



IS IT SAFE?

Charleston

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

IS IT SAFE? CHARLESTON

OVERALL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

RATING ●●●■

Exercise caution outside tourist areas.

Charleston's historic peninsula is a beautiful and visitor-friendly area with a low crime rate. However, a sharp divide exists between tourist zones and residential neighborhoods. Stay within the historic district, French Quarter, and King Street corridor and you'll feel completely safe. Venture north of Calhoun Street or into North Charleston without local guidance and the picture changes significantly.

Charleston rewards the solo traveler who leans into its walkable historic core — most of what you came for is within a square mile.

RATING SCALE

- = Very safe
- = Safe
- = Use caution
- = Avoid at night
- = Avoid

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

●●●●● Very safe ●●●● Safe ●●●● Use caution ●●●● Avoid at night ●●●● Avoid

AREA	RATING	NOTES
Historic District / South of Broad	●●●●●	Very safe. The heart of Charleston.
French Quarter	●●●●●	Pedestrian-friendly, well-lit, safe.
Upper King Street	●●●●●	Lively bar/restaurant strip. Safe.
Cannonborough-Elliottborough	●●●●●	Residential, gentrifying. Safe by day.
North Charleston	●●●●●	High crime. Avoid unless you have a specific reason.
East Side	●●●●●	Exercise caution. Not tourist territory.
Hampton Park / North Central	●●●●●	Transitional. Use caution at night.

The rule of thumb locals use: south of Calhoun Street, you're in safe territory for solo exploration.

GETTING AROUND SAFELY

MODE	RATING	NOTES
CARTA bus	●●●●■	Covers main visitor areas. Safe.
Uber / Lyft	●●●●●	Recommended for night travel.
Walking (historic)	●●●●●	Excellent. Most sights within easy reach.
Cycling / e-scooters	●●●●■	Good in flat historic district. Use lanes.
Taxis	●●●●■	Metered. Safe. Fewer available than apps.
DASH trolley (free)	●●●●●	Free downtown loop. Great for visitors.

COMMON SCAMS & HOW TO AVOID THEM

- Carriage tour overcharging:**
Compare prices before booking. Some operators charge well above standard rates.
- Street parking 'helpers':**
Individuals may approach offering to 'watch your car' — not official. Decline.
- Hotel resort fees:**
Check for undisclosed fees when booking downtown hotels. Ask upfront.
- Fake art gallery openings:**
Some galleries use high-pressure sales tactics during 'First Friday' events.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

- Dial 911 for all emergencies.
- MUSC Health (Medical University of SC) is the major hospital — downtown location.
- Roper St. Francis Hospital also centrally located.
- Numerous CVS and Walgreens pharmacies throughout downtown.
- Heat and humidity in summer are serious — hydrate heavily and use sunscreen.

SOLO WOMEN TRAVELERS

Charleston's historic district is very comfortable for solo women travelers. Locals are friendly and the southern hospitality reputation is well-earned. Bar and restaurant staff are accustomed to solo female diners and travelers. After dark, stick to King Street and the well-lit historic core. Use Uber or Lyft rather than walking long distances at night, particularly away from the main tourist corridor. Avoid North Charleston entirely when alone.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police / Fire / Medical	911
Charleston PD non-emergency	843-743-7200
MUSC Hospital	843-792-2300
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222
Travelers Aid	843-723-7408