



IS IT SAFE?

Phoenix

SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY GUIDE

OVERALL SAFETY ASSESSMENT

RATING: Use Awareness — tourist corridors (downtown, Roosevelt Row, Scottsdale, hiking trails) are safe; the dominant hazard is heat, not crime.

Phoenix’s citywide crime rate runs above the national average, but as with most large Sun Belt cities, risk is heavily concentrated outside the areas a visitor following this guide would spend time in. Downtown, Roosevelt Row, Heritage Square, Old Town Scottsdale, and the Arcadia district are all well-trafficked and generally safe, including into the evening.

The single most important safety fact for a visitor to internalize is this: heat, not crime, is the primary hazard in Phoenix. Summer temperatures regularly exceed 110°F, and heat-related illness sends more visitors to urgent care each year than any category of crime. Every itinerary in this guide is built around beating the heat with early starts.

Property crime — car break-ins in particular — is more common than violent crime for visitors. Phoenix has ranked among the top US cities for vehicle theft in recent years. Never leave visible valuables in a parked car, and use a steering wheel lock if you’re renting.

RATING SCALE

★★★★★ = Very safe ★★★★★ = Safe ★★★ = Use awareness ★★ = Avoid at night ★ = Avoid

NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

AREA	RATING	NOTES
Downtown / Heritage Square	★★★★	Walkable and well-trafficked by day. Reasonably safe evenings; use rideshare late at night.
Roosevelt Row	★★★★	Active arts district, safe but sees occasional petty theft during festivals — normal event-crowd awareness applies.
Old Town Scottsdale	★★★★★	Well-policed, heavily trafficked, comfortable day and night.
Arcadia	★★★★★	Affluent, low-crime neighborhood. One of the safest areas in the Valley.
Camelback Mtn / South Mtn trails	★★★★	Safe but remote — the hazard is heat and dehydration, not crime. Hike early.
Central Phoenix / Van Buren St corridor	★★★	More uneven after dark. Avoid walking alone late at night; use rideshare.

COMMON SCAMS & RISKS

Heat-related illness

Not a scam but the dominant real risk. Heatstroke can develop quickly on Phoenix trails, especially Camelback Mountain and South Mountain. Hike before 9am in warm months, carry more water than feels necessary, and know the signs of heat exhaustion (dizziness, nausea, stopping sweating).

Vehicle break-ins & theft

Phoenix ranks among the top US cities for auto theft. Never leave bags, electronics, or valuables visible in a parked car, and use a steering wheel lock on rentals, especially in central Phoenix and near trailhead lots.

Scorpion stings

Bark scorpions are present throughout the Phoenix area, including hotel patios and desert trail edges. Shake out shoes left outside overnight and avoid reaching into rock crevices on hikes. Stings are painful but rarely dangerous for healthy adults; seek care if you have a severe reaction.

Monsoon dust storms & flash floods

June through September brings sudden dust storms (haboobs) and flash flooding in washes. If visibility drops while driving, pull off the road entirely and wait it out — do not attempt to outdrive a haboob.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

Banner University Medical Center Phoenix and HonorHealth both operate major emergency departments and trauma centers with easy access from downtown and central Phoenix.

Heat exhaustion and heatstroke are the leading weather-related medical risks. Symptoms progress from heavy sweating and dizziness to confusion and hot, dry skin — the latter is a medical emergency requiring immediate cooling and care.

The city operates a Heat Relief Network of hydration stations and air-conditioned cooling centers throughout downtown, including near Civic Space Park and the Central Library — useful to know even for a well-prepared visitor.

Travel insurance with medical coverage is strongly recommended, as with any US travel, particularly given the genuine risk of heat-related urgent care visits.

SOLO TRAVELER NOTES

Phoenix works well for solo travel: the hiking trails are busy enough to feel social, bar seating is standard at nearly every restaurant in this guide, and the light rail gives a car-free option between downtown, Roosevelt Row, and Tempe.

The most important solo-specific precaution is heat management on trails — tell someone your hiking plan and expected return time, carry more water than you think you'll need, and avoid remote trail sections alone in summer months.

Solo women travelers report downtown, Roosevelt Row, and Old Town Scottsdale as comfortable throughout the day and into a reasonable evening. Standard precautions — rideshare over walking alone late at night, staying in well-lit main corridors — apply as in any major US city.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

SERVICE	CONTACT
Emergency (Police / Fire / Medical)	911
Phoenix Police (non-emergency)	(602) 262-6151
Banner University Medical Center (trauma)	(602) 839-2000
HonorHealth (multiple campuses)	(480) 882-4636
Poison Control (US)	1-800-222-1222
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to 741741
National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	988