In 2012 an opportunity arose for me to join a walking tour of Sicily, but I had to travel there by myself. Not wanting to miss out, I did my homework before I left, and loved the freedom of travelling alone.

My motto is "Don't be scared, just be prepared". If you're a solo traveller about to embark on a trip, then read on for my top tips for travelling alone overseas.

If you're prepared for all situations, then you'll be able to enjoy your trip with peace of mind. Photo: Sea to Summit.

Here are my tips for any female taking on solo international travel

1. Do research before your trip

Check that your passport is current and valid for a minimum of 6 months after your trip end date, and if visa's, injections are required. Organise these once your trip is booked.

2. Get travel insurance

This is a must for anyone going overseas, as it's good to be prepared in case you need to visit a doctor on your trip.

3. Book before you go

Book at least your first nights accommodation before you depart, and know how to get there.

4. Make copies of important documents

Make 3 copies of all important documents – passport, visas, tickets, itinerary, travel insurance. Carry one in hand luggage, one in a suitcase and leave one at home with family/friend. I like to email myself a copy, just in case. One of the above copies could be on a USB, but make sure it is stored in a secure place.

5. Keep in regular contact

Arrange to keep in touch with at least one friend or family member while away.

6. Register before your trip

Register your travel plans with Smart Traveller and check current travel warnings. Info is also available on local laws, health risks etc.

There are heaps of steps you can take to make solo travel safer and less stressful. Photo: Sea to Summit

7. Write down important phone numbers

Add important phone numbers to your mobile phone contacts before leaving home such as family/friends, Australian consulate, police, emergency for the countries you are travelling, accommodation, and your bank card services.

8. Be aware of credit card and passport chip scanners

Keep chip credit cards, passport (the new ones all have chips) in <u>RFID scanner blocker</u>. There are a number of purses, wallets or sleeves on the market that can help block chip scanners.

9. Prepaid currency cards

Consider a 'Travel Money Card' or 'Cash Passport'. These are prepaid currency cards available from foreign currency exchange booths, Australia Post and some banks.

10. Notify your bank

If taking a credit card for extra security notify your bank of your travel plans and contact details.

11. Have a backup

Have a backup plan for extra money – don't rely entirely on the internet for money transfers.

12. Look up the health risks

Do some research before departure on health risks, animals, insects, public transport, protocol and culture. It can be an insult to do some things that we take for granted in Australia.

13. Learn the language

Learn some basic language for the country you are visiting. Simply knowing how to say 'hello' can break the ice.

14. Make sure you know the serial numbers of your phone and other devices

This way if it does get stolen, you will be able to identify your phone and it will help for insurance purposes as well.

15. Keep your wits about you

This is an obvious one, but highly populated tourist areas are a hotspot for thieves so try and find the happy medium between taking in the sights, and paying attention to what's going on around you.

If you have any further advice for anyone who is preparing to travel alone? Let us know in the comments below.