



Sports trip (generic information)

Updated 1st September 2024

Travel

Coach

It is our belief that you should **travel in comfort and safety**. On all our European sports tours, you will enjoy **door to door travel** by **executive coach**, contracted on your behalf with a reputable supplier that has supplied us with an audit checklist in advance. The term 'executive coach' is used by the coach industry to refer to one that is typically fitted with reclining seats, DVD, stereo, air circulation system and microphone. Some vehicles will also be fitted with USB points. A toilet will be available on all executive coaches that we send on overseas trips and sometimes also in the UK. All British coaches will be fitted with seatbelts as standard. Most executive coaches have **49-53 seats**, although we do also contract executive **double-decker coaches with up to 79 seats** on occasion for larger groups. Midi-coaches (20-39 seats) are not typically fitted with toilets. British tour drivers are DBS checked and you should find your tour driver to be friendly, experienced and reliable. Where coach travel is provided by suppliers in overseas countries, we contract **reputable companies in destination** to handle all the journeys as stipulated. However, while they comply with local regulations, please bear in mind that standards and requirements may be different to those here in the UK.

Luggage capacity is limited, regardless of the number of seats and you must pack accordingly. No hard-rimmed suitcases are allowed, and only soft-sided sports bags will be allowed and packed accordingly in the hold. A small carry-on item (handbag or back-pack) can be taken on with you for the journey, as long as it can be safely and comfortably stored on board.

Ferry

We use the **ferry services** from Dover to Calais (or Dunkerque) for most of our tour groups travelling to Europe (P&O, Irish Ferries and DFDS). With refurbished and improved vessels, you can eat and drink on board in comfort as you sail across to the Continent. We also use the fast and popular **Eurotunnel service** from Folkestone to Calais. A supplement is sometimes required for groups wishing to use this service and as coach space is limited, availability can seldom be guaranteed until closer to departure. Other ferry routes including services from Harwich-Hoek of Holland and Newcastle to Amsterdam may also be available on request.

Flights

For **flight-inclusive packages**, we will always take into consideration your preferred departure airport and travel times, however these cannot always be guaranteed. Many bookings are accepted in advance of airline schedules being released and the airlines often make amendments closer to departure too. Please also bear in mind that any booking will also be subject to the terms and restrictions of the airline that has been selected. Amendments (including name changes) after a booking has been received may well incur substantial fees (imposed by the airline) and you will need to adhere to these conditions. The airlines have reduced capacity (and increased prices) since the pandemic, so there is often less flexibility than before. Please carefully check the baggage restrictions of the airline. Supplements (fees) will apply to excess luggage and weight should you exceed your allowance.

Accommodation

The accommodations that we feature have been **hand-picked** for our groups. These are subject to an **audit checklist** and reviewed by our staff or representatives to ensure their suitability. The bedrooms in the hotels that we contract will be en-suite. This means that they have a shower and toilet in the room. Many hostels still have shared washroom facilities along the corridor. Self-catering cottages/bungalows/mobile homes/villas in holiday parks (like Center Parcs) will have a shared bathroom/toilet in the unit but are not en-suite. As local **accommodation classifications vary** in different countries, please read the descriptions carefully or ask us for further details before deciding whether a particular venue is right for you and your group.

Meal plans

Different meal plans are available, so please check your Tour proposal for details of the meals that have been included in your package. These may be referred to as **room only/self-catering** (no meals included); **bed and breakfast** (only breakfast included); **half board** (breakfast and dinner included) or **full board** (breakfast, packed lunch and dinner included). Meals will usually be provided at your accommodation, but sometimes might be at a local restaurant or host sports team clubhouse for example instead.

Damage Deposits

Some accommodation providers require a **damage deposit** to be paid in advance or directly to them on arrival, refundable after the stay subject to an inspection of your rooms - over and above any security deposit that may have already been paid to us.



Tourist tax & City tax

Some countries/cities/resorts charge a city tax or tourist tax, which by law, is collected by the accommodation to pass on to the Authorities. This needs to be paid directly on arrival at the accommodation. Whenever possible we include these costs within your package, but this is not always allowed. Please check on your Proposal for details and check with us first if you are at all unsure.

Sports

It is important that you choose the right tour to suit your budget, goals and ambition. Our hugely experienced team of sports tour experts are here to help you, so please do get in touch for a chat. Whichever destination and package you choose, you will need to check in advance with your governing body regarding any **permission to tour overseas** as a team that may be required. Forms often need to be completed and returned several weeks in advance of your tour dates to allow approval to be granted so please do start this process as soon as possible, especially if you are unfamiliar with the procedures. We can assist you with the completion of any such documentation when you have it ready to pass on to us. Please ask if you need any help.

Festivals

We organise our own **multi-sport festivals** including the popular **SportsSchool events** in Holland and Spain. These typically include coaching sessions from qualified staff, festival matches with other British schools, organised evening social events and a selection of recommended excursions. A team of our staff and representatives is on hand to manage the events and help you to make the most of your time on tour. Matches with foreign teams are not normally included in these tours but can sometimes be added for a supplement on request. Subject to scheduling, we may also organise our own tournaments/festivals here in the UK.

Friendly Matches

A typical tour package will include the organisation of friendly matches for your teams. Subject to your dates, destination and tour duration, the number of matches may vary as appropriate. We shall endeavour to organise fixtures to match your ages and ability, but you should be aware that age categories in other countries normally vary to those here in the UK. Throughout continental Europe, **sports team age categories** are based on calendar year birthdates (i.e. 1st January - 31st December) and not Academic year dates as operated in England. As such, there will always be some disparity in ages when teams travel and play abroad and touring teams should take into account that we are the exception rather than the rule as a nation with this in mind. Furthermore, school groups must be aware that most games will be organised against local club teams (not schools) – especially in Europe – being mindful that school sport is far less developed than in the UK (or indeed not played competitively) in most European countries. Further details on categories and local variations are available on request.

Tournaments

These vary in size from large international competitions to local club events. All of these are governed by their own rules and regulations and are not owned or organised by us. Strict age rulings often apply. Due to the differing age categories between countries, **dispensation** can sometimes (but certainly not always) be applied for to allow some overage players to participate in an age group. Further information about each event is available on request. Most of these events are **open tournaments** meaning that they accept bookings from teams of all ability levels. Often the results of your matches in the initial group stages will determine your subsequent progression in the tournament. Please bear in mind that although we can enter you into tournaments and offer best advice, when these are not managed by us, we cannot determine the tournament structure or regulations, nor influence outcomes or bend the rules.

Pro Coaching

Coaching programmes (or ad hoc sessions) are available with various **professional clubs** that we work with both at home and abroad. The nature of these will vary and some may be tailor-made to meet more specific requirements on request. Coaching staff either work for the relevant club or are specifically approved by the club and all have a recognised national governing body qualification. Venues used are either owned or contracted by the host club. The delivery of any session is determined by the coaches and access to facilities and venues is at the discretion of the club on each occasion. Individual ad hoc coaching sessions with professional staff are also possible at many of our featured destinations at a supplement on request.

Equipment

Please ensure that you take the **appropriate kit** and equipment with you and that you have checked what equipment and facilities will be available for you in destination. Please ask us well in advance if you need any help or advice. Remember that any additional kit will need to be transported (whether on the coach or by paying for extra luggage on a flight) and should space allow.



Activities, Excursions & Tickets

We will work with you to build an itinerary which meets your goals and expectations. This may include the scheduling or booking of additional activities should you wish and should time on tour allow. Excursions to **theme parks, waterparks, stadium visits**, museums and places of educational and cultural interest might be planned. These can often be pre-reserved on your behalf and paid for in advance. Further local activities such as **ten pin bowling or crazy golf (for example)**, will be available in some resorts. Tickets to sports matches can sometimes be purchased in advance too, subject to group allocations and scheduling. Remember that match dates and times are subject to change for TV rights and other reasons, which are all wholly outside of our control. If group **match tickets** are allocated, the host club will endeavour to seat you all together as a group, if possible, in a safe and suitable section of the stadium. Please bear in mind that **the wearing of team colours** (other than those of the host club) is strictly forbidden and any breach of this ruling can lead to immediate expulsion from the stadium.

Representation

You will always be able to talk to an English-speaking representative. Depending on the nature of your tour, this could mean a local representative to meet with you on arrival to assist with check in; English-speaking assistance during your tour or local agency support. However, a full-time tour representative dedicated to your group is not included in your tour package unless specifically shown as an inclusion. Our 24-hour emergency Duty Manager service is available to all our groups on tour.

Sports tour 'what to pack' checklist:

Here's a sample checklist below - although you may wish to amend or use your own of course. Consider carefully before deciding whether to bring valuable items such as jewellery or gadgets which might get damaged, lost or stolen during the trip.

Sports Clothing & equipment

Sports kit (for matches)

Training kit (for coaching sessions)

Equipment that may also be required (balls, cones, bibs and specialist accessories)

Footwear (appropriate to the sports and surfaces you may be using, which may be indoor and outdoor, natural and artificial)

Other Clothing

Leisurewear appropriate to the climate of the trip and destination

Underwear (including normal socks)

Trousers/Jeans/Jogging bottoms/shirts

Jacket/waterproof & Hoodie or sweatshirt

Swimming trunks/costume

Comfortable and appropriate footwear

Sliders/Slippers/indoor shoes

Personal items

Wash kit & tissues & travel-sick pills (if required)

Towel(s) – worth taking even if you have a towel at your accommodation (for after sports matches, training, swimming)

Water bottle (drink water regularly to prevent dehydration)

Essentials

Passport

GHIC (the replacement for the old EHIC)

Travel insurance documentation

Medication & Wet wipes and hand sanitiser

Small backpack / personal kit bag

European plug adaptor / USB adaptors / cables / chargers

Sunscreen (depending on destination) & sunglasses

Extras

Phone (and gadget or device if you wish – making sure these are suitably insured)

Camera (consider a disposable camera)

Reading book / Language phrase book / Paper or notebook and pen/pencil and tour folder/itinerary etc.

Travel pillow (for coach or flight)