



## Best Practices for Independent Travel in the West Bank

Travel to Palestinian areas is an essential way to learn more deeply about the conflict. J Street does not recommend traveling alone in the West Bank. J Street cannot guarantee the safety and security of those who wish to travel on their own in the region. If you do wish to travel independently, please review these best practices to minimize risks and help keep yourself safe.

- 1. Go on guided tours.** There are many guided tours available run by both Israelis and Palestinians to encounter more sides of Palestinian society. We recommend first and foremost traveling in a structured tour with a group and a guide who knows the region well. Please see our [Guidebook](#) for tour recommendations.
- 2. Always travel with a friend.** If you do decide to travel independently, always travel with a friend. Never put yourself in a situation where you are alone with whoever is hosting you in the region.
- 3. Be aware of cultural differences.** If you are traveling to more traditional and rural areas, such as Bedouin communities, it is important to respect cultural differences. Understanding what is appropriate behavior and what is inappropriate behavior is also important to guide the interactions you will have with other people.
  - a. Dress modestly.** Wear pants or a skirt that go past the knees and a shirt that covers the shoulders.
  - b. Avoid one-on-one encounters.** Bedouin communities are quite gender segregated. Intimate meetings between men and women are not appropriate. An invitation to be alone with someone should be understood as a romantic or sexual advance.
  - c. Avoid physical contact.** Other than a handshake, physical contact between men and women is not appropriate.
- 4. Always have a way to leave.** It is crucial that you are not dependent on anyone else to leave if you find yourself in a situation that causes you



discomfort. Have a few numbers of taxi drivers and cash on hand. Palestinian drivers who live in Jerusalem are a great option as they can travel freely in the West Bank and in Israel.

5. **Go with your gut.** If you are unsure about your personal safety at anytime, don't wait for a boundary to be crossed to make the call to leave. You do not owe anyone your time or your presence. If you are feeling unsafe or uncomfortable, call a taxi and get yourself out of that situation.
6. **Bring your passport and entry slip and/or student visa.** You will be asked to show your passport at checkpoints when returning to Israel.
7. **If you see something, say something.** If you witness or encounter any harassment or other misconduct, please inform us so that we can offer you support and help prevent future incidents.

\*Please also review J Street's [Code of Conduct](#).