

Top travel insurance FAQs



How do I make sure I'm properly covered for what I want to do overseas?

Your insurer's Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) describes what your policy does and doesn't cover, and how much the insurer is willing to pay for specific losses such as cancellations or medical emergencies.

When choosing a policy, look for:

- What is included in the policy
- What is excluded, and how this compares with your plans
- What you have to tell your insurer when you buy the policy
- How to contact your insurer when you are overseas
- What paperwork or information you need to take with you
- The dollar limits for claims on individual items and as a whole
- The proof you might need to support making a claim
- The cost of the premium
- The amount of excess you would pay on a claim

Can I buy it online or does it need to be through a travel agent?

Consumers have a range of coverage options for overseas and domestic travel. It's worth shopping around to find cover that suits your circumstances and travel plans.

You can buy insurance direct from the insurer online or over the phone. Some travellers prefer to buy insurance through their travel agent, who may offer only a small range of policies and may receive a commission.

Financial institutions, airlines and health insurers may also offer travel insurance. It's important to read the PDS to make sure the policy meets your needs (including coverage that may be included through a credit card).

How much does it usually cost?

Travel insurance is a low-cost way to protect yourself against unexpected financial losses overseas and domestically.

The premium you pay depends on a range of factors including your destinations, the length of travel, number and ages of the people covered by the policy, the activities you intend to take part in and whether you have a pre-existing medical condition.

When is the best time to buy it?

Consider buying your travel insurance as soon as your plans have been confirmed and you've paid for flights, accommodation or tours.

That way you may be covered for unused travel and accommodation if you have to cancel your trip due to a covered event, such as unforeseen illness or a natural disaster.

Top travel insurance tip:

Most policies don't cover risky activities such as rock climbing, skiing or motorcycle riding (some will cover it for an additional premium). Contact your insurer for guidance if you plan to do adventure activities.



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How do I make a claim if someone steals my phone or camera during my trip?

This depends on the insurer, but you will have to provide evidence to back your claim. You may have to provide a report from the police or other authorities. You will need evidence of ownership such as a receipt. Photos of your possessions can also help speed up claims.

Note that the age of the item may affect the value of your claim. Read your PDS for details about your insurer's claims process.

Can my insurance company help me in an emergency situation?

Many travel insurers have a 24-hour telephone service you can call from anywhere in the world should you need to lodge a claim, or require advice or assistance. Note it down before you leave. Your insurer's ability to assist may be limited by the circumstances of your emergency and the nature of your policy. If your insurance policy doesn't cover your particular emergency, there's no guarantee your insurer will be able to financially help you.

Though the Department of Foreign Affairs and

Trade (DFAT) may be able to lend assistance, the Australian Government does not pay any costs, such as legal fees, emergency flights or medical care.

I have a pre-existing medical condition. Will I automatically be covered for this overseas?

Pre-existing medical conditions are typically excluded from most travel insurance policies. However, if you disclose your medical condition when you buy the policy, your insurer may offer to cover it (and may require an additional premium). Many insurers will provide cover for travellers with pre-existing conditions, though they may exclude claims that arise from that particular illness or condition. The PDS will detail the types of pre-existing medical conditions your insurer won't cover as well as conditions it may include.

If you are not sure about whether you have a medical condition that needs to be declared, contact your insurer and discuss it.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition and you don't tell your insurer about it when you buy your policy, the insurer may refuse to pay some or all of any claim you make later that is due to that pre-existing condition.

Did you know?

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), daily hospital costs in Southeast Asia regularly exceed \$800 and return of remains from Europe can cost in excess of \$10,000. The cost of medical evacuations from the United States regularly ranges from \$75,000 to \$95,000 and sometimes up to \$300,000.



www.smarttraveller.gov.au

Beware

Be wary of comparison websites. They show only a small range of available policies, and encourage you to select a policy on price rather than on what you need for your plans.



Will my insurer cover all the health care costs right through until the end of my treatment?

Not usually. For international policies, the insurer will provide coverage for costs incurred overseas that are covered under your policy. Limits and excesses may apply. Once you return home you will be able to use Australia's public and private health systems. Domestic travel insurance won't cover health costs (though it may cover you if an injury or illness causes you to cancel or shorten a trip).

What is a travel insurance excess?

An excess is the amount a policyholder contributes towards the cost of a claim. It is only payable if you make a claim. Typically, a higher excess leads to a lower premium, and vice versa. Therefore if your insurer offers the option of increasing your excess, it is likely to result in your insurance premium being lower.

Your excess will be shown in the PDS and/or on your certificate of insurance.

What if I develop a medical condition after purchasing travel insurance but before I leave for my holiday?

If you develop a medical condition after you have bought your travel insurance that requires you to cancel or alter your travel arrangements, your policy may cover any associated financial losses. Make sure you let your insurer know if your health circumstances have changed so your policy can be adjusted if necessary.

Why won't insurers cover me for drug or alcohol-related incidents?

Your insurer expects that you won't take unnecessary risks and will look after your health and possessions. Making a claim for something that happened while you were under the influence of drugs or alcohol may not be covered by your policy.

Need to find an insurer?

www.findaninsurer.com.au allows you to search more than 230 general insurance categories and more than 100 Australian general insurance brands to find the policy that is right for you

Visit www.understandinsurance.com.au for more information on travel insurance