

More About Brazil: Culture, Money & Safety



Language, money, weather, cultural norms, personal safety strategy and emergency numbers - the context that makes everything else easier.

The honest safety picture

Brazil has real crime, and pretending otherwise helps nobody. It is also a country millions of women travel through every year without incident. The difference is almost always preparation and routine, not luck.

Most crime affecting visitors is **opportunistic theft** - phones, bags, jewellery - concentrated in specific places at specific times. It responds extremely well to boring habits. The approach below is not about being fearful; it is about removing the easy opportunities so you can relax into the trip.

THE TEN HABITS THAT DO THE MOST WORK

1. **Leave the jewellery at home.** No visible gold, no designer watch, no engagement ring on display. This is the single highest-impact change.
2. **Phone out of sight on the street.** Do not walk along navigating on an open phone. Step into a shop or cafe to check the map.
3. **Cross-body bag, worn in front,** zipped, in crowds and on transport.
4. **Carry a decoy wallet** - a small amount of cash and an old card. Keep your real cards and passport in the accommodation safe. Carry a photo or photocopy of your passport, not the original.
5. **Ride, do not walk, after dark** - even in good neighbourhoods, even for ten minutes.
6. **Ask reception which streets to avoid.** Local staff give straight answers.
7. **Do not take valuables to the beach.** One card, some cash, and a cheap phone if you have one.
8. **Vary nothing that matters, but stay unpredictable in the small things** - do not announce your room number or plans loudly in public spaces.
9. **Share your live location** with someone at home on nights out and long journeys.
10. **If you are robbed, hand it over.** No phone is worth injury. Do not resist, do not chase. Report it afterwards for your insurance claim.

Situations that need extra attention

- **Cash machines.** Use ATMs inside banks, shopping centres or airports, during daylight, ideally with someone waiting nearby. Avoid street-facing machines at night.
- **Crowd crush at fan zones and stadium exits.** Agree a meeting point with your group before you go in, since phone networks fail when 40,000 people leave at once.
- **Beaches after dark.** Lovely by day, avoid unlit stretches at night.
- **Carnival-style street crowds.** Pickpockets work these densely. Money in a front pocket or money belt only.

- **Overly helpful strangers at ATMs or ticket machines.** Politely decline and walk to a staffed counter.

Emergency numbers

NUMBER	SERVICE
190	Military Police - the general emergency police number
192	Ambulance / SAMU medical emergency
193	Fire service
180	Violence against women hotline - a dedicated national line. Save this one.
100	Human rights hotline
Local	Delegacia da Mulher - women's police stations exist in all major cities, staffed to handle crimes against women. Ask your accommodation for the nearest.

Also save: your country's embassy or consulate in Brasilia and the nearest consulate to where you are staying, your insurer's 24-hour line, and your accommodation's phone number. Write them on paper as well - a stolen phone takes your contacts with it.

Money

- **Currency:** the Brazilian real (R\$, plural reais). Notes come in 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200.
- **Cards are king.** Visa and Mastercard are accepted nearly everywhere, contactless is standard, and even beach vendors often carry a card machine. Amex is patchier.
- **Tell your bank your dates** before you fly, or your first transaction will be blocked.
- **Bring two cards from two different banks** and keep them in two different places.
- **Always choose to be charged in reais**, not your home currency, when a machine offers - the conversion rate offered is worse.
- **Cash:** carry a small amount for markets, small stalls and tips. Withdraw from bank ATMs; Banco do Brasil, Bradesco, Itau and Santander machines generally accept foreign cards.
- **Pix** is the instant transfer system everyone uses. It generally requires a Brazilian account or CPF number, so plan around cards instead.
- **Rough costs (2026 levels):** metro ride R\$5-6; por quilo lunch R\$35-60; airport transfer in a major city R\$40-90; intercity bus R\$100-300; domestic flight Rio-Sao Paulo from R\$250.

Language

Brazil speaks **Portuguese**, not Spanish - and saying so is genuinely appreciated. English is limited outside hotels and tourist areas. Even thirty words of Portuguese transforms how you are treated.

PORTUGUESE	ENGLISH
Bom dia / Boa tarde / Boa noite	Good morning / afternoon / evening
Por favor / Obrigada	Please / Thank you (women say <i>obrigada</i>)
Desculpa / Com licenca	Sorry / Excuse me
Voce fala ingles?	Do you speak English?
Nao entendi	I did not understand
Quanto custa?	How much is it?
Onde fica o banheiro?	Where is the bathroom?
A conta, por favor	The bill, please
Estou perdida	I am lost (female)
Pode me ajudar?	Can you help me?
Me deixa em paz	Leave me alone
Preciso de ajuda / Chame a policia	I need help / Call the police
Estou com meu marido / meus amigos	I am with my husband / my friends (a useful, low-drama exit line)

Download the offline Portuguese pack in your translation app before you fly, and learn to say numbers - it makes markets and taxis far easier.

Weather in June and July

This is Brazilian **winter**, and the country spans nearly 40 degrees of latitude. You may be packing for two seasons in one trip.

CITY	TYPICAL JUNE-JULY	PACK
Salvador, Recife, Fortaleza	Warm, 23-30C. Recife and Salvador are in their rainier months.	Light clothes, a rain jacket, sandals that survive a downpour
Rio de Janeiro	Mild and pleasant, 18-27C. The best time of year to visit.	Layers, a light jacket for evenings
Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte	Cool and dry, 12-24C, cold evenings	Proper jacket, jumper, closed shoes
Brasilia	Dry season, 14-27C, very low humidity	Lip balm, moisturiser, layers
Porto Alegre	Genuinely cold, 8-18C, wet	Warm coat, waterproof, scarf

The sun is strong year-round, including on cool days and cloudy ones. High-factor sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses everywhere.

Cultural notes

- **Warmth is the default.** Brazilians greet with a kiss on the cheek (one or two depending on the region), stand closer than northern Europeans do, and touch arms while talking. It is friendliness, not an advance.
- **Time is elastic socially, strict professionally.** A 20:00 dinner invitation means 20:30. A match kick-off does not.
- **Compliments and attention are common** and usually harmless. A brief smile or a plain "nao, obrigada" and walking on is a complete and acceptable response.
- **Football is not a hobby, it is an identity.** Asking someone their team is a great conversation opener. Brazil's women's team has enormous national affection - expect the tournament to be a genuine national event.
- **Dress:** Brazilians dress casually and beachwear is normal at the beach, but change before walking into the city. Cover shoulders and knees in churches.
- **Race and region matter.** Brazil is enormously diverse and regional pride runs deep. Avoid generalising about "Brazilians" - a Gaucho from Porto Alegre and a Baiano from Salvador will both tell you they are different.
- **Do not photograph people, especially in poorer neighbourhoods, without asking.**

Connectivity

- **Get an eSIM before you land.** Cheap, instant, and it means you have maps and ride apps working from the airport. Vivo, Claro and TIM have the widest coverage.
- **Download offline maps** of every host city you will visit.
- **Carry a power bank.** A dead phone at midnight is a safety problem, not an inconvenience.
- **WhatsApp is how Brazil communicates.** Hotels, drivers, tour operators, restaurants - all of them. Have it installed and working.
- **Avoid banking on public wifi.** Use mobile data for anything with a password.

Before you leave home

- ☐ Scan passport, visa, insurance and tickets to a secure cloud folder, plus a paper set in your bag
- ☐ Register with your embassy's traveller programme if your country offers one
- ☐ Share your full itinerary and accommodation addresses with someone at home
- ☐ Agree a check-in schedule - a daily message is enough
- ☐ Set up a way for someone to reach you that does not depend on your phone
- ☐ Pack a doorstop wedge or portable door lock if it helps you sleep better
- ☐ Save emergency numbers, embassy details and insurance line on paper

Please double-check before you fly. This guide was written in August 2026 for the FIFA Women's World Cup Brazil 2027 (24 June - 25 July 2027). Visa rules, prices, and safety conditions change. Always confirm with your own government's travel advisory, the Brazilian consulate for your country, and the official FIFA tournament site before booking or travelling. Safe Passage Brasil 2027 is an independent travel resource and is not affiliated with FIFA, CBF, or any government body.