



**Your guide to being  
animal friendly  
on holiday**



## Planning your trip

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# Why it's vital to protect animals when you travel

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Seeing wild animals when you travel can be such a memorable part of any travel experience. However, you may not be aware these animals often suffer unseen cruelty and abuse.

Many wild animals are taken from their natural environments to be exploited for entertainment and profit. You may see animals that belong in the wild being used in live shows or being offered for transport and rides. You may be approached to pose with animals for photos, or be offered animal souvenirs or by-products. Often, the worst cruelty is hidden from view.

Elephants are trained to perform for tourists in shows, they're beaten with rods to learn 'tricks' and chained to restrict their movement.

Bears are kept in tiny cages and suffer horrific mental and physical pain as a syringe is repeatedly pushed through the bear's skin into the gall bladder to extract bear bile to sell to tourists.

Sadly, many tourists who love animals may actually contribute to animal suffering simply because they're unaware of the hidden cruelty.

**World Animal Protection** helps people like you protect animals. This guide lets you know what to look out for so you can make informed decisions about animal experiences on your journey.

The more we can be aware of the way animals are being treated, the more we'll be able to protect them from cruelty and suffering. Being animal friendly when you travel means you always show respect - for the people, the culture, the environment and the animals, in every country you visit.

Plan your animal friendly trip 



# Before you go checklist

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You can protect animals on your holidays by being informed and alert to the welfare of the animals you encounter. Make good decisions for animals when you travel by following these simple steps:

-  **Do your research:** investigate the venues you intend to visit. If animal encounters are offered, how are the animals treated and where did they come from?
-  **Ask questions:** check if your tour operator or travel agent has an animal welfare policy. Ask your friends and family about their experiences.
-  **Make positive choices:** support tourism that does not exploit wild animals.
-  **Eat ethically:** when trying local exotic foods, ask if the animal is rare or endangered, which is often illegal.
-  **Think before you buy:** Consider what may be a locally-produced animal souvenir may actually drive demand for the illegal trade in wildlife.
-  **Think about culture:** always be respectful when you travel, but remember that culture is not an excuse for cruelty.



# Wild animals belong in the wild

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A captive wild animal can never truly experience a life free from suffering and cruelty. No matter how well they are looked after in captivity, only in their wild environment can all the animals' needs be fully met.

When you see a captive wild animal on your holiday, often you can't see the cruelty. **It's hidden from view.** Whether taken from the wild or bred in captivity, all captive wild animals have their own stories of pain and suffering. Here's just one example.

Elephants used in entertainment can appear to be well looked after, but the reality can be very different. Where they've come from and how they got there is a terrible journey that most holidaymakers aren't aware of.

Young elephants are valued much more than older ones, so they become the targets of poachers. They're easier to catch, transport and train. In the wild, these adolescent elephants are trapped in pits, crudely-dug holes from which they can't escape. Equally traumatic, many elephant calves are bred and born into captivity - never to experience a life without pain and stress.

Ripped from their families and transported to their destinations, terribly cruel training awaits. Rods with spikes, chains, ropes, and "the crush". **And this is just the beginning.** This elephant will now be forced to entertain tourists with its free time spent socially isolated and physically restrained for the rest of its life. And as long as the demand remains for this kind of tourism, so will the cruelty.

By being aware of the impact your decisions can have, you're taking the first step to ending the cruel exploitation of wildlife.

You know their story, now start protecting animals on your holiday 

# What to look out for on your holiday

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At last you're on your journey! Now ask yourself these simple questions that can help protect the animals you encounter as you travel.



## 1 Does this animal have food and water?

Many wild animals used to entertain tourists, like elephants and monkeys, are forced to work long hours with limited access to fresh water and food. They may suffer heat stress, exhaustion and dehydration.



## 2 Is there rest and shelter for the animals?

Wild animals used to entertain tourists have often been taken from their natural environments. They are kept in enclosures with little or no protection from harsh weather, and are not given adequate rest.





Image © World Animal Protection/Victor Watkins

### 3 Is this animal in pain and suffering?

Many captive animals may be suffering from poor nutrition and health, caused by an inadequate diet or access to little or no veterinary care. Some animals will have their teeth pulled or claws clipped, causing terrible suffering.



Image © Flickr.com/cesarastudillo

### 4 Is this 'natural behaviour' or is it cruelty?

Captive animals are often taken from their families. Many wild animals have complex social structures that cannot be recreated in captivity. These animals are exploited for entertainment, forced to perform unnatural behaviours.



Image © flickr.com/mamchenkov

### 5 Will I see animals in distress?

Performing wild animals in zoos, shows and circuses often suffer from high stress levels and psychological trauma caused by close confinement, inadequate conditions and cruel training methods.

It's the cruelty you don't see that can be the most distressing.



# Protect animals after your holiday

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- **Spreading the word:** Tell your friends and family about your experiences. Use social media to encourage your friends to learn about how they can be animal friendly on holiday.
- **Reporting and recording:** Record inappropriate treatment and report it to the appropriate local authorities. Do not take corrective measures yourself. Be aware of risks to yourself and/or the animals involved.
- **Seeing animals in the wild:** experience the joy and wonder of animals in the wild. Protect the environment on which wildlife depends.
- **Joining World Animal Protection:** learn more about our vital work for animals in disasters, animals in farming, animals in communities and animals in the wild. Visit: [worldanimalprotection.org](http://worldanimalprotection.org)

**By empowering yourself with the information in this booklet, you've taken the first step to helping protect animals when you travel. Thank you!**

**Now it's time to put what you've learned into action. Pack your bags, have a great trip – and protect animals as you travel!**



[worldanimalprotection.org](http://worldanimalprotection.org)

