

HITCHHICKING



By Kate Dablieva

What is hitchhiking

Hitchhiking is one of the cheapest ways of traveling. By tradition, hitchhiking is defined as soliciting a ride by standing at the edge of a road, facing traffic, with one's thumb extended/upwards.



- * Remember, hitchhiking may be illegal in some areas or on certain types of roads
- * Make sure to carry enough food and drink if you're going for a long trip
 - * Some people swear that bright colors with high visibility get you away quicker.

Before travelling

- * Learn the language, at least a little
 - * Be prepared to walk all day
- * Buy a map of the area you are going to travel
- * Some hitchhikers recommend taking a foldable bike as back-up transportation

- * Don't try to catch a ride from downtown, instead catch public transport to the edge of town.

- * Avoid places where traffic cannot stop legally.

- * Roadside picnic areas are good.

Location

- * Land borders where traffic has to stop are great..

- * Getting a ride at night is very difficult.

- * Gas stations where many cars stop are good.

- * Highway rest areas are ill-advised, particularly in the USA, due to the number of "disturbing incidents" at these locales. An exception to the "rest area" rule is the commercial rest area on toll roads.

Alternatives

As an alternative to waiting by the roadside, many websites allow users to try to pre-organize hitch hiking trips. Sites in different countries use different systems, but it is best to find a site which concentrates on long-distance and one-off trips rather than regular commutes.

For example: <http://www.backseatsurfing.com/>



- * If you arrange a ride through a ride-matching website, you can request the ID number of the driver who offers the ride; give this number to someone at home. Ask for this ID when you meet the driver; most will understand this precaution.

- * Keep your bag or backpack in easy reach.

- * Wear at least some of your valuables (i.e. passport, wallet, money, etc.) under or in your clothes, rather than in your pack. Keep them in different places.

Stay safe

- * Choose a car with a single occupant or a couple rather than the last seat in a car full of people.

- * Note the vehicle registration, and its make, model, and color before you take a ride. Text this information to a friend.

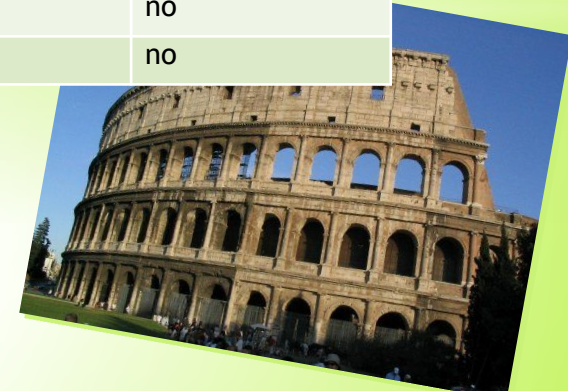
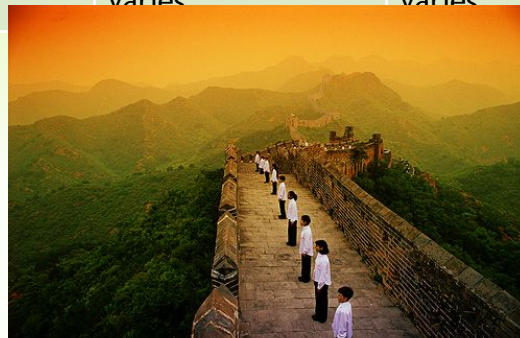
- * Sit in the front passenger seat, if you can.

- * Take care who you get a ride with. Some criminals prey on hitchhikers

Countries



Country	Popularity	Ease	Legal	Payment expected
Australia	occasional	medium	yes	no
Canada	common	easy	varies	no
China	occasional	medium to hard	no (nobody cares)	often
France	occasional	medium	yes	no
Germany	occasional	easy / medium	yes	no
Italy	occasional	hard	yes	no
Japan	rare	easy	yes	no
Russia	common	easy	yes	often
Spain	occasional	hard	yes	no
UK	Almost non-existent	varies	yes	no
USA	rare	varies	varies	no



Thanks for attention