



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the right.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid license, passport, International Driving Permit (IDP), vehicle documents and proof of insurance. Identification should be carried at all times.
- ❑ The Haitian Gourde (HTG) is the national currency.
- ❑ Individuals attempting to access ATMs are often followed and robbed. Resistance increases the chance of being seriously injured or killed.
- ❑ The US State Department warns against travel to Haiti due to kidnapping, crime, civil unrest and poor medical care. Visitors are frequently targeted.
- ❑ Do not reveal local address or personal information to unauthorized persons in the immigration or customs areas in or near airports.
- ❑ Women travelers and women drivers are subject to verbal and physical harassment.
- ❑ Driving is regarded as highly dangerous. Visitors should consider hiring a driver through a reputable hotel or tour company prior to travel.
- ❑ Drive with windows up and doors locked at all times. Car-jackings are common. Drivers should not offer resistance.
- ❑ There is no legal blood alcohol limit. Drink driving is common, especially at night.
- ❑ There are 19.9 road deaths per 100,000 people in Haiti, compared to 2.2 in Sweden and 2.3 in the UK.



Source: CIA Factbook

## ROAD CULTURE

- **Drivers are** poorly trained, and not required to pass written or practical driving tests.
- **Motorists** generally disregard right-drive rules and use both sides of roads, even when there is oncoming traffic.
- **Drivers often** swerve into oncoming lanes to avoid large potholes or standing water.
- **Aggressive driving** and speeding are widespread.
- **In general**, drivers do not observe common safety practices or signal before making turns.
- **Many drivers** operate vehicles without headlights, adequate brakes, seat belts, brake lights or taillights.
- **Motorists** frequently drive overloaded vehicles.
- **Motorcyclists** are often reckless, and weave through traffic at high speeds.
- **Hitchhiking** is common. Large numbers of people seeking rides can be found along roadways.
- **Pedestrians** frequently step into roads. Impaired pedestrians are common in areas with bars and clubs.

## ROAD CONDITIONS

- **Of the** 4,102 km (2,548 miles) of roads, 600 km (373 miles) are paved and 3,502 km (2,176 miles) are unpaved.
- **Roads** are designated as national, department or county.
- **Traffic** throughout the country is chaotic.
- **Urban roads** are often heavily congested.
- **Roads** are generally narrow and poorly maintained.
- **Road lighting** is inadequate or non-existent.
- **There are no** lane demarcations and few traffic lights.
- **Mountain roads** are steep, narrow and winding.
- **Severe** earthquake damage has not been repaired in many areas. Multiple roads were destroyed in 2010. Remaining roads are often in poor condition, with deep potholes and broken surfaces.
- **There is** a major cruise ship port in Labadee near Cap Haitien with private security. Surrounding roads are included, but safety is not guaranteed.
- **Fuel sources** are unreliable. There are shortages throughout the country.
- **Frequent** power outages occur and mobile phone services are often disrupted or unavailable.
- **Navigation** is difficult. Signs are lacking.
- **GPS navigation** systems are unreliable. Accurate maps are not generally available.
- **Pedestrian** infrastructure is poor. There are few crosswalks. Drivers generally disregard pedestrians.
- **Many** people travel by bicycle. Infrastructure is lacking; bicyclists must share narrow, unlit roads with motorized traffic, and are at risk from drivers who disregard the safety of bicyclists.
- **Carts** pulled by donkeys or other large animals are common. Carts must share roads with motorized traffic.



## Road Conditions, continued

- **There are** many loose animals in or near roads. Pigs, dogs and goats can be found on city streets.
- **Abandoned** and broken-down vehicles are rarely cleared from roads, and may block traffic or cause drivers to suddenly swerve to avoid them. Mechanics generally work on cars where they have broken down, rather than tow them to another location.
- **There are** frequent public demonstrations. Avoid all public gatherings, which may become violent. Roads may be blocked, disrupting road travel and public transport.
- **Gangs** outnumber police and government authorities in most areas of the country.
- **Land and sea** borders between Haiti and the Dominican Republic are closed at the time this report was prepared, but conditions may change at short notice.
- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
  - » **Route Nationale 2** linking Martissant to Miragoane is dangerous. Armed gangs control movement along this road, and frequently erect roadblocks. Stopped drivers are robbed and may be assaulted.
  - » **The road to and from Prince International Airport** is the location of gang shootings, car jackings, assaults and robberies. The section between Delmas 33 and the airport is particularly dangerous. Vehicles are often followed to Port-au-Prince for the purpose of robbery or attacks. Drivers who suspect they are being followed should go directly to the nearest police station. Because of dangers, arrange airport transfers and accommodations in advance of travel.
  - » **All border roads** with the Dominican Republic are volatile and high-risk. These areas are controlled by gangs, especially in and near Malpasse and Ouanaminthe. Do not drive along these roads.

## REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- **Haiti** is subject to torrential rains, severe flooding, flash floods, landslides, hurricanes, earthquakes and tsunamis.
- **Flash floods** and landslides may follow heavy rains.
- **The Atlantic** hurricane season is from approximately June 1 to November 30. During storms, roads may become impassable and bridges washed away. Rescue services are inadequate.
- **There are** frequent earthquakes. Tsunamis may follow seismic activity.
- **Some areas** are located at high elevations and carry the risk of altitude sickness. Dizziness, lack of coordination, headache, fatigue, shortness of breath and nausea can impair driver judgment and increase road risks.
- **Criminal activity**, including armed robbery and kidnappings, increases during the December holiday season, Carnival in February or March, and at the beginning of school years in late August or early September.
- **Be familiar with emergency procedures.** The Red Cross provides a website and free, downloadable emergency app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies>

## TRANSPORTATION

- **Transportation options** include cars, taxis, minibuses, luxury coach buses, “tap-taps,” motos (motorcycle taxis), bicycles, water taxis and boats. Tap-taps may be minibuses, pick-up trucks or shared taxis.
- **The majority** of the population does not own or have access to private vehicles. Use of public transport, bicycles and walking are the main forms of transport.
- **Public transportation** is regarded as generally dangerous. Tap-taps, in particular, are not recommended.
- **Local currency** in change or small bills is required to use public transport.
- **Taxis** are scarce and must be booked in advance through a hotel, tourist agency or travel agent.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	50 kph (30 mph)
Rural roads	50 kph (30 mph)
Highways	No national limit

Always adjust speed according to signage, hazards and weather conditions.

Signs are generally pictorial and may not follow European Union conventions.





## Transportation, continued

- **Most taxi** vehicles are SUVs or four-wheel drive trucks.
- **Local buses** are small minibuses and are generally in poor repair.
- **Minibuses can** be found in the center of towns and cities. Destinations are displayed on cards in front windshields.
- **Limited** luxury coach buses are operated by multiple private companies including San Souci Tours, Caribe Tours and Terra Bus. Buses are air-conditioned.
- **Tap-taps** are the most common form of public transport, and include multiple types of vehicles (trucks, minibuses, buses and motos). Most run along set routes and can be hailed on the street.
- **All vehicles** used as tap-taps are brightly painted.
- **Tap-taps** are frequently involved in crashes, kidnappings, robberies and assaults.
- **Not all** tap-taps utilizing the same road routes go to the same final destination.
- **Tap-taps** are generally overcrowded. Pick-up truck tap-taps may carry up to 30 people in a single truck bed.
- **Motos** are common. Moto drivers do not supply helmets to passengers.
- **Moto drivers** are often reckless, and weave in and out of other traffic.
- **Some** moto drivers may attempt to carry several passengers at once.
- **Rideshares** are not available.
- **Public water taxis** and private boats provide service between coastal towns; ferry services connect to Haiti's small islands. Water taxis and ferries generally do not have set schedules and run on demand.
- **Water transport** is regarded as unsafe and unreliable. Accidents occur regularly. Many vessels are unseaworthy, overloaded and have no safety equipment, including life jackets. If traveling by boat, carry your own life preserver and do not travel during inclement weather or rough seas.

## TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must** be at least 18 years of age, and 21 years old to rent a vehicle. Individual rental agencies may have other restrictions.
- **Seat belts** are mandatory for drivers and passengers.
- **Laws do not** mandate child safety restraints. For safety, children should be seated in rear seats and secured in child seats or restraints appropriate to age and size.
- **Helmet use** is compulsory for motorcycle and motorbike drivers and passengers.
- **Children** are not restricted from being passengers on motorcycles or motorbikes, provided they wear a helmet.
- **It is** illegal for motor vehicles to have tinted windows.
- **Common** right-of-way rules are not observed.
- **On-the-spot** fines are issued for many traffic violations. Do not pay cash to traffic officer. Follow payment instructions printed on the traffic ticket.

## Port-au-Prince (Capital)

- » Largest city. Driving is not recommended. Roads are generally in poor condition. Construction to repair past earthquake damages is ongoing in many areas.
- » Crime levels are high; kidnappings and assaults are common. Police responses to emergencies are inadequate or non-existent.
- » Particularly high-risk areas include Artibonite Central, Bas-Delmas, Bel Air, Carrefour, Carrefour Drouillard, Champs-de-Mars, Cité Soleil, Croix-des-Bouquets, Downtown Port-au-Prince, Fontamara, Jalousie, Laboule 12, Martissant, Portail Léogane, Santo, Tabarre, Torcelle, Toussant Brave and the road to the airport.
- » Political conditions are unstable. Police resources are insufficient. Violence is common; an estimated 80% of the city is controlled by gangs. Road travel and public transportation may be impacted at any time by gang activity.
- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, minibuses, luxury coach buses, "tap-taps," motos (motorcycle taxis), bicycles, water taxis and boats. Tap-taps may be minibuses, pick-up trucks or shared taxis.
- » All forms of public transport are regarded as generally dangerous. Use of public transport, particularly tap-taps, is not recommended.
- » There are no tickets for public transport. Local currency in change or small bills is required.
- » There are few taxis. These must be booked in advance through a hotel, tourist agency or travel agent.
- » Taxi vehicles are usually small SUVs or four-wheel drive trucks.

## Port-au-Prince, continued

- » Minibuses serve as local buses and are generally in poor repair.
- » There are no bus stations. Minibuses can be found in the center of town. Destinations are displayed on cards in front windshields.
- » Limited, full-size coach buses are operated by multiple private companies. Buses are air-conditioned.
- » Brightly painted tap-taps are widely available. Tap-taps include trucks, buses, minibuses and motos. Most run along set routes and can be hailed on the street.
- » Tap-taps are dangerous, and are frequently involved in crashes, kidnappings, robberies and assaults.
- » Tap-taps are generally overcrowded. Pick-up truck tap-taps may carry up to 30 people in one truck bed.
- » Motos are common. Drivers do not supply helmets to passengers.
- » Moto drivers often disregard safety, and weave in and out of other traffic.
- » Moto drivers frequently carry several passengers at once.
- » Rideshares are not available.
- » Pedestrian infrastructure is undeveloped. In most locations, pedestrians must walk in roadways.
- » Many people travel by bicycle. There is no cycling infrastructure.
- » Pedestrians and bicyclists are at high risk from drivers of motorized vehicles who disregard their presence.
- » Public water taxis and private boats provide service between the city and other coastal destinations. Water taxis and ferries generally do not have set schedules and run on demand.
- » Ferry services connect to Haiti's small islands.
- » All water transport is regarded as unsafe and unreliable. Accidents occur regularly. Many vessels are unseaworthy, overloaded and have no safety equipment, including life jackets. If traveling by boat, carry your own life preserver. Do not use boat or ferry services during rough seas or inclement weather.
- » Toussaint Louverture International Airport is 9 km (5.6 miles) from the city.
- » Transport between the airport and city is by car, bus, minibus and taxi. Arrange transfers with a trusted person or company prior to travel, particularly if arriving after dark.
- » Buses from the airport are operated by individual companies. Station locations within the city vary by company.
- » Airport minibuses connect to multiple locations downtown.
- » Some rental agencies are represented at the airport. Check vehicle condition carefully before signing agreement.

**Cap Haitien**

- » Second largest urban area. The central town area is small.
- » Driving is not recommended. Roads are damaged. There are few signs.
- » Drivers behave recklessly and disregard traffic and safety rules.
- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, minibuses, luxury coach buses, "tap-taps," motos (motorcycle taxis), water taxis and boats. Tap-taps may be minibuses, pick-up trucks or shared taxis.
- » All public transportation is considered dangerous. Use of public transport, particularly tap-taps, is not advised.
- » Rides on public transport are paid for in local currency. Change or small bills are necessary.
- » Private taxis are uncommon. Taxis must be booked in advance through a hotel, tourist agency or travel agent.
- » Local buses are small minibuses that are often in poor repair.
- » There are no bus stations. Minibuses are parked in the center of town. Destinations are shown on cards in windshields.
- » Limited coach buses are operated by multiple private companies, with routes to Port-au-Prince. Buses are air-conditioned, but vehicles may be in poor repair.
- » Most people travel by tap-tap. Vehicles are brightly painted and include pick-up trucks, minibuses, buses and motos that run along set routes.



## Cap Haitien, continued

- » Tap-taps can be hailed on the street.
- » Tap-taps are frequently involved in crashes, kidnappings, robberies and assaults.
- » Tap-taps are usually overcrowded. Many pick-up truck tap-taps carry dozens of people in a single truck bed.
- » There are many motos. Drivers do not supply helmets to passengers.
- » Moto drivers frequently weave in and out of other traffic and ignore traffic rules. Drivers may carry multiple passengers.
- » There are no rideshare services.
- » Pedestrian infrastructure is undeveloped. Pedestrians must walk near or in roadways with motorized traffic.
- » Many people travel by bicycle. There is no cycling infrastructure.
- » Pedestrians and bicyclists are at high risk from drivers of motorized vehicles who disregard their presence.
- » Public water taxis and private boats provide service to other parts of the island.
- » Ferries connect to small islands. Water taxis and ferries generally do not have set schedules and run on demand.
- » Water transport is regarded as unsafe and unreliable. Accidents occur regularly. Many vessels are unseaworthy, overloaded and have no safety equipment, including life jackets. If traveling by boat, carry your own life preserver. Do not board vessels that are overcrowded, during poor weather or when seas are rough.

**ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED**

- **Laws prohibiting** discrimination against persons with physical, sensory or other challenges are not enforced. There is little accommodation for persons with mobility or other challenges, and local authorities do not enforce laws mandating public access.
- **Accessibility** is limited in public transportation, lodging, communications, information and general infrastructure.
- **There are** few sidewalks. Existing sidewalks are often damaged with potholes and broken surfaces, or are blocked by street vendors and parked cars.
- **Motorcycle** drivers generally disregard persons on foot, including pedestrians with mobility challenges.

**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
- **Responders** to emergency numbers in remote areas may not speak English.
- **Emergency numbers** (a response is not guaranteed):
  - » Police: 114
  - » Ambulance and fire: 118
- **Responses to** emergency situations are unavailable in most areas, and undependable where they exist.
- **Ambulances** are not staffed with trained paramedics, and not equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment or supplies.
- **Medical care** is regarded as substandard and does not meet western standards, particularly outside of the capital.
- **Public** medical clinics are scarce, and frequently lack basic supplies.
- **Hospital staffs** and physicians may speak little or no English.
- **Payment** is generally required prior to the delivery of care. Credit cards may not be accepted.
- **In the event** of serious illness or injury, medical evacuation to another country is generally necessary.
- **Medicines** prescribed in other countries may be illegal in Haiti. Verify legality of medications prior to travel. Carry medicines in their original packaging accompanied by a written doctor's prescription.
- **If involved in a crash:**
  - » Call police and emergency services.
  - » Make your way to the nearest medical center or police station if there is no response.
  - » Do not expect assistance from law enforcement or medical personnel.



**ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR SAFE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAVEL (ASIRT)**

ASIRT is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in memory of Aron Sobel, age 25, who was killed along with 22 other passengers in a Pamukkale Bus Company crash on the roads of Turkey.

Disclaimer: ASIRT provides this information as a service to travelers. This Road Safety Review is intended to provide general guidelines for travelers to countries around the world. Any electronic links provided in this Report are for illustrative purposes and ASIRT is not responsible for the content provided within these electronic links and/or videos.

Copyright: Purchasers of this Road Safety Review are entitled to use it for purposes of research, education, information on health, safety and general road and traffic conditions or other non-commercial uses. Neither the whole nor any part of this ASIRT Road Safety Review may be copied in any form or provided to any other party without the prior written consent of the copyright owner. Flag images are © Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook.

To order more copies or to order Road Safety Reviews for other countries please contact:

Association for Safe International Road Travel, 11769 Gainsborough Road, Potomac, MD 20854 USA,  
Phone: 1-240-249-0100; Email: [asirt@asirt.org](mailto:asirt@asirt.org); Website: [www.asirt.org](http://www.asirt.org); Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ASIRT.org/>