

What if I build my own holiday?

There has been a huge rise in the number of people booking "DIY holidays", where holidaymakers plan and put together their own packages with increasing on-line availability of flights, particularly on low cost carriers, and separate accommodation agents. However, despite what many air travellers believe, these holidays are not ATOL-protected in the same way as if you'd booked everything with a single tour operator.

Booking on-line with separate suppliers may seem the cheaper option, but if an airline stopped flying, you might pay considerably more to get another flight home and might even have to cut short your holiday. If you've yet to travel you could have difficulties getting to hotels or villas you've already paid for. Last minute alternative flights could be expensive and fly at different times to the ones originally booked.

If you book everything with an ATOL tour operator you will be protected. And, because they are responsible for each component of the holiday, if there's a problem with one of them - before you go or when you're away - they must sort it out and provide you with help and assistance.

If you want to book on-line there are ATOL tour operators' that let you build low cost and flexible holidays that are protected. Just look for the ATOL logo. Otherwise consider taking other financial protection measures, such as insurance policies that cover against insolvency.

So beware of the potential risks and consider your options.

Longreach Travel has an ATOL licence which ensures your Financial Protection.