



IS IT SAFE?

Memphis

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

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OVERALL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

RATING

Use caution. Tourist areas safe; be aware outside them.

Memphis has a higher overall crime rate than many U.S. cities of comparable size. This requires honest acknowledgment — and equal honesty about what it means in practice for visitors. The tourist areas — downtown, Beale Street, the National Civil Rights Museum corridor, South Main, and Cooper-Young — are well-policed and comfortable for visitors during standard hours. The challenge is geographic: several of Memphis's most important destinations (Stax Museum, Cozy Corner, Graceland's immediate surroundings) are in residential neighborhoods where standard urban awareness is genuinely warranted. This guide aims for accuracy rather than either false reassurance or excessive alarm.

Very safe

= Safe

= Use caution

= Avoid at night

= Avoid

The practical implication for solo travelers following this guide is straightforward: stay on the itinerary routes, use rideshare or a rental car rather than walking between non-adjacent destinations, and apply normal urban awareness in all neighborhoods. The civil rights history, the music heritage, and the food culture of Memphis are genuinely worth experiencing — the city rewards visitors who engage with it seriously and travel within the well-established visitor zones.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Very safe Safe Use caution Avoid at night Avoid

AREA	RATING	NOTES
Downtown / Beale Street (daytime)		Well-policed tourist core. Comfortable for solo visitors throughout the day.
Downtown / Beale St (Fri/Sat nights)		Crowds increase risk of pickpocketing. Watch phone and wallet. Stay on the lit main strip.
South Main Arts District		Gentrifying entertainment district. Safe in the arts corridor; awareness at fringes after midnight.
Midtown / Overton Park		Residential and cultural. Cooper-Young and the park areas are very comfortable.
Cooper-Young		The safest and most pleasant neighborhood for solo visitors. Excellent bar and restaurant culture.
Graceland campus (Whitehaven)		The Graceland complex is well-secured. Do not wander the surrounding streets.
Stax Museum / South Memphis		Go directly to the museum by car or rideshare. The surrounding neighborhood warrants real caution.
Crosstown Concourse		Active and well-monitored mixed-use complex. Safe during operating hours.
North Memphis		High crime area. Not a tourist destination; avoid after dark.
Orange Mound		Historically significant neighborhood (oldest African American neighborhood in U.S. built by freed slaves). Not a tourist destination; observe from guided tour context only.
Mississippi Riverfront		Well-maintained, monitored, excellent for morning walks. Safe at all hours.

GETTING AROUND SAFELY

MODE	RATING	NOTES
Lyft / Uber		Primary mode. Reliable and safe. Always verify vehicle plate and driver before entering. Do not accept unsolicited rides.
Rental Car		Recommended for Day 2 (Graceland, Stax, Cozy Corner). Keeps you mobile and in control of your environment between South Memphis destinations.
Main Street Trolley		Free downtown loop. Useful for riverfront to Beale Street to South Main movement. Safe and monitored.
Walking (downtown core)		Beale Street corridor and South Main are walkable. Do not walk to Sun Studio from downtown — rideshare instead.
Taxis		Licensed and metered. Use hotel taxi lines or Yellow Cab app. More reliable than street hailing.
MATA Bus		Limited service; not recommended for tourists navigating unfamiliar routes at night.

COMMON SCAMS & RISKS

Beale Street crowd theft:

Friday and Saturday nights bring very large crowds. Keep phone and wallet in front pockets or a zipped bag. The area between Tootsie's and Blues City Cafe is the highest density.

Rideshare verification:

Always confirm vehicle make, model, plate number, and driver photo before getting in. Scammers operating fake rideshares are present near high-traffic tourist areas.

Unofficial 'tour guides' near Graceland:

Individuals near the Graceland entrance offering private tours or inside access. These are not official. Use only tours booked at graceland.com.

Overcharging at tourist-adjacent restaurants:

The restaurants immediately on Beale Street (not the institutions like B.B. King's, but the newer bars) charge tourist prices for ordinary food. Eat one block off Beale.

ATM security:

Use ATMs inside hotels, banks, or well-lit convenience stores. Standalone outdoor ATMs in less-trafficked areas carry skimming risk.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

- Dial 911 for all emergencies — police, fire, and medical.
- Regional One Health (877 Jefferson Ave) is the Level I trauma center for the Mid-South region.
- Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare system has multiple hospitals throughout Memphis; Methodist University Hospital downtown is the most convenient for tourists.
- Baptist Memorial Hospital Medical Center (6019 Walnut Grove Road, East Memphis) is the other major system.
- Walk-in urgent care: FastMed, QuickCare, and Methodist Urgent Care have multiple locations.
- Pharmacies: CVS and Walgreens citywide. The CVS at 2289 Union Ave (Midtown) is 24 hours.
- Heat risk: Memphis summers regularly exceed 95°F with high humidity. Carry water; recognize signs of heat exhaustion.
- Travel insurance strongly recommended for international visitors — U.S. healthcare costs are significant without coverage.

SOLO WOMEN TRAVELERS

Memphis is manageable for solo women travelers who stay within the established visitor zones and use rideshare for movement between neighborhoods. The downtown tourist corridor, South Main, and Cooper-Young are comfortable at all hours. The practical advice is direct: use rideshare rather than walking between non-adjacent areas, particularly at night; stay on the lit main strips of Beale Street on weekend evenings rather than the side streets; and trust your instincts about any situation that feels uncomfortable. The National Civil Rights Museum, Sun Studio, and Graceland are all entirely comfortable solo experiences. Cooper-Young is the best neighborhood for solo dining and evening drinks — the Young Avenue Deli long bar is welcoming and self-evidently appropriate for a solo traveler at any point in the evening.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police / Fire / Medical (Emergency)	911
Memphis Police Non-Emergency	901-545-2677
Regional One Health (trauma center)	901-545-7100
Methodist University Hospital	901-516-7000
Poison Control Center	1-800-222-1222
Sexual Assault / Crisis Line (Memphis)	901-272-2020
Crisis Text Line (24h)	Text HOME to 741741

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