

Getting here and advice about your stay

Entry requirements

Passport validity

Unless otherwise stated, this information is for travellers using a full 'British Citizen' passport. Your passport should be valid for the proposed duration of your stay in Mexico.

Visas

If you are visiting Mexico as a tourist you do not need a visa, but you do need a tourist card, which you can get free of charge on arrival by completing an immigration form available at border crossings or on-board flights to Mexico. Immigration officials at the port of entry may ask to see proof of your departure plans from Mexico before allowing you entry to the country.

If you are crossing the border into Mexico from the US, there will not be an immigration officer at the port of entry, but you will need to identify the nearest immigration office and clear your immigration status before you continue your journey into Mexico. The immigration office can usually be found close to the border area, and customs officials at the border should be able to tell you where to find it. If you fail to clear immigration at this point, it is often more complicated to do so once you have left the border area.

You need a tourist card to leave the country. If you lose your tourist card you can get it replaced at the immigration office at any international airport in Mexico. The cost of a replacement is \$295 Mexican Pesos, which is payable at a bank.

There have been reports of bogus immigration officers operating within international airports. You should always refuse offers of help and head directly to the immigration office.

Tourists are not allowed to undertake voluntary (including human rights) work, or activity, or any form of paid employment. If you wish to carry out this type of work you must get the correct visa from the Mexican Embassy before you travel.

You may need a visa to undertake certain adventure or eco-tourism activities like caving, potholing or entomology, especially if they involve any scientific or technological research. The Mexican authorities may define scientific or technological research activities far more broadly than other countries. If you are in any doubt, check with the Mexican Embassy in London at: <https://embamex.sre.gob.mx/reinounido/index.php/en/> well in advance of your visit and ask for written confirmation if necessary.

It is no longer possible to switch immigration status in-country. You cannot enter Mexico on a tourist visa and then change it for a work visa. You must apply at the Mexican Consulate of your normal place of residence in plenty of time before you are due to travel.

Travelling with children

The Mexican authorities have suspended the rules which came into effect in May 2011 requiring children under 18 years of age travelling alone, or accompanied by an adult who is not the parent or legal guardian, to apply for a special permit to leave the country. These rules now only apply to Mexican nationals or foreigners with dual Mexican nationality. The accompanying adult may, however, be asked to provide evidence of his or her relationship with the child.

Although there is currently no specific requirement for authorisation by an absent parent, single parents who are not, or who appear not to be, the child's parent (e.g. if they have a different family name) may be asked to show evidence of their relationship with the child and the reason why they are travelling with the child. This evidence could include a birth or adoption certificate, divorce or marriage certificates, or a Parental Responsibility Order.

Travelling to Mexico via the US

If you are travelling to Mexico via the US, even if you are only transiting, check the US entry requirements with the US Embassy in London. If you do not have the correct authorisation you will not be allowed to travel to or transit through the US. See: <https://uk.usembassy.gov/visas/>

Importing meat or dairy products

You cannot bring meat or dairy products into Mexico from the EU.

UK Emergency Travel Documents

UK Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) should be valid for a minimum period of six months from the date of entry into Mexico and are accepted for entry, airside transit and exit from Mexico.

Money

The local currency is the Mexican Nuevo Peso, known colloquially as 'Peso'. It is easier to exchange US Dollar travellers' cheques and notes into local currency than Sterling. UK debit and credit cards are widely accepted for payment and in ATMs. It is not usually possible to exchange cash at hotel receptions – this can only be done at banks and bureaux de change.

[Source: FCO Travel Advice/gov.uk]

Local laws and customs

The Mexican Police have the authority to ask for proof of legal status in Mexico and, on occasion, have detained British nationals without documents. You should carry photocopies of the relevant pages of your passport and of the stamped 'Forma Migratoria Múltiple' (FMM) given to you on arrival in Mexico at all times. If you are a resident you may be asked to provide your residency card issued by the Mexican Government.

If you are travelling between states or near international borders, you may be stopped by Mexican immigration authorities for immigration checks. You will need to be able to provide your passport and FMM slip. Copies are not accepted. If you are unable to produce these documents, you may be detained, held at an immigration holding centre, and ultimately deported.

Do not become involved with drugs of any kind. Penalties for drug offences are severe. Convictions carry sentences of up to 25 years.

Although civil unions between same-sex partners are now legal in Mexico City and the state of Coahuila, homosexuality in Mexico is generally tolerated rather than accepted. Public displays of affection between same-sex couples may be frowned upon.

Mexican law on surrogacy is under development. Assisted human reproduction, including surrogacy, might only be recognised in some Mexican states. If you are considering a surrogacy arrangement in Mexico, you should familiarise yourself with the relevant laws and regulations and make sure you will meet all legal requirements to take the newborn child out of Mexico before you start the process. You should seek independent legal advice before entering into any surrogacy arrangement. For more information see the UK Government's guidance on surrogacy overseas, at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/surrogacy-overseas.

[Source: FCO Travel Advice/gov.uk]

Safety and security

Violence

Drug-related violence in Mexico has increased over recent years. The violence is concentrated in specific areas, and some regions are almost completely spared. Make sure you research your destination thoroughly.

Outbursts of politically-motivated violence can occur across the country, with a recent increase in the states of Guerrero and Mexico City.

The Mexico City Command and Control Centre (Centro de Atención a Emergencias y Protección Ciudadana de la Ciudad de México) has information and advice on safety in Mexico City, see: www.caepccm.df.gob.mx (site not in English). Monitor their twitter page 'Safe City': https://twitter.com/ciudad_segura/ for up-to-date information and advice on accidents, road blocks, demonstrations etc. in Mexico City.

Travelling around

Mexico receives more British tourists a year than any other Latin American country. There were 513,800 British nationals that visited Mexico in 2016. Most victims of crime and violence in Mexico are Mexicans involved in criminal activity, but the security situation does pose risks for foreigners. Be alert to the existence of street crime as well as more serious violent crime like robbery, assault and vehicle hijacking. In certain parts of Mexico you should take particular care to avoid being caught up in drug-related violence between criminal groups.

Seek advice from local contacts, avoid travel off-the-beaten-track, stay abreast of media coverage of events in the areas, to or through which, you intend to travel, and ensure that trusted contacts are aware of your travel plans. Be aware of your surroundings at all times and of the risks of travelling to certain areas. You should include security measures in all of your travel plans and register on Facebook or follow the FCO on Twitter @UKinMexico. There is no evidence to show British nationals will be specifically targeted, although there is a risk of being in the wrong place at the wrong time, and a heightened risk for women in some areas.

You should check the FCO Travel Advice for the latest security advice on regional travel, driving in Mexico, crime, terrorism risks and natural disasters, at: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/mexico

[Source: FCO Travel Advice/gov.uk]

Software

In the same theme, IMPI, the Mexican body responsible for protecting industrial property rights, has signed agreements with the Business Software Alliance. In 2012 Mexico became the first government body in the world to earn BSA's Certification in Standards-Based Software Asset Management for Organizations, a program known as CSS (O). The credential demonstrates the Mexican Government's commitment to promoting legal software use by implementing internationally-recognised best practices for maintaining compliance with software licences.

Copyright

Enforcement efforts by the Mexican Government are improving (see below), however levels of piracy are still high, which it is claimed by industry sources, has resulted in closure of legitimate copyright-related businesses. Counterfeit sound and motion picture recordings are widely available throughout Mexico, where piracy has shifted from traditional formats to optical discs (CD, DVD, and CD-ROM) and internet piracy.

More information can be found at the International Intellectual Property Alliance. See: www.iipawebsite.com

For further UK Government guidance, see: www.gov.uk/intellectual-property-an-overview.

[Source: FCO Overseas Business Risk/gov.uk]

Protective security advice

Business disputes

The vast majority of British businesses have not been prevented from operating in Mexico by the security risks although many Mexican and foreign businesses choose to hire private security.

The UK Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) also provides protective security advice to businesses. See: www.cpni.gov.uk.

[Source: FCO Overseas Business Risk/gov.uk]

Health

Visit your health professional at least four to six weeks before your trip to check whether you need any vaccinations or other preventive measures. On 10 August 2016, Public Health England advised people planning to travel to the Riviera Maya coast in Mexico to be aware of the risk of infection from a food and water bug, Cyclospora, following an increase in reported cases. See: www.gov.uk/government/news/cyclospora-outbreak-linked-to-mexico.

UK health authorities have classified Mexico as having a risk of Zika virus transmission. For more information and advice, visit the National Travel Health Network and Centre at: http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/147/mexico#Other_risks.

Not all hospitals will agree to deal directly with medical insurance companies. You should be prepared to pay for treatment yourself up front and then seek a refund. Make

sure you have adequate travel health insurance and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment abroad and repatriation.

Drink only boiled or bottled water; and avoid ice in drinks.

On arrival in Mexico City and other high-altitude areas, you may feel a lack of energy, shortness of breath or headaches. The factsheet: <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/disease/12/altitude-illness> includes advice on how to reduce the risk of altitude sickness and what to do if you develop symptoms.

There have been cases of cholera in the state of Hidalgo.

Cases of Chikungunya virus have been confirmed in Mexico. For more details about this outbreak, see: <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/27/chikungunya>. You should take steps to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. See: <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/38/insect-and-tick-bite-avoidance>.

If you need emergency medical assistance during your trip, dial 060, 065, 066 or 068 and ask for an ambulance. In Mexico City, you can also use the emergency buttons on CCTV cameras visible across the city which will immediately connect you to the emergency services. You should contact your insurance/medical assistance company promptly if you are referred to a medical facility for treatment.

Country-specific information and advice is published by the National Travel Health Network and Centre on the TravelHealthPro website: <http://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>, and by NHS (Scotland) on the FitForTravel website: www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations.aspx.

Useful information and advice about healthcare abroad is also available on the NHS Choices website: www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx.

Make sure you have adequate travel health insurance and accessible funds to cover the cost of any medical treatment abroad and repatriation.

[Source: FCO Travel Advice/gov.uk]

FCO travel advice

If you are travelling to Mexico for business, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) website has travel advice to help you prepare for your visits overseas and to stay safe and secure while you are there.

For advice please visit the FCO travel section pages on the gov.uk website: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/mexico

Travel insurance

Take out comprehensive travel and medical insurance before you travel. See FCO foreign travel insurance: www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance.

Contact the FCO travel advice team

This email service only offers information and advice for British nationals planning to travel abroad. Email: traveladvicepublicenquiries@fco.gov.uk

If you need urgent help because something has happened to a friend or relative abroad, contact the consular assistance team on: +44 (0)20 7008 1500 (24 hours).

If you are abroad and need emergency help, contact the nearest British Embassy, Consulate or High Commission. See: www.gov.uk/world/organisations

[Source: FCO Travel Advice/gov.uk]

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