



IS IT SAFE?

Edinburgh

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

IS IT SAFE? EDINBURGH

OVERALL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

RATING ●●●●■

Generally safe. Standard awareness recommended.

Edinburgh is a safe and welcoming city with a strong sense of civic pride. The Old Town and New Town are comfortable for solo exploration at nearly any hour. The notable exceptions are weekend pub closing times in the Grassmarket and Cowgate areas, when the atmosphere can shift sharply. Leith is improving rapidly but retains some rough edges at night.

Edinburgh's hills reward the walker — Arthur's Seat, Calton Hill, and Holyrood Park are all safe, accessible, and stunning solo experiences.

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
Old Town / Royal Mile	●●●●■	Busy tourist spine. Watch bags.
New Town	●●●●●	Georgian elegance. Very safe.
Stockbridge	●●●●●	Village feel. Excellent for solo walks.
Grassmarket / Cowgate	●●●■	Lively pub district. Rowdy weekends.
Leith	●●●■	Improving. Exercise caution at night.
Portobello	●●●●●	Coastal suburb. Safe and relaxed.
Marchmont / Morningside	●●●●●	Residential. Calm and very safe.

Stockbridge is Edinburgh's best-kept solo travel secret — independent shops, great cafés, and zero tourist crowds.

GETTING AROUND SAFELY

MODE	RATING	NOTES
Lothian Buses	●●●●●	Excellent coverage. Very safe.
Edinburgh Trams	●●●●●	Airport to city centre. Reliable.
Night buses	●●●●■	Available. Well-used and safe.
Uber / Taxis	●●●●●	Black cabs reliable. Apps available.
Walking (Old/New Town)	●●●●●	Best way to explore. Well-lit.
Cycling	●●●●■	City hire bikes available. Good lanes.

COMMON SCAMS & HOW TO AVOID THEM

Royal Mile souvenir markup:

Tartan and whisky prices drop significantly one street off the main drag. Shop around.

Unofficial castle 'guides':

Individuals offering tours near the esplanade are not licensed. Use official guides only.

Taxi overcharging (Fringe/NYE):

During August Fringe and New Year, surge pricing and route inflation occur. Agree price upfront.

Charity clipboard approach:

Common near Waverley station. Politely decline and move on.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

- Dial 999 (or 112) for all emergencies — police, fire, or ambulance.
- Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (Little France) is the main hospital.
- Western General Hospital for neurology and oncology.
- Boots and Lloyds Pharmacy are widespread; NHS walk-in clinics available.
- Tap water is excellent quality throughout Scotland.

SOLO WOMEN TRAVELERS

Edinburgh is generally very safe for solo women travelers. The New Town, Stockbridge, and Marchmont areas are particularly comfortable at all hours. The Grassmarket and Cowgate pub district during weekend evenings is the main caveat — high-energy, occasionally rowdy, and best navigated with awareness. Scotland has strong laws around harassment and public behavior. Locals tend to be reserved but reliably helpful when approached. The Fringe Festival in August brings large crowds — stay aware of your surroundings and belongings.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police / Fire / Medical (UK)	999
All Emergencies (EU standard)	112
NHS 24 (non-emergency medical)	111
US Embassy London	+44 20 7499 9000
Tourist assistance (central)	0131 473 3868