



South Africa - High



South Africa Country Map

-  POLITICAL
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-  TERRORISM
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-  CIVIL UNREST
-  MARITIME AND PIRACY
-  HEALTH
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-  TRANSPORTATION

Last Published: 24 January 2026

## COUNTRY OVERVIEW

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Africa, the southernmost country on the African continent, renowned for its varied topography and cultural diversity, is a newly industrialised nation with a mixed economy. South Africa is a high-risk destination. This is due to a severe

threat of crime, frequent violent civil unrest, and various environmental- and health-related risks.

Since the end of Apartheid in 1994 and the subsequent transition to democracy, South Africa has become a favoured destination for tourism and business. However, despite making great strides in establishing social equity, political equality and economic stability, progress has slowed in recent years. As a result of the country's socio-economic problems, South Africa continues to face challenges, such as high levels of crime, ethnic tensions, and periodic incidents of unrest.

Opportunistic and violent crime presents the greatest threat to travellers in South Africa, although the majority of such criminality takes place in low-income townships. There has been an increased number of high-profile shootings in these areas too. Travellers could be targeted by criminals due to their perceived wealth and should exercise increased caution and situational awareness at all times.

Protests are frequent. They can result in the use of aggressive crowd dispersal tactics by security forces that can pose incidental risks to innocent bystanders and trigger localised travel disruptions.

While South Africa's travel infrastructure is relatively well developed, road travel can be hazardous due to dangerous driving practices and poorly maintained vehicles and roads, particularly in remote areas. As such, self-driving should only be considered by travellers with in-country driving experience, otherwise, the use of a local, vetted driver is recommended.

## **CULTURAL INFORMATION**

### **Cultural Tips**

- There are 11 official languages in South Africa, including Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans and English. All road signs, advertisements and directions are printed in English, and may be accompanied by an Afrikaans translation.
- A 10-15 per cent tip to servers is expected. However, travellers should check the bill to make sure that gratuity has not already been added. Airport porters expect 5-10 rand per piece of luggage and porters at hotels expect 10-20 rand per service.
- Homosexuality and same-sex marriage are legal in South Africa. However, attitudes may be less accepting in more rural areas. There have been inci-

dents of violence directed against members of the LGBTQ community.

- There is a significant threat of gender-based violence. Sexual violence is a serious concern in South Africa.

<b>KEY FACTS</b>	
<b>CAPITAL</b>	Pretoria
<b>CAPITAL CITY PHONE CODE</b>	12
<b>COUNTRY PHONE CODE</b>	27
<b>CURRENCY</b>	South African Rand
<b>ELECTRICITY</b>	230 V, 50 Hz
<b>GMT</b>	+2
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	Afrikaans, isiZulu, English
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	President Cyril Ramaphosa
<b>OFFICE WORK WEEK</b>	Monday-Friday
<b>OFFICIAL COUNTRY NAME</b>	Republic of South Africa
<b>PLUG STYLES</b>	Types C, D, M, N
<b>RELIGION</b>	Christian 86%, ancestral, tribal, animist, or other traditional African religions 5.4%, Muslim 1.9%, other 1.5%
<b>TIME ZONE OFFSET</b>	UTC + 2

## KEY FACTS

<b>TYPE OF GOVERNMENT</b>	Parliamentary republic
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## RISK SUMMARY

### **Political - Moderate**

South Africa's 1996 constitution defines the country as a parliamentary representative democratic republic, in which the President is the head of state and head of government. The bicameral national parliament is made up of the lower house (National Assembly), whose members are elected for five-year terms via proportional representation, and the upper house (National Council of Provinces), with members elected by the legislatures of each province.

The ANC has been the dominant political party since the transition to democracy in 1994; however, in recent years, its approval ratings have slumped. At the 2024 general elections, the ANC failed to secure an absolute parliamentary majority for the first time in its post-Apartheid history. In June, the party formed a coalition government alongside the centre-right Democratic Alliance (DA) and eight other parties, with President Cyril Ramaphosa retaining his position. In 2025, the government experienced divisions in the coalition, causing delays to the passage of key legislation, including the annual budget.

Alongside the ANC and DA, South Africa has a growing number of smaller, radical parties. These include the far-left Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), and the uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) party, a populist group led by former ANC leader and president Jacob Zuma. The growth of radical parties has contributed to the ANC's decline and a polarisation of South African domestic politics.

There is a concern of institutional corruption at the local, regional, and national levels.

## Armed Conflict - Low

The risk of armed conflict within South Africa is low, and the nation has strong international relations globally, with no specific external threats from other nations. It operates a large but underfunded conventional military with much of its equipment being inoperable, especially in the air force and navy.

The country does contribute to peacekeeping operations across the African continent, most notably in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where troops have deployed as part of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Congo (MONUSCO). These troops have engaged M23 forces following the Rwandan-backed militia offensive in the eastern DRC in early 2025, but have since begun a phased withdrawal starting in March 2025.

## Terrorism - Low

There is a low risk of terrorism in South Africa due to there being no notable or specific threat posed by either domestic or international terrorist groups. The most prominent terror threat, albeit limited, is posed by extremists linked to the so-called Islamic State (IS) or self-radicalised individuals motivated by conflicts in the Middle East or online Islamist propaganda.

In recent years, South Africa has become a source of funding for Islamist groups further north. Since 2023, reports have indicated that the Islamic State Somalia Province (ISS), operating out of Puntland, receives a considerable proportion of its resources from South Africa via convoluted and complex financial channels.

## Crime - Severe

South Africa has very high rates of crime. Opportunistic and petty crime presents the greatest threat to travellers, particularly in central business districts and urban centres of major cities. High rates of murder and sexual violence are prevalent in large townships, but can also occur in other urban and rural areas. Law enforcement may have limited ability to respond.

Financial crimes are common. ATM fraud includes the placement of skimming devices on ATM's that steal credit card information or thieves posing as volunteers to help their victim withdraw money, then grab the money and card as it is ejected. Skimming also occurs when criminals use a portable credit card processing machine or mobile application to charge a victim's credit card by bumping into a person or holding the reader against a wallet or purse.

Petty thefts, especially pickpockets, are frequent, especially on public transport and in busy areas in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and other urban centres. They often work in pairs or groups, with one person distracting while another steals belongings. Travellers are advised to avoid leaving their phone in their back pocket and use anti-pickpocket bags.

Car smash and grab incidents are common and are avoided by not leaving valuables on a visible and unoccupied seat in the car or cell phones in a docking station visible from the outside.

Spiking is frequently reported in South Africa. Victims of drink or food spiking are at increased risk of assault or sexual violence, including rape. Travellers are advised to closely monitor their beverages in restaurants and clubs and should not accept drinks or unwanted gifts from strangers. Most victims of such crimes are locals, however, tourists have previously been targeted. Criminals also use dating apps to rob, rape or sexually assault victims. Be cautious when using dating apps and meet in well-lit, public places. Always tell friends or family your plans.

Gender-based crime is widespread in South Africa, with the country's femicide rate approximately five times higher than the global average. In November 2025, gender-based violence was declared a national disaster following widespread protests ahead of the G20 summit. Female and LGBTQ+ travellers are advised to exercise heightened vigilance and avoid isolated areas, particularly at night.

Carjackings are common across the country and occur at any time of day, though incidents are more likely at night. Criminals target vehicles at traffic lights, driveways, on-ramps/off-ramps and residential driveways as victims arrive home. It is advisable to avoid stopping unnecessarily, stay on main roads in high-risk areas and park in well-lit spaces.

Armed robberies and shootings can occur in shopping malls, particularly at jewellery stores, high-end electronics stores, and high-end liquor stores. Mass shoot-

ings can and do happen, with three such incidents taking place in 2025, including Marble Hall, Mpumalanga and Gqeberha.

Organised crime is widespread across South Africa, encompassing a range of serious offences beyond armed vehicle hijackings, house robberies, and business robberies. These include human trafficking, smuggling, and extortion. Extortion networks frequently target cafes, restaurants, and luxury apartment complexes. Law enforcement agencies have limited capacity to prosecute high-level organised crime figures effectively.

There is a high rate of identity theft across South Africa, which is conducted by organised criminal gangs. It is highly advised not to give out personal information to untrustworthy sources before receiving appropriate identification. Avoid accessing online bank accounts via hotel computers as an added precaution.

Transport hubs such as airports, trains, and bus stations are areas of high criminal activity. It is advisable to vacuum pack luggage, particularly when transiting through O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, and to keep all valuable items in your carry-on luggage. People were followed from O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg to their destinations and then robbed, often at gunpoint.

There has been a recent rise in violent crime and armed attacks on routes between Cape Town International Airport and the city centre, particularly on secondary roads after dark, with some incidents resulting in fatalities when victims resisted attackers. Travellers are advised to remain on the M3 and N2 rather than the R300, use the dedicated airport approach road (exit 16 on the N2) instead of Borchers Quarry Road toward Nyanga, plan journeys in advance with input from a trusted local contact, and avoid GPS routes that divert away from main roads.

### **Civil Unrest - High**

Demonstrations and protests occur regularly in South Africa. Although many protests remain peaceful, there is a possibility that some could escalate into violence. Travellers in South Africa are advised to avoid all protests as a safety precaution due to the possibility of violence and should seek secure shelter at the first sign of unrest.

Protests are typically triggered by inadequate public service delivery, including load shedding, leading to protracted blackouts and a lack of water access in urban areas. Other causes include perceived government inaction, unequal and segregated distribution of land in both rural and urban areas, lack of housing, and labour unions. The Gauteng Province hosts the political and economic capitals (Pretoria/Tshwane and Johannesburg, respectively) and typically experiences more unrest than other provinces however, Cape Town, Durban and university campuses nationwide are also civil unrest flashpoints.

Such incidents usually involve protesters blocking roads, setting fires, throwing stones at passing vehicles, and low-level vandalism. It is relatively common for protests over service delivery to result in violence, including scuffles with security forces, as well as significant disruptions to overland travel.

Police response varies depending on the type of protest, the severity and the location. Rubber bullets, tear gas, stun grenades and water cannons are typically used to disperse crowds. In more extreme cases, such as the 2021 violent protests following the imprisonment of former President Jacob Zuma, the government ordered the deployment of 25,000 troops to assist the police. It's reported that 340 people died because of the violence, and 1,500 were arrested.

Labour strikes are most likely to occur in the winter months during the 'strike season'. Labour unions are powerful in South Africa and can mobilise thousands of workers at short notice. Industries commonly affected are mining, farming, civil service, and public transport.

It is highly advised to monitor official and local news channels for updates regarding protests, as well as Solace Secure alerts. It is recommended not to approach areas where protests are occurring, and to find different routes to avoid possible roadblocks and crowds.

## **Maritime and Piracy - Low**

South African waters are generally considered low risk for piracy, with no significant incidents in recent years however, vessels transitioning towards the Gulf of Guinea (northwest) or the Mozambique Channel (northeast) may enter higher risk areas.

The Cape Sea Route has become busier since 2023 due to the increased security threat in the Red Sea. This has increased the risk of collisions between vessels and grounding. South Africa's ports, including Cape Town, Durban, and Gqeberha, have struggled to cope with the increased volume of transiting vessels. Ports may have inadequate or obsolete equipment, a lack of capacity, and may suffer from corruption.

The waters near the Cape are notoriously difficult to navigate. The Atlantic Ocean region around the Cape has frequent harsh weather, swells, rogue waves, and strong winds. The coastline further east of Table Bay is also prone to harsh weather.

Along the west and southeast coasts, especially near small fishing communities, local and illegal foreign vessels may lack proper lighting, tracking and signalling equipment. This poses collision risks at night.

There are several Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs) in or near South African waters. Vessels approaching TSSs will need to follow specific navigation rules, such as entering or exiting maritime corridors at designated points. TSSs include approaches to Port Elizabeth, Saldanha Bay, Table Bay, the area near the Alphard Banks, south of Cape Infanta, and the Mossel Bay area, south of Cape St. Blaize.

In case of emergency, use VHF Channel 16.

## **Health - Moderate**

Private medical facilities and healthcare services are of a high standard, comparable to Western European nations. However, private medical care can be expensive, so travellers should ensure they have adequate travel insurance to cover the cost of treatment and repatriation. The standard of public medical facilities and hygiene is generally lower compared to Western standards, and the quality of care can vary across the country. Emergency service provision is generally good nationwide, with both public and private ambulance services supported by helicopter and fixed-wing air ambulance assets.

In the 2018 UNAIDS report, South Africa was confirmed as having the largest HIV epidemic in the world, with roughly 7.1 million people living with the virus, representing around a 19 per cent prevalence rate among the general population.

Insect or tick-borne diseases are present in some areas of South Africa, including diseases such as African Trypanosomiasis, African tick bite fever, chikungunya, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever, Rift Valley fever and West Nile virus.

Travellers should take precautions to protect themselves from insect bites, including wearing long-sleeved/full-length clothing and using insect repellent or Deet products.

Cholera outbreaks are possible, with the most recent cases in both Gauteng and Limpopo provinces. Travellers should practice good personal hygiene, including frequent handwashing and hand sanitising to reduce the risk of infection.

Travellers who develop symptoms associated with cholera, including diarrhoea and vomiting, should seek urgent medical attention.

Tap water is safe to drink and cook with when taken from taps in urban areas. Not all tap water in rural areas is safe for consumption, so it is advised that bottled water be used in these areas.

Before travelling to South Africa, travellers should seek medical advice regarding vaccination courses and boosters. Most travellers are encouraged to ensure they have been vaccinated to protect against Hepatitis A, Tetanus and Typhoid.

## **Environmental - Moderate**

Environmental threats vary depending on the location in South Africa and the time of year.

In the dry season, wildfires are a potential hazard and can pose a risk to life and property in extreme instances. Forest fires occur with some frequency in the Western Cape. The risk of wildfires increases during prolonged periods of drought.

Southern coastal areas typically experience heavy rainfall between June and September. In Gauteng, storms are common from November to April, often leading to flash floods. Snowfall may also occur during this period. These weather events can result in widespread power outages.

There are regular blackouts in South Africa due to power stations being unable to meet public demand. Blackouts are controlled and referred to as "load shedding." Power cuts may affect residential or commercial security systems unless genera-

tors are used as a backup. Load-shedding practices have increased as the winter season begins. To check what the position is of load shedding at any time, go to [loadshedding.eskom.co.za](http://loadshedding.eskom.co.za).

There are regular sightings of sharks off the coast of South Africa, with occasional attacks reported. Popular beaches, such as those in the Western Cape, are monitored by drones for shark sightings. It is recommended to adhere to warnings and leave the water until the alarm is removed.

## **Transportation - High**

South Africa is a popular destination with both international tourists and business travellers, and as such, it is well served by numerous international airlines such as British Airways, Air France, Emirates, Etihad Airways and KLM, with certain airways offering direct flights to Cape Town and Johannesburg.

There are numerous internal flights available to all key provincial and administrative centres such as Durban, Bloemfontein, East London and Port Elizabeth. Operations at main city airports run smoothly, and airports throughout South Africa are of good quality. Security is of a good standard. However, standards will vary at smaller regional airports and there has been an increased number of reports of theft from luggage by airport staff at O.R. Tambo International Airport (JNB) in Johannesburg. Travellers should allow ample time when arriving and departing the country.

In major urban areas, travellers should use a security-trained driver with local knowledge at all times. The use of a low-profile vehicle is recommended as criminals are more likely to target high-end vehicles and their occupants. Overall standards of driving can vary and South Africa has a high rate of fatal road accidents. An established and well-maintained road network connects all major towns and cities throughout the country. Roads in more rural areas may be heavily potholed or unpaved.

Ensure that you have more than an adequate supply of fuel and limit movement to daylight hours. Travel with a translator who is familiar with the local area. Sporadic protests may occur with little notice, blocking key roads in major cities. Travellers should remain vigilant when travelling to and from the Kruger National Park as multiple robberies and car-jackings have been reported.

Road moves outside of major urban areas should be conducted in a well-maintained four-wheel-drive (4WD) vehicle with a comprehensive breakdown kit, water, additional fuel and a medical kit. Police checkpoints are not common on main roads. Checkpoints may be erect by criminal gangs to rob passing motorists. Travellers should comply with all instructions given and refrain from verbally abusing any attackers.

Public transport within South Africa should be avoided as services including buses, trains and taxis are often targeted by criminals. Only use pre-booked taxis from reputable companies or hotels. Do not walk to or from Gautrain stations after dark.

<b>EMERGENCY DETAILS</b>	
<b>IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY CONTACT SOLACE GLOBAL 24/7 OPERATIONS CENTRE AT +44 (0)1202 795 801. LOCAL EMERGENCY SERVICES CAN BE REACHED BY DIALLING 10111.</b>	
<b>POLICE NUMBER</b>	10111
<b>AMBULANCE NUMBER</b>	10177
<b>FIRE NUMBER</b>	10177
<b>EMERGENCY DETAILS</b>	Currently, there's no single emergency number in South Africa and therefore you need to save the correct contact details for a possible emergency.

## TRAVEL

### TRAVEL ADVICE

It is highly advised to avoid all travel at night. When travelling to rural areas, vehicles should be equipped with spare parts and extra fuel. It is advised to use 4x4 wheel drive vehicles for all travel outside of urban areas. It is advised to plan for refuelling stops and to identify safe fuel stations prior to travel. While hitchhiking is common, it is highly advised not to pick up hitchhikers.

There has been a recent rise in violent crime and armed attacks on routes between Cape Town International Airport and the city centre, particularly on secondary roads after dark, with some incidents resulting in fatalities when victims resisted attackers. Travellers are advised to remain on the M3 and N2 rather than the R300, use the dedicated airport approach road (exit 16 on the N2) instead of Borchers Quarry Road toward Nyanga, plan journeys in advance with input from a trusted local contact, and avoid GPS routes that divert away from main roads.

It is advised to avoid hiking, including at popular spots such as Table Mountain National Park. This is due to reports of organised criminal groups attacking hikers, even during the day and on busy trails.

If partaking in a safari, never leave the car or leave windows open. Do not approach the wildlife on foot or by car. Always abide by the instructions of certified guides and security personnel.

While South Africa is known for its progressive laws regarding LGBTQ rights, including same-sex marriage and anti-discrimination protections, LGBTQ travellers may still face risks due to social attitudes and isolated incidents of homophobia and violence, especially in rural areas. LGBTQ visitors should exercise caution, stay informed about local attitudes, and connect with local LGBTQ organisations for guidance and support.

Tap water is safe to drink and cook with when taken from taps in urban areas. Not all tap water in rural areas is safe for consumption, so it is advised you take precautions if necessary.

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

**MARCH 15, 2026**

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **Laylatul Qadr (Night of Power):** South Africa - Muslim

**MARCH 20, 2026**

- **March Equinox:** South Africa - Seasonal
- **Eid ul Fitr:** South Africa - Muslim

**MARCH 21, 2026**

- **Human Rights Day:** South Africa - National

**APRIL 03, 2026**

- **Good Friday:** South Africa - National

**APRIL 04, 2026**

- **Holy Saturday:** South Africa - Observance

**APRIL 05, 2026**

- **Easter Sunday:** South Africa - Observance

**APRIL 06, 2026**

- **Family Day:** South Africa - National

**APRIL 27, 2026**

## SIGNIFICANT DATES

- **Freedom Day:** South Africa - National

**MAY 01, 2026**

- **Workers' Day:** South Africa - National

**MAY 10, 2026**

- **Mother's Day:** South Africa - Observance

**MAY 14, 2026**

- **Ascension Day:** South Africa - Observance

**MAY 24, 2026**

- **Pentecost:** South Africa - Observance

**MAY 27, 2026**

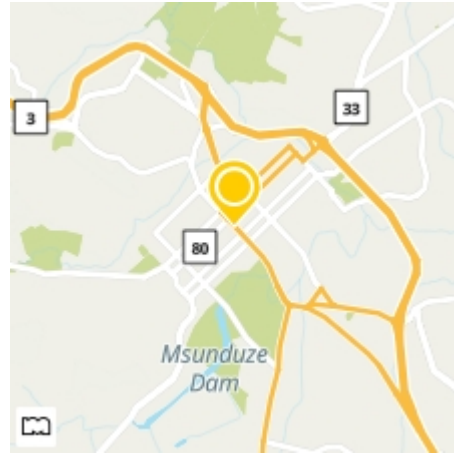
- **Eid ul Adha:** South Africa - Muslim

**JUNE 16, 2026**

- **Youth Day:** South Africa - National

## RECENT ALERTS

### YELLOW THUNDERSTORM WARNING ISSUED FOR KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate

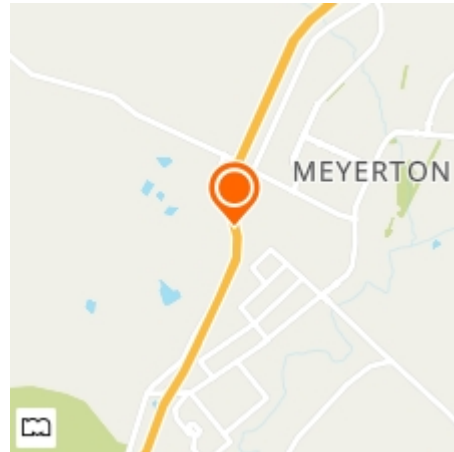


10-Feb-2026 05:51

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) has issued a level four yellow thunderstorm warning for KwaZulu-Natal province. According to the weather service, heavy downpours and high winds are also forecasted which may lead to flooding, damage to infrastructure alongside dangerous travel conditions. At present, no evacuation orders have been issued however disaster management teams have been placed on high alert.

### AT LEAST SIX KILLED AFTER SHOOTING IN MEYERTON NEAR JOHANNESBURG

## RECENT ALERTS



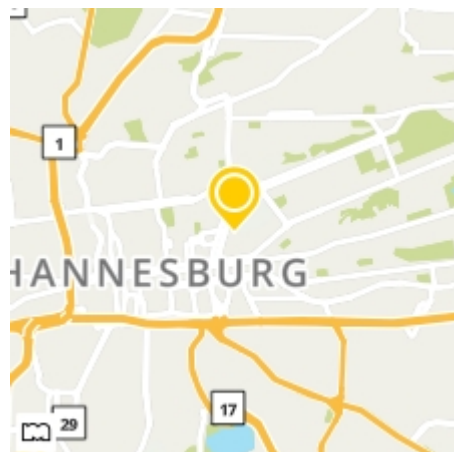
**Category:** Caution - **Risk:** High



03-Feb-2026 16:45

Local media sources report that at least six people have been killed and several others injured after a shooting on the R59 in Meyerton near Johannesburg. Authorities have reportedly arrested the two suspects involved. A large law enforcement presence remains in the area as investigations continue. Further details remain limited at this time. We will monitor the situation and update if appropriate.

## MULTIPLE INJURED AFTER LARGE BUILDING COLLAPSE IN JOHANNESBURG



## RECENT ALERTS

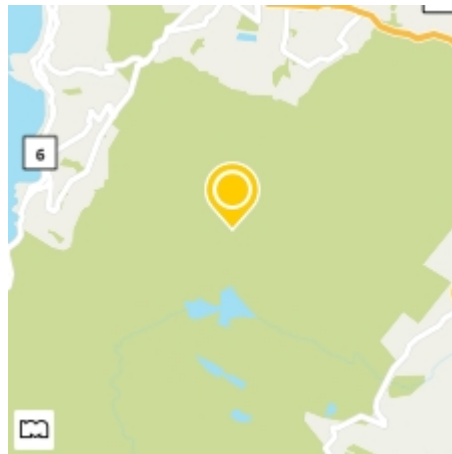
**Category:** Caution - **Risk:** Moderate



02-Feb-2026 12:22

Local media reports that at least three people have been injured following a building collapse in the New Doornfontein area of Johannesburg. The building is believed to have collapsed due to an electrical fire, causing an explosion. The fire has now been extinguished, although the surrounding area is still being cordoned off by emergency services. Further information surrounding the incident remains limited.

## ACTIVE WILDFIRE AT TABLE MOUNTAIN PARK, HOUT BAY, CAPE TOWN



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate



28-Jan-2026 13:34

Local media reports that a wildfire is ongoing in Table Mountain Park, Hout Bay, Cape Town. Emergency services have been deployed to the scene, with additional support currently en route. Footage circulating online shows large pillars

## RECENT ALERTS

of smoke emanating from the forest. As a result of the fire, Park Avenue Road has been closed. There have been no casualties or damages reported at this time.

## HEATWAVE WARNING IN PLACE FOR PARTS OF NORTHERN SOUTH AFRICA UNTIL 30 JANUARY



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate

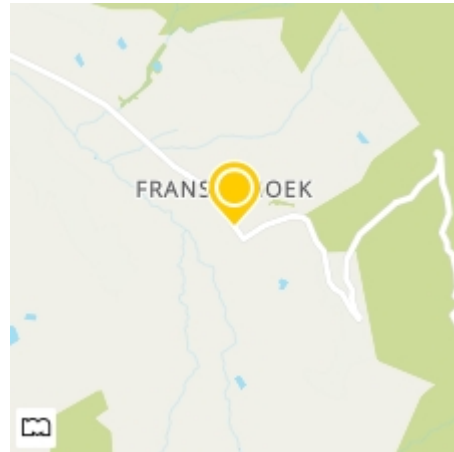


27-Jan-2026 09:48

The South African Weather Services (SAWS) has issued a heatwave warning for parts of northern South Africa until 30 January. The warning is in place for parts of the Northern Cape, Free State and North West and is expected to reach temperatures as high as 40 degrees Celsius. The heatwave is expected to start today, 27 January.

## WILDFIRES REPORTED IN FRANSCHHOEK

## RECENT ALERTS



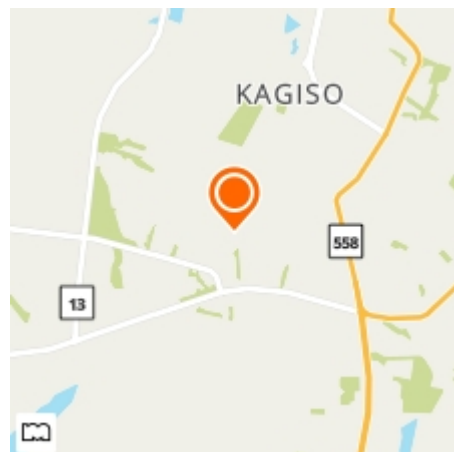
**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Moderate



22-Jan-2026 07:52

According to local media sources, wildfires have been reported in Franschoek. It has been reported that aerial firefighting resources have been deployed to assist the crew on the ground. Authorities have confirmed that no structures have been damaged. Currently, there are no reports of any casualties. Further information remains limited.

## **APPROXIMATELY 500 RESIDENTS IN KAGISO HAVE FLED THEIR HOMES FOLLOWING INTIMIDATION BY ILLEGAL MINERS**



## RECENT ALERTS

**Category:** Crime - **Risk:** High



21-Jan-2026 13:01

Local media reports that approximately 500 residents from Rustenburg have fled their homes to Kasigo following intimidation by illegal miners. The residents say they fled their homes because of a lack of safety and a shortage of food caused by illegal miners commonly known as Zama Zamas. Community leader Thembela Conywa has called on government to urgently intervene. Footage circulating online shows a large number of people gathered in community facilities for shelter.

**AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED AND SEVERAL OTHERS HAVE BEEN INJURED FOLLOWING A SHOOTING OUTSIDE OF BOOYSENS MAGISTRATE COURT, JOHANNESBURG**



**Category:** Crime - **Risk:** High

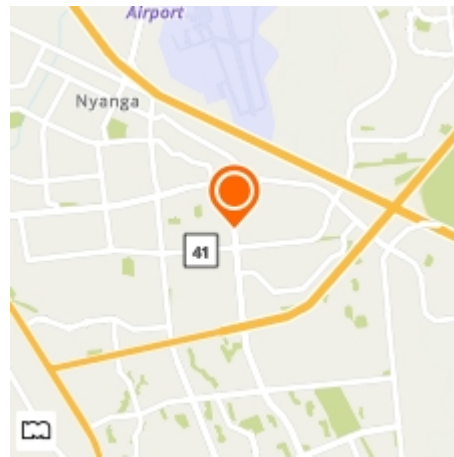


20-Jan-2026 11:29

## RECENT ALERTS

Local media reports that at least two people have been killed and several others have been injured following a shooting outside of Booyens Magistrate Court in south Johannesburg. Police and emergency services are on the scene. Police have cordoned off the area. According to unverified reports, at least five people have been injured. It is currently unclear if the suspect has been identified.

### MULTIPLE PEOPLE FATALLY SHOT AFTER REPORTED MASS SHOOTING IN THE PHILIPPI AREA OF CAPE TOWN



**Category:** Caution - **Risk:** High



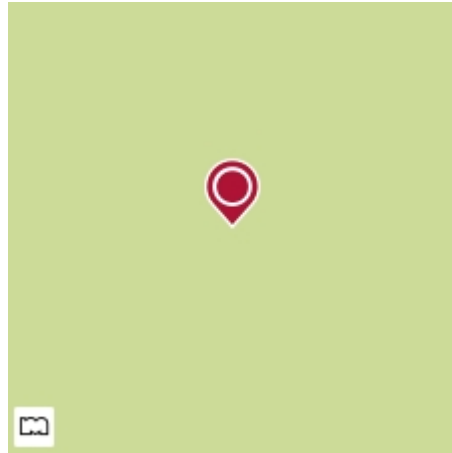
17-Jan-2026 07:25

Local media reports that at least seven people have been killed and three others injured after a mass shooting in the Philippi area of Cape Town. Emergency services are on the scene. The incident is believed to be linked to extortion-related activity in the area, though no suspect has been identified at this time.

Further information about the incident remains limited.

## RECENT ALERTS

### UPDATE: AT LEAST 19 DEAD AS FLOODING LEADS TO EVACUATION OF KRUGER NATIONAL PARK



**Category:** Environmental - **Risk:** Severe



16-Jan-2026 03:51

According to local media sources, at least 19 people have been killed due to severe flooding across a large area of Limpopo, including Kruger National Park, which has evacuated its staff from the area. Local media sources have reported that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has been assisting in the evacuations by deploying search and rescue helicopters. Images circulating on social media show large amounts of floodwater submerging roads. Much of Limpopo remains under the highest level flood alert due to weather forecasts of persistent heavy rain over the next 48 hours.

# FCDO SUMMARY

Last updated: 02/09/2026 09:17:46

## Warnings and insurance

### Before you travel

No travel can be guaranteed safe. Read all the advice in this guide. You may also find it helpful to:

- see [general advice for women travellers](#)
- read our [guide on disability and travel abroad](#)
- see [general advice for LGBT+ travellers](#)
- read about [safety for solo and independent travel](#)
- see [advice on volunteering and adventure travel abroad](#)

### Travel insurance

If you choose to travel, research your destinations and [get appropriate travel insurance](#). Insurance should cover your itinerary, planned activities and expenses in an emergency.

### About FCDO travel advice

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) provides advice about risks of travel to help you make informed decisions. Find out [more about FCDO travel advice](#).

### Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow FCDO:

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)
- [Travel Aware on Instagram](#)

## Entry requirements

This information is for people travelling on a full [‘British citizen’ passport](#) from the UK. It is based on the UK government’s understanding of the current rules for the most common types of travel.

The authorities in South Africa set and enforce entry rules. If you’re not sure how these requirements apply to you, contact the [South African High Commission in the UK](#).

## Passport validity requirements

Your passport must have an ‘expiry date’ at least 30 days after the date you leave South Africa and have at least 2 blank pages.

## Dual nationals

When returning to the UK, British citizens must carry a valid [British passport](#) or [certificate of entitlement](#). See [Dual citizenship](#).

## South African-British dual nationals

If you are a South African citizen aged 18 or over, you must use a South African passport to enter and exit South Africa. It is illegal to use another country’s passport. See the [South African Department of Home Affairs](#) for further information.

## Visa requirements

You can visit South Africa without a visa for up to 90 days for business or tourism.

Check the expiry date of your visa or entry stamp and ensure you do not overstay.

For more information on visas, contact the [South African High Commission](#).

The Department of Home Affairs also has information on [South Africa visas and immigration regulations](#).

## Travelling with children

There are special requirements for travelling to South Africa with children aged 17 and under, and for unaccompanied children entering South Africa. The [South African Department of Home Affairs](#) has more information.

## Vaccine requirements

To enter South Africa, you must have a certificate to prove you've had a yellow fever vaccination if you're coming from a [country listed as a transmission risk](#).

For full details about medical entry requirements and recommended vaccinations, see [TravelHealthPro's South Africa guide](#).

## Customs rules

There are strict rules about [goods you can take into or out of South Africa](#). You must declare anything that may be prohibited or subject to tax or duty.

## Taking money into South Africa

When you enter South Africa, you must declare cash:

- in South African rand if you are bringing more than 25,000 rand per person
- in other currencies if together they are worth more than 10,000 US dollars

## Safety and security

### Terrorism

There is a high threat of terrorist attack globally affecting UK interests and British nationals, including from groups and individuals who view the UK and British nationals as targets. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times.

UK Counter Terrorism Policing has information and advice on [staying safe abroad](#) and what to do in the event of a terrorist attack. Find out [how to reduce your risk from terrorism while abroad](#).

### Terrorism in South Africa

Terrorists are likely to try to carry out attacks in South Africa.

The main threat is from individuals who may have been inspired by terrorist groups, including Daesh, and who may carry out 'lone actor' attacks.

Attacks could be indiscriminate and could target public spaces and places visited by foreigners, such as:

- tourist sites
- shopping centres
- high profile events
- crowded places

Stay aware of your surroundings, keep up to date with local media reports and follow the advice of local authorities.

## **Israel and Palestine conflict**

The current conflict in Israel and Palestine has led to heightened tensions around the world. Terrorist groups, such as Al-Qaida and Daesh, have called on their supporters to carry out terrorist attacks in response to the conflict. The conflict could also motivate individuals to carry out attacks. Terrorist attacks could target Jewish or Muslim communities, or the interests of Israel and its allies. Attacks could also be indiscriminate and happen without warning.

## **Political situation**

There are regular protests and demonstrations in South Africa which can turn violent at short notice. Violence could affect participants and bystanders anywhere in the country.

Avoid areas where protests, demonstrations or marches are taking place, especially in city centres and townships. Do not cross protester roadblocks. This could provoke a violent reaction. Monitor local and social media for updates, including local radio. Where possible stay on main roads. Be aware GPS could lead you to less secure areas.

## **Crime**

There is a high crime rate in South Africa, with incidents including:

- violent muggings
- snatching jewellery and valuables

- carjacking
- ‘smash and grab’ attacks on vehicles
- house robbery
- rape and sexual assault
- murder

## **Crime locations**

Violent crime can take place anywhere, including in tourist destinations and transport hubs. Most violent crimes occur in townships located on the outskirts of major cities, central business districts or in isolated areas. The threat is higher when it is dark.

There have been violent incidents involving tourists at popular tourist locations. There are usually security personnel in the main tourist areas who can assist tourists. However, policing and security can be limited, so always be cautious.

Avoid isolated beaches and picnic spots. Do not walk alone in remote areas or on beaches when deserted, especially when it is dark.

## **Protecting yourself and your belongings**

To protect your personal safety:

- do not display valuables or leave them in your car
- take safe and reliable transport – see [Public transport](#)
- stay alert and be wary of people who approach you
- do not walk around after dark
- travel with friends if possible and make sure someone knows your plans
- only go to a township with a responsible and reliable tour guide
- consider removing expensive-looking jewellery
- be aware that resisting a robbery can lead to a violent response, including use of weapons, that can result in physical injury

## **Airport crime**

Crime in and around airports includes robbery and theft of baggage and valuables. Criminals have followed people from OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg to their destinations and then robbed them, often at gunpoint.

You should:

- be careful in and around the airport
- use main roads to and from airports
- go through public areas quickly
- avoid isolated areas
- arrange for your hotel or tour operator to meet you if possible
- go to your connecting flight quickly if in transit
- consider vacuum-wrapping luggage
- keep valuables in your carry-on luggage
- avoid dropping off your rental car at night

## **Cape Town airport road attacks**

There have been recent attacks and violent crime on secondary roads to and from Cape Town airport.

You should:

- stay on the M3 and N2 (rather than the R300)
- stay on 'airport approach road' (exit 16 on the N2) rather than taking the Borchard's Quarry Road leading to Nyanga
- make a journey plan in advance and discuss it with a trusted local contact
- avoid following GPS navigation routes that take you away from main roads

## **Vehicle crime**

Carjacking and robbery are common, particularly after dark and around traffic lights, junctions, petrol stations and driveways.

Thieves often break car windows and take valuables while cars are waiting at junctions.

Criminals sometimes force vehicles, including tourist buses, to stop so that they can rob passengers. Common tactics include throwing spikes (sometimes hidden in plastic bags), stones or glass in front of vehicles. If criminals target your vehicle, drive to a safe place, or as far as possible, if it is safe to do so.

Criminals may pose as police and use 'blue lights' on plain (often white) vehicles to stop motorists and steal the vehicle. If you are suspicious, do not stop and continue to a police station, petrol station or other place of safety to call the police.

Do not pick up strangers or stop to help apparently distressed motorists. Continue driving and report the incident to the police.

If you are involved in a carjacking, stay calm and surrender your valuables and your vehicle if asked. Do not resist as this could lead to a violent reaction.

To reduce your risk while driving:

- check your route for any hazards or disruptions before you set off
- use a GPS, but do not follow routes into less secure areas – generally smaller roads
- check whether car rental companies have any safety tips
- stay on main roads and park in well-lit areas
- avoid stopping for long periods
- always lock your car and physically check car doors. Criminals can interfere and block the car's central locking system using car jamming technology
- keep your windows closed, especially at junctions
- keep valuables out of sight, ideally in the boot
- use 'smash and grab' film on windows – ask hire car firms for this
- make sure you can see the tarmac and the tyres of the car in front of you when you stop your vehicle, giving you space to escape if you need to

## **Taxi app crime**

Scammers target people using taxi apps in major cities.

Make sure you:

- use an internationally recognised service
- book the taxi in the app
- check the vehicle registration and ID before entering
- do not wait in the street
- do not display your phone or valuables
- ask the driver to close rear windows and lock doors if you cannot do so yourself
- check the taxi app for extra security features, and consider using them

Be wary of unregulated drivers posing as Uber or other taxi app drivers, especially at airports. If you book a taxi, wait in a designated taxi pick-up area, if there is one.

Tensions between taxi app and metered taxi drivers can lead to armed violence, particularly around Gautrain stations and at airports. Strikes and protests by taxi app drivers take place, sometimes with attacks against drivers not seen to be participating. Passengers have also faced harassment or violence. Apps generally warn about high-risk areas, but be cautious using these services. During strikes use alternative reliable private transportation.

## **Criminal kidnap**

The risk of kidnap is increasing throughout South Africa. Criminals generally kidnap people for financial gain.

In recent years, foreign nationals, including British nationals, have been kidnapped. British nationals can be seen as wealthier than locals and may be at particular risk of kidnap for financial gain. There have also been reports of young children being kidnapped from shops, shopping malls and beaches. Stay vigilant and be aware of your surroundings.

Express kidnappings are short-term, opportunistic abductions aimed at extracting cash from the victim. Victims may be held hostage for up to several days while criminals use stolen bank or credit cards. These often take place after dark.

To reduce your risk:

- avoid wearing expensive clothing or jewellery, particularly in public
- be vigilant, especially at night
- avoid predictable routines and isolated areas
- limit sharing personal information online
- use secure transport and keep car doors locked

## **Solo and women travellers**

Solo and women travellers have received unwanted attention and have been assaulted. Read our advice for [‘Solo and independent travel’](#) and [‘Advice for women travelling abroad’](#).

## **Fraud and scams**

Be alert to the risk of scams, including through business or job opportunities, visa services or offers of romance and friendships, including on dating apps.

Card skimming and confidence scams are widespread. There has been an increase in cybercrime and internet scamming. Do not meet up with or send money to someone you do not know.

If you use a visa agent, be wary of fraud. Always follow the correct visa application process through the [Department of Home Affairs](#). Fraudsters often use embassy or other government details – check they are authentic before responding. Visa scams come in many forms and can cause great financial loss.

Criminals may pose as officials for financial or personal gain. If in doubt, ask to see their ID and move into a safe, public and open space. Police officers must carry their appointment certificate. If you have any concerns, call:

- police on 10111
- emergency services on 112 (mobile only)

## **Nightlife and dating**

Criminals use dating apps to rob, rape or sexually assault victims. Be cautious using dating apps and meet in well-lit, public places. Always tell friends or family your plans.

There have been instances of drink spiking involving robbery and sexual assault with both male and female victims. Do not leave drinks unattended or accept drinks from strangers. If you think your drink has been spiked, seek immediate medical help and contact the police.

If you have been sexually assaulted, read our advice for [survivors of rape and sexual assault in South Africa](#).

## **ATMs and money exchanges**

Crime around ATMs and money exchanges is common. You should:

- hide your PIN
- be wary of strangers offering to help or who try to lure you to an ATM
- only change large sums of money in banks or secure shopping malls, not in busy public areas – some people exchanging large amounts of cash have been followed and robbed.

## **Table Mountain National Park attacks**

There have been recent violent attacks and muggings against hikers and foreign tourists in Table Mountain National Park, including on Lion's Head and Signal Hill.

You should:

- avoid quieter areas of the park, especially during early mornings and evenings
- stay on busy, marked trails
- go on popular days such as weekends
- not hike alone

Some Cape Town residents coordinate group hikes on social media, for example [The Hikers Network](#) and [Facebook](#). The Hikers Network offer a [free safety tracking service](#).

## Transport risks

### Road travel

If you are planning to drive in South Africa, see [information on driving abroad](#).

You can use a UK photocard driving licence to drive in South Africa for up to 12 months. If you still have a paper driving licence, get the [1968 version of the international driving permit \(IDP\)](#) before you travel, or [update to a photocard licence](#).

If you become a permanent resident, exchange your UK licence for a South African licence within 12 months of getting your residency. See [living in South Africa](#).

Hire car companies often have stricter requirements for their customers, such as a year of driving experience and a higher minimum age.

See [Crime](#) for advice on travel to and from the airport, vehicle crime and safety at border crossings.

### Air Travel

There have been travel delays and disruptions at airports due to power outages and, refuelling disruptions and immigration queues. Allow for adequate

time when travelling Check the [Airports Company South Africa \(ACSA\)](#) 'X' feed for the latest updates.

## **Driving rules and standards**

Driving standards vary in South Africa. Fatal road accidents are common, particularly around weekends and major public holidays.

Drive cautiously and:

- obey speed limits
- avoid unfamiliar areas and be extra vigilant at night
- keep fuel levels above half a tank to avoid running out

On highways, drivers overtake or undertake in any lane including the hard shoulder.

On single-lane roads, trucks and slower vehicles sometimes use the hard shoulder to allow faster vehicles to overtake.

At most intersections, including 4-way stops and where traffic lights are out of service, the first vehicle to arrive generally has priority. Small roundabouts (called circles) are treated the same as a 4-way stop.

On larger roundabouts, you should give way to the right, although drivers often do not do this.

## **Road conditions**

Road conditions are mostly very good but some roads in remote areas are less well maintained and may have potholes.

If you are travelling to a lodge in a remote area, check road conditions with the lodge management as you may need a car with good ground clearance.

If you rent a car, save the emergency roadside assistance numbers. Download an offline map if you do not have access to a GPS.

## **Pedestrian safety**

Pedestrian deaths account for a high number of road deaths every year in South Africa. This can happen anywhere, and the risk is higher if you cross a road away

from marked crossings (jaywalking). If possible, cross at a marked crossing when it's safe to do so.

## Public transport

Transport with a greater risk of theft, violence and unreliable service includes:

- minibus taxis
- Metrorail train services
- long-distance public train and coach services

Generally safer and more reliable transport includes:

- Gautrain between Johannesburg, Pretoria and OR Tambo International Airport
- MyCiTi bus in Cape Town (central business district and Atlantic Seaboard)
- airport shuttle buses through internationally recognised hotels
- internationally recognised taxi apps where bookings are confirmed through the app

To reduce your risk:

- do not walk to or from Gautrain stations after dark
- do not travel to townships by MyCiTi bus – there have been violent attacks in Khayelitsha

## Outdoor activities and adventure tourism

### Hiking and walking

To stay safe while hiking, [South African National Parks \(SANParks\)](#) advise you:

- save [emergency numbers](#) before you hike
- not hike alone – go in groups of 4 or more if possible
- choose a route that matches your ability
- stay on busy, marked trails on popular days such as weekends
- plan your route and allow enough time
- carry water, food and a fully charged phone
- dress appropriately and prepare for weather changes
- tell someone your route and when you expect to return

## **Table Mountain National Park**

Some Table Mountain trails are strenuous, and mountain rescuers get regular calls to help hikers. Know your limits, research possible trails and select a route suitable to your fitness level. Check [SANPARKS](#) for the latest guidance including hazards such as wildfires. Always check the availability of the cable car if you are planning to use it.

See [Crime](#) for information on violent attacks in Table Mountain National Park.

## **Kruger National Park**

After a violent attack killed a tourist in the Kruger National Park, ~~SANParks~~ advise against using the Numbi gate. There have been protests and violent incidents on the R538 road leading to the gate.

You can fly directly to Kruger National Park from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Many people also choose to take a private tour or drive overland themselves.

If you stay outside the park, contact your lodge in advance to find out if any disruptions will affect your trip. See [SANParks news](#).

## **Addo Elephant Park**

South African National Parks advise visitors travelling from Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) to Addo Elephant Park to use the N2 via Colchester, rather than the R335 via Motherwell due to crime, including vehicle high jackings.

Recommended routes can be found on the [South African National Parks Website](#).

Do not take unnecessary risks when participating in outdoor activities and adventure tourism. Health and safety standards vary globally and may not be the same as in the UK.

Check with the local tourism office for safe and licenced operators and consider hiring a registered guide.

Where possible, insist on a receiving a safety briefing.

## **Swimming safety**

Beach conditions and local safety measures vary. Every year, many people drown due to strong sea currents. Ask for a life jacket if you participate in water sports.

On beaches with no equipment or warning signs, speak to local people who know the conditions. If in doubt, do not enter the water.

On busier tourist beaches:

- only swim between the red and yellow flags
- read the warning signs
- follow instructions from lifeguards

The South African National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) has [information about rip currents](#).

In an emergency, call:

- 112 emergency services (mobile only)
- +27 87 094 9774 - NSRI emergency line

Seals and other marine animals can bite. Take care near seals when you are swimming or by the sea where they are found. Rabies has been detected in seals along the Cape Peninsula coastline. If you are bitten seek immediate medical attention and notify the authorities.

## **Extreme weather and natural disasters**

Find out what you can do to prepare for and respond to [extreme weather and natural hazards](#).

### **Flooding**

Heavy rainfall often causes widespread flooding. There is a year-round risk of flooding across South Africa. Always check weather reports and news for hazards before you start your journey. For alerts and forecasts, see the [South African Weather Service](#).

### **Wildfires**

Wildfires can happen in rural and urban areas during hot and dry weather including Cape Town and in the Table Mountain National Park. Follow evacuation orders if requested. If you see a wildfire, move to a safe place away from

vegetation and smoke. If you are inside a building or a car and judge it is safe to stay there, close all vents and windows.

## **Power cuts**

In South Africa there have been local and nationwide power cuts caused by shortages and extreme weather. Whilst there has been a significant reduction in planned power cuts ('loadshedding'), they can still happen and affect:

- private accommodation, including hotels and airbnbs
- availability of mobile phone networks and wifi
- shops
- banks and ATMs
- public lighting
- traffic lights
- security systems such as alarms and electric fencing
- petrol stations
- water

There may be higher risk of crime where security systems or public lighting do not work.

You should:

- ask your accommodation provider how they manage planned power cuts
- check for planned cuts on the [Eskom website](#) or 'loadshedding' apps
- follow the advice of local authorities if there are water restrictions, including bans on drinking tap water

## **Preparing for power cuts**

To prepare for long power cuts:

- write down emergency contact numbers
- plan how you'll let relatives and friends know where you are
- carry a power bank with extra charging cables
- carry a torch or other portable lighting
- ensure you have enough medicine and first aid supplies
- find nearby safe places that may have back-up power such as hotels, hospitals and police stations, in case you need help

- read our advice [If you are affected by a crisis abroad](#)

## **Water shortages**

Across parts of South Africa, there have been water shortages. Follow the advice of local authorities if there are water restrictions in place.

## **Laws and cultural differences**

### **Personal ID**

Always carry a copy of your passport photo page and the page with your visitors permit or residence permit for South Africa. South African officials may ask for ID and proof of residence at any time. Keep your passport in a hotel safe or another secure location. Do not carry it with you unless you need it for official identification.

### **Illegal drugs and cannabis laws**

Illegal drugs, including cannabis, carry severe penalties. Using cannabis in private is legal. Public and private use of cannabidiol oils (CBD oils) is also legal.

You should expect a long jail sentence and heavy fines for possessing, using or smuggling illegal drugs, including when transiting through the airport.

Airports in South Africa have excellent technology and security for detecting illegal items. This is also used to scan the baggage of transiting passengers.

### **LGBT+ travellers**

Same-sex sexual activity is legal. It is illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation. See our [advice for LGBT+ travellers](#).

### **Wildlife, animal products and souvenirs**

It is illegal to buy, sell, kill or capture any protected wild animal or trade any of its parts without a permit. Trading ivory or rhino horn is banned. Anyone caught buying or trafficking banned goods will be prosecuted.

### **Health**

Before you travel check that:

- you have [appropriate travel insurance](#) for local treatment or unexpected medical evacuation
- your destination can provide the healthcare you may need

This is particularly important if you have a health condition or are pregnant.

## Emergency medical number

Dial 112 (from a mobile) or 10177 and ask for an ambulance.

Contact your insurance or medical assistance company quickly if you're referred to a medical facility for treatment.

There may be other regional emergency numbers available, check locally.

## Vaccine recommendations and health risks

At least 8 weeks before your trip:

- check the latest [vaccine recommendations for South Africa](#)
- see where to get vaccines and whether you have to pay on the [NHS travel vaccinations page](#)

See [what health risks you'll face in South Africa](#), including:

- malaria
- chikungunya
- cholera
- mpox

Altitude sickness is a risk in parts of South Africa, including Johannesburg. Read more about [altitude sickness on TravelHealthPro](#).

## HIV

HIV is a risk in South Africa. Take normal precautions to avoid exposure to HIV/AIDS. There is more information on [sexually transmitted infection risk and prevention for travellers on TravelHealthPro](#).

## Medication

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or bought in the UK can be different in other countries.

If you take regular medication, make sure you can get repeat prescriptions if needed. Most prescription medicines in the UK need a prescription ('script') from a doctor in South Africa. The doctor may ask you to get an electronic prescription from your medical practitioner in the UK. There are pharmacies across the country – some have medical practitioners on site who can write prescriptions.

TravelHealthPro explains [best practice when travelling with medicines](#).

## Healthcare in South Africa

There is no healthcare agreement between the UK and South Africa.

Public medical care varies across South Africa. Standards of treatment and hygiene may not be the same as in the UK.

South Africa has a very high standard of private medical care. Private healthcare can be expensive, so make sure you have the right travel health insurance and funds to cover the cost of medical treatment abroad and repatriation if needed.

[ECDC](#) has a [list of medical providers in South Africa](#).

## Rehabilitation centres for drug or alcohol addiction

Private rehabilitation centres are widely accessible to foreign visitors. You should read available guidance on [rehabilitation, recovery and residential treatment in South Africa](#), if you are considering attending an inpatient treatment programme.

You should also:

- do extensive research beforehand
- choose a reputable facility that is registered with the South African [Department of Social Development](#) or the [Western Cape's Substance Use Disorder Service](#)
- get the right visa for your stay
- get the right travel insurance, including medical cover suitable for a rehabilitation stay and your particular circumstances

Make plans in case:

- you relapse abroad
- treatment is unsuccessful
- you need unplanned repatriation to the UK – this may need to include access to extra funds

TravelHealthPro has [information on travelling abroad for treatment](#).

[International Association for Medical Assistance to Travellers](#) has information on the impact of travel and substance use.

The British High Commission in Pretoria does not usually contact or visit people who have travelled specifically for medical treatment.

## Travel and mental health

Read [FCDO guidance on travel and mental health](#). There is also [guidance on TravelHealthPro](#).

### Getting help

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) cannot provide tailored advice for individual trips. Read this travel advice and carry out your own research before deciding whether to travel.

## Emergency services in South Africa

All emergencies from mobiles: 112

Ambulance and fire: 10177

Police: 10111

National Sea and Rescue Institute: 112 or +27 87 094 9774

Search and Rescue: 10177 or 10111

There may be other regional emergency numbers available, check locally.

## Contact your travel provider and insurer

Contact your travel provider and your insurer if you are involved in a serious incident or emergency abroad. They will tell you if they can help and what you need to do.

## Refunds and changes to travel

For refunds or changes to travel, contact your travel provider. You may also be able to make a claim through insurance. However, insurers usually require you to talk to your travel provider first.

Find out more about [changing or cancelling travel plans](#), including:

- where to get advice if you are in a dispute with a provider
- how to access previous versions of travel advice to support a claim

## Support from FCDO

FCDO provides guidance on how to help yourself stay safe and what to do if you need help or support abroad, including:

- finding English-speaking [lawyers](#), [funeral directors](#) and [translators and interpreters](#) in South Africa
- dealing with a [death in South Africa](#)
- being [arrested in South Africa](#)
- getting help if you're a [victim of crime](#)
- what to do if you're [in hospital](#)
- if you are [affected by a crisis](#), such as a terrorist attack

Find more [support for British nationals abroad](#).

## Contacting FCDO

### Help abroad

See [how to get help from the UK government abroad](#) including in an emergency.

### Help in the UK

You can call FCDO in London if you need urgent help because something has happened to a friend or relative abroad.

Telephone: 020 7008 5000 (24 hours)

[Find out about call charges](#)

## Get travel advice updates

Sign up to [get email notifications](#) when this travel advice is updated.

Follow ECDO:

- [travel advice on X](#)
- [travel advice on Facebook](#)

## Risk information for British companies

The Overseas Business Risk service offers [information and advice for British companies operating in South Africa](#) on how to manage political, economic, and business security-related risks.

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## PACK SMART

Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Carry a duplicate wallet with small denomination notes and old cards that you could relinquish if threatened by robbers. Only pack items you can replace, leave valuables at home. You will be less likely to attract criminals and if threatened, you won't be tempted to put up a fight to save your belongings.



Always check the destination restrictions regarding medications when planning your trip.

### **STAY SAFE: Hotels**



Request a hotel room between the third & seventh floor. Ground floor rooms should always be avoided as they are easily accessible from the outside. Higher levels mean in the event of a fire there are many stairs to navigate and in some countries firefighters may not have ladders capable of reaching higher than the seventh floor.



Check your room phone works in case you need to call reception for help.



Know where your fire exits are. Count the number of doors to the fire exit from your room so you can feel your way in the event of a fire and a smoke-filled corridor.



To prevent unauthorised entry into your hotel room, make sure the windows and doors lock. Bolt the deadbolt and use the door wedges you've brought with you from home to wedge the main door closed.

### **TRAVEL SAFE: Out & About**



When you are out and about, be aware of your surroundings - don't display obvious wealth, such as expensive jewellery, watches and mobile phones.



Use ATMs inside banks and shopping centres, where there is greater security and CCTV. Safety in numbers. If you are travelling with

colleagues, stay together for meals and trips out. If you are alone, avoid quiet areas and trust your instincts.

### **Road traffic accidents are still the greatest threat to travel safety.**



- Use licensed taxis.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Keep doors locked & windows up.
- Avoid night-time driving.
- If the driver is using a phone or driving dangerously, insist they slow down/stop using their phone.

Check in regularly. Use the 'Check In' button on the Solace Secure app so your location can be monitored and you can view all intelligence alerts within your vicinity.

### **SAFE TRAVEL:** Health Tips

**See a medical travel specialist at least 4 weeks before travel.**

**Ask about recommended vaccines for specific destinations.**

**First aid kit with regular & special medication for trip - carry in hand luggage.**

**Evacuation & travel insurance to cover health emergencies while abroad.**



Take an extra month of prescribed medication for pre-existing conditions.

Risk of malaria - take precautions to prevent mosquito bites and take malaria pills as advised.



Avoid drinking alcohol and becoming dehydrated.

Verify & consume safe water and food. Have a supply of medicine for

self-treatment of diarrhoea.



Excessive sun exposure should be minimised by the use of sunscreen - sun can be more intense over water, snow and at altitude.

Leave animals alone. Animal bites or scratches can transmit rabies.

### **THINK SAFE:** Know Your Destination

Understand the culture of your destination. Dress and behave so as not to cause offence or draw attention.



Know if the tap water is suitable to drink if not; only accept water from a sealed bottle.

Avoid ice in your drinks & salad washed in tap water.

Research where you are travelling to. Make a note of the local emergency services number. Know the current security and medical threats and advice. See the FCO website for general information ([gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)).

### **DOCUMENT SAFE:** Know Your Destination

Take photos/scans of your essential documents and email them to yourself. You can then access them remotely if your belongings are stolen:

- Passport
- Driver's Licence
- Travel Insurance Document
- Visa

- Medical Certificates

For 24/7 travel risk advice and emergency assistance contact Solace Global Risk operations: + 44 (0)1202 795 801

The Solace Secure desktop and app provide up-to-the-minute alerts, providing latest information on your travel location even when you are there.

#### CONTACT SOLACE GLOBAL RESPONSE TEAM

This report has been prepared for you by Solace Global Risk Ltd.

If you need urgent help, advice or assistance at any time please contact the 24/7 Response and Assistance Team.

If you have a question about this travel advice or any other location please email [SGR@solaceglobal.com](mailto:SGR@solaceglobal.com) for further safety and security information.

For support using your Solace Secure platform or app please contact [support@solaceglobal.com](mailto:support@solaceglobal.com).

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