TRAVEL INTERNET SECURITY

Your Passport Isn't the Only Thing Worth Protecting



Public Wi-Fi in airports, hotels, cafés, and lounges is a network you don't own or control, and other users, or hackers, on it may be able to see your activity. Protect your devices and personal information from what the network and attackers can reach. The more sensitive the activity, like banking, bookings, work, and email, the more important it is to secure your device before you connect.

Compare the scenarios below with your habits and improve your travel security.

Connecting to Public WiFi Only

MOST RISKY

Public WiFi → Laptop

Low Security

Most convenient option, but the highest risk.

- Shared network anyone can join
- Others nearby may see your activity
- Avoid for banking, email, and work logins



Connecting to Mobile Hotspot + VPN

BEST SECURITY

Cellular Data → Hotspot → VPN

Excellent Security

Best balance of security and convenience.

- Private cellular connection you control
- VPN encrypts all of your activity
- Safe for banking, email, and work logins



VPN on Public WiFi

Good Security

Public WiFi → Laptop → VPN

Encrypts traffic, even on public networks.

- Encrypts your traffic, even on public networks
- Your device is still on the public network

Travel Router Only

Good Security

Public WiFi → Travel Router → Laptop

A private bubble for your devices.

- Your devices connect to a router instead of directly to public Wi-Fi
- Public WiFi sees destination

Travel Router + VPN

Very Good Security

Public WiFi → Travel Router → VPN

A private bubble and encrypted traffic.

- Private network plus encrypted traffic
- Best choice when public WiFi is unavoidable

Mobile Hotspot Only

Very Good Security

Cellular Data → Hotspot → Laptop

Use cellular when you can.

- Avoids public WiFi entirely
- Depends on cellular signal and data
- Simpler to set up than a travel router

Virtual Private Network (VPN)

An app that encrypts your internet traffic, so others on the same network can't read what you send or receive.

Travel Router

A small portable router that connects to public Wi-Fi once, then creates your own private network for all your devices.

Mobile Hotspot

Shares your phone's cellular data as a Wi-Fi connection for your laptop and other devices, so you skip public Wi-Fi.

For those interested in using a VPN or personal mobile hotspot while travelling, we recommend researching available options to find what best suits your needs. NYT Wirecutter offers independent reviews and recommendations to help you compare services and devices.
Try It Here: https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/

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