25,000; Foreign currency unlimited if declared; No Kruger coins.
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR EXIT:**
ZAR 25,000; Foreign currency unlimited if amount was declared on entry; Up to 15 Kruger coins if proof purchased with foreign currency.

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Embassies and Consulates

U.S. Consulate General Johannesburg**1 Sandton Drive (opposite Sandton City Mall)****Johannesburg 2196****South Africa****Telephone:** +(27)(11) 290-3000 / 011-290-3000 (from within South Africa)**Emergency After-Hours Telephone:** +(27) 79-111-1684 / 079-111-1684
(from within South Africa)**Fax:** +(27)(11) 884-0396 / 011-884-0396 (from within South Africa)consularjohannesburg@state.gov

CONSULATES

U.S. Consulate General Cape Town**2 Reddam Avenue, West Lake 7945,****Cape Town, South Africa****Telephone:** +(27)(21) 702-7300 / 021-702-7300 (from within South Africa)**Emergency After-Hours Telephone:** +(27) 702-7300 / 021-702-7411
(from within South Africa)**Fax:** +(27)(21) 702-7493 / 021-702-7493 (from within South Africa)americanscapetown@state.gov**U.S. Consulate General Durban****303 Dr. Pixley KaSeme Street (formerly West Street)****31st Floor Old Mutual Centre****Durban 4001****South Africa****Telephone:** +(27)(31) 305-7600 / 031-305-7600 (from within South Africa)**Emergency After-Hours Telephone:** +(27) 079-111-1445 / (031) 305-7600
or 079-111-1445 (from within South Africa)**Fax:** +(27)(31) 305-7691 / 031-305-7691 (from within South Africa)consulardurban@state.gov**U.S. Embassy Pretoria****877 Pretorius Street, Arcadia****Pretoria 0083****South Africa****Telephone:** +(27)(12) 431-4000 / 012-431-4000 (from within South Africa)**Fax:** +(27) (12) 431-5504 / 012-431-5504 (from within South Africa)

The U.S. Embassy in Pretoria does not provide consular services to the public.

Destination Description

See the Department of State's [Fact Sheet on South Africa](#) for information on U.S. – South Africa relations.

Entry, Exit & Visa Requirements

South Africa strictly enforces entry and exit requirements and other immigration laws. Failure to observe these requirements may result in the traveler being denied entry, detained, deported, and/or deemed inadmissible to enter South Africa in the future. Please visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) for the most up to date entry and exit requirements.

Visas: U.S. citizen visitors to South Africa for stays of up to 90 days for tourism, short business meetings, or in transit do not require visas in advance. A visitor visas will be issued at the port of entry in South Africa. If you travel to South Africa for any other purpose (e.g. employment or study) you must obtain a visa in advance.

Two Blank Visa Pages: South Africa requires travelers to have two completely blank visa pages in their passports upon every arrival in South Africa. You will be denied entry and forced to return to your point of origin if you do not have two blank visa pages.

Traveling with minors: There are special requirements for minors traveling through South African ports of entry. Visit the [Department of Home Affairs website](#) for the most up-to-date requirements for traveling with minors to or from South Africa.

Immunizations: Travelers entering South Africa from WHO-designated countries with risk of yellow fever virus (YFV) transmission must present their current and valid International Certificate of Vaccination as approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) ("yellow card"). See the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's South Africa page](#) . The U.S. Department of State is unaware of any HIV/AIDS entry restrictions for visitors to or foreign residents of South Africa. However, South Africa has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

Other: Information about [dual nationality](#) or the prevention of [international child abduction](#) can be found on our web site. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information Sheet](#).

The Embassy of the Republic of South Africa is located at 3051 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008, telephone (202) 232-4400. Information may be obtained from the [South African Department of Home Affairs \(DHA\)](#) website.

Safety and Security

In South Africa the equivalent to the "911" emergency line is 10111.

The following paragraphs provide a summary, but please read the Department of State's most recent [Overseas Security Advisory Council Crime and Safety Report on South Africa](#), which provides detailed information about safety and security concerns for travelers to South Africa

Civil Unrest: Strikes and demonstrations occur frequently. These can develop quickly and occasionally turn violent. Strikes can also interrupt provision of electricity, water, public transportation, fuel, and other goods and services. Periodic incidents of mob violence directed against refugees and immigrants from other African countries have occurred in South Africa.

Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence. You should avoid areas of demonstrations and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings or protests.

Crime: Most visitors to South Africa enjoy their visit without incident, but South Africa has a very high level of crime. Violent crimes, such as armed robbery, rape, carjacking, mugging, and "smash-and-grab" attacks on vehicles affect visitors and residents alike. Crime can occur anywhere, but you should exercise particular caution in the central business districts (CBDs) of major cities, especially after dark. Avoid visiting informal settlement areas unless you are with someone familiar with the area. Never walk alone after dark.

If you are a victim of crime, report it to South African Police Service (SAPS). Also see our webpage on [help for U.S. victims of crime overseas](#) which includes resources for all crime victims, including victims of rape and sexual assault.

Internet financial and romance scams: See the [Department of State](#) and [FBI](#) pages for information.

Domestic violence: U.S. citizen victims of domestic violence may contact a [U.S. Consulate General](#) for assistance.

Game parks and outdoor safety: Visitors have been injured and killed by wild animals in South Africa. It is dangerous to leave your vehicle in game parks. Observe park regulations. Be mindful of sharks when swimming. Rip tides are common and very dangerous. Do not swim alone in isolated beach areas or dive into unfamiliar waters.

Hikers must be prepared for rapidly changing weather conditions and ensure they have proper clothing and supplies. Many areas, especially in the Western Cape province, experience brush fires during the summer months (December-February). These fires can burn for several days. Monitor local media and follow fire crew instructions regarding road closures and evacuations.

Travel restrictions: From time to time certain locations may be declared off-limits to U.S. Mission employees for safety reasons. If the same dangers apply to private U.S. citizens, we issue a Security Message to U.S. Citizens. Check the [Mission's website](#) to review Security Messages to U.S. Citizens, and register with the U.S. Mission to South Africa at <https://step.state.gov> to receive new security messages by email during your travels.

For further information:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Call us in Washington at 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts.
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) .
- See [traveling safely abroad](#) for useful travel tips.

Local Laws & Special Circumstances

Criminal Penalties: You are subject to local laws. If you violate local laws, even unknowingly, you may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. You should know that we are limited in what we can do to assist detainees, and your U.S. passport will not help you avoid arrest or imprisonment.

Furthermore, some laws are also prosecutable in the United States, regardless of local law. For examples, see our website on [crimes against minors abroad](#) and the [Department of Justice](#) website.

Arrest Notification: If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the nearest U.S. Consulate in South Africa immediately. See our [webpage](#) for further information.

Faith-Based Travelers: See the [Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report](#).

LGBTI Travelers: There are no legal restrictions on same-sex sexual relations or the organization of LGBTI events in South Africa. See our [LGBTI Travel Information](#) page and section 6 of our [Human Rights report](#) for further details.

Travelers Who Require Accessibility Assistance: South Africa law mandates access to buildings for persons with disabilities, but these laws are rarely enforced. Many tourist attractions, and restaurants near tourist attractions, are equipped with ramps and other options to facilitate access.

Students: See our [Students Abroad](#) page and [FBI travel tips](#) .

Women Travelers: See our travel tips for [Women Travelers](#).

Health

Private medical facilities are good in urban areas and in the vicinity of game parks, but limited elsewhere. Private medical facilities require a deposit before admitting patients. Pharmacies are well-stocked, but you should carry an adequate supply of prescription medication in original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription. HIV and AIDS is a major public health concern.

Much of South Africa is malaria-free, but there is malaria risk in some low-altitude areas year-round and in other areas during the warmer months. Visit the [CDC's malaria web](#) page for details.

Medical Insurance: Most care providers overseas only accept cash payments. We cannot pay your medical bills, and Medicare does not provide coverage overseas. Verify that your existing health insurance provides overseas coverage or obtain travel medical insurance for your trip. Make sure you have coverage for the costs of medical evacuation. See our webpage for more [information on insurance providers for overseas coverage](#).

See the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's South Africa page](#) for information about diseases prevalent in South Africa.

Be up-to-date on [vaccinations](#) recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For further health information:

- [World Health Organization](#)
- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

Travel & Transportation

Road Conditions and Safety: Traffic in South Africa moves on the left, and the steering wheel is on the right-hand side of the car. Under South African law, all occupants of motor vehicles equipped with seatbelts are required to wear them while the vehicle is in operation. Texting or talking on cell phone without a hands-free unit while driving is illegal.

South African law does not require an international driver's license. A valid driver's license from any U.S. state or territory that has the signature and photo of the driver is valid to drive in South Africa for stays of less than six months.

Road conditions are generally good in South Africa, but the road traffic death rate is nearly three times higher in South Africa than in the U.S. The high incidence of road traffic mortality is due to a combination of poor driving, limited enforcement of traffic laws, road rage, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and driving under the influence of alcohol. Use extreme caution driving at night. U.S. Mission employees are prohibited from driving after dark outside of major metropolitan areas. Traffic lights are frequently out of order. Treat all intersections with malfunctioning traffic lights as a four-way stop.

Please refer to the [Road Safety page](#) for more information. Also, visit the websites of [South African Tourism](#) and the [South African National Roads Agency](#) for more information regarding local transportation trends and laws.

Taxis: The use of individual metered taxis dispatched from established taxi companies, hotel taxis, and tour buses is recommended. Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), such as Uber, also operate in South Africa. U.S. Mission employees are not allowed to use minibus taxis or hail taxis on the street. Minibus taxi drivers are often unlicensed and drive erratically.

Rail Service: The long-distance rail service, Shosholoza Meyl; the rapid rail Gautrain in Gauteng Province; and luxury rail services, such as Shosholoza Meyl Premier Classe, Blue Train and Rovos Rail are generally safe and reliable, though mechanical problems and criminal incidents do sometimes occur. U.S. Mission employees are not allowed to use the Metrorail commuter rail service because of safety and crime concerns.

Aviation Safety Oversight: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the government of South Africa's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of South Africa's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA's safety assessment page](#) .

Please see [Fact Sheet for this country](#).

Assistance for U.S. Citizens

U.S. Consulate General
Johannesburg
1 Sandton Drive (opposite
Sandton City Mall)
Johannesburg 2196
South Africa

- **Telephone**
+(27)(11) 290-3000 (from
South Africa 011-290-3000)
- **Emergency After-Hours
Telephone**
(011) 290-3000 or 079-111-
1684 (outside South Africa: +
(27) 79-111-1684)
- **Fax**
+(27)(11) 884-0396 (from
South Africa (011-884-0396)
- **Email**
consularjohannesburg@state.gov
- **U.S. Consulate General
Johannesburg**

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