

A major portion of this article was contributed by an individual who has gone on many metal detecting trips to England. I would like to acknowledge Sarah Lohberger, who is very active in her metal detecting club the Treasure Hunters Society of Santa Clara Valley (THSSCV) of California. Sarah and husband (Dan) both hold or have held club offices and are active members of the club's board. I would like to thank Sarah for her time, knowledge, and expertise in helping to make this article a reality.

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Are you are thinking about taking a metal detecting trip to England for that once in a life time metal detecting target. One reason to select England is that the country has been populated with a variety of cultures much longer (several thousand years) than the U.S. therefore the metal detecting finds can be very old and sometimes very valuable.

You may think to yourself, "How do I prepare for an overseas metal detecting adventure of this magnitude?" The objective of this article is to provide answers to important questions about such a trip. However the article will probably leave you with some questions that you must answer as you move forward with your research and planning.

The very first thing you must do is to educate yourself about the requirements associated with metal detecting in England. If you decide to go to Scotland the laws are some what different and they will not be covered in this article.

Below is a list of important websites that should be read before starting your trip preparations. It is very important to read the content of these sites so that you have a good understanding about metal detecting in England. This will be important for either setting up your own metal detecting trip or enlisting the services of an England Tour Organizer.

While going over the website list; take notes so that you can create a list of questions that can be asked of Tour Organizers and others while researching the trip.

Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales

Website: <http://www.ncmd.co.uk/docs/CofP1.pdf>

Council for British Archaeology

Website: <http://new.archaeologyuk.org/>

English Heritage

Website: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/>

National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD)

Website: <http://www.ncmd.co.uk/>

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Website: <http://www.finds.org.uk/>

Treasure Act 1996

Website:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1996/ukpga_19960024_en_1

Next, you will need to make sure you have a current passport for travel. If your passport is expired or you do not have a passport one can be obtained through your local United States Post Office (USPS). This process can take 6-10 weeks; advanced planning for a passport is essential.

USPS Website Passport Services:

<http://www.usps.com/passport/>

Along with obtaining a passport one should also check to see whether a visa is required for the trip. You can access this website to validate any visa requirements:

UK Border Agency Website:

<http://flightdelayclaimsteam.com/uk-visas-immigration/>

While traveling to England you will also need a secondary photo ID to support your passport.

How to choose a trip sponsor? The suggestion is to get other detectorist opinions that have gone on a trip or two to England and read testimonies of others on the various Tour Organizer websites. If you have trouble locating someone that has gone on an English detecting trip go on the internet and select one or more of the metal detecting forums then pose your questions and ask for feedback and recommendations. Also

email the Tour Organizers that are under consideration; asking questions about how they handle tours and what services they offer.

Any recommendations received from a detectorist, who has been on an English detecting trip should be given serious consideration towards making a final decision.

Remember: Research, Research, Research

Should you travel with a Tour Organizer or go independently? The advice is to go on your first England metal detecting trip with a Tour Organizer as you must abide by all aspects of the Treasure Act in regards to any find.

The Tour Organizer has exclusive contracts with farmers to hunt their land. Plus they have the skill to identify your finds, handle all of the export paper work and if your find is a Treasure as defined by the Treasure Act they report the find to the local museum officials.

If you were to independently travel to England you would need to locate land to detect, identify the owner, gain written permission, contact local officials for finds identification, handle export paperwork and make all other arrangements to meet the requirements of the Treasure Act. This could be a big deal if it's your first trip.

Should you select an all inclusive trip or setup your own air travel & other reservations? If you want to save some money, the recommendation is, make your own flight reservations and accommodations for the first night's stay. The rest of the metal detecting tour should be included in the Tour Organizer's fee.

If you do not want to take responsibility for any part of the tour then select an all inclusive tour where one fee pays for everything.

What should the length of stay be? The decision to go one week, two weeks or ten days should be based on your physical health' financial situation and your

desire to metal detect 10-12 hours per day. A good compromise is ten days. One should consider dividing the trip into two sections: first section of the trip devoted to metal detecting and the second section of the trip to sightseeing. This would be a good time to have your non-hunting spouse join you as there is nothing for them to do during the first week.

Generally, the tour group you are with will want to metal detect from 7:00 AM until dark. (Long Days)

What is the best time of the year? In March and October there is more bare land available as there are no crop in the fields or stubble from the past years growth crop.

Spring? You should expect rain or snow in England. Occasionally you'll have warmer weather but remember you need to have raingear handy at all times as it can rain often during your metal detecting days.

Fall? Expect rain. Some days are very warm and again it can rain at any time.

What transportation is availability once in the country? Buses and taxis are available at the airport and can take you to your hotel for the first night's stay.

Depending upon the type of tour you are taking transportation may be all inclusive in the tour price and wherever you need to go the transportation is furnished.

The Tour Organizer will drive you to the detecting field every morning. At lunch time they will return with a meal and you can either stay in that field or change to another location. This may not be exactly the same for all Tour Organizers.

Some Tour Organizers may have a vehicle at the detecting location and others may drop you off and pick you up later. You need to verify this with the Tour Organizer before signing on the dotted line.

What are the living conditions like? The living conditions range from private homes, individual lodges

on private lands and standard motels. The living conditions will vary based on the Tour Organizer and location of the tour.

Are there meals available? If you have an all inclusive tour most likely all the meals will be included in the price. Lunch is brought to the hunt field with breakfast and dinner at your lodging.

Other types of tours may have the breakfast and lunch provided but not the evening meal. Some people may prefer to go out to a local pub in the evenings.

Food can also be purchased. There are excellent grocery stores in England. Some of the smaller villages also have butcher shops.

How much clothing should be taken for the trip and are there laundry facilities? There may be laundry facilities available where you are staying. This is one of those items that needs to be verified with your Tour Organizer once you are about to select your accommodation. If laundry facilities are available then less clothing will be required.

The suggestion is to pack one set of clothing that will be used just for metal detecting since you will frequently encounter muddy fields. No one seems to care how dirty or muddy you get in the fields so just hang the gear up and put it on for the next day's detecting.

Rain gear is very important and the recommendation is to be willing to spend money for good rain gear that will last the entire trip. To complement the rain gear you will need good boots Muck boots are used by many detectorists on these trips. Don't forget gloves it can be cold and muddy (three pairs of rubber palmed gloves for detecting). In the spring disposable hand warmers come in handy.

You should plan on dressing in layers since the morning hours can be fairly cold. However, the day can warm up and shirt sleeve attire will later be adequate especially during a fall day. You may need to use sunscreen to keep from getting a sun burn.

Once in England, what security requirement should be taken for your personal items and detectors? The suggestion is to take valuables with you to the hunt field and leave the backpack in the locked vehicle or carry the pack. The vehicle key can be hid close by for all to use in case you need your back pack or just want to collapse on a seat and rest.

How much currency should you take? The recommendation is to get your English pounds from the London airport ATM as they seem to have the best rate. Get enough moneys (400 to 500 pounds) to handle paying for part of any van rental, occasionally eating at the pubs and of course shopping for souvenirs. You should also have enough spare money in case there is some sort of emergency.

Should you take travelers' checks? Travelers' checks are accepted in most areas that are frequented by tourists; to avoid additional charges they should be acquired and taken in Pound Sterling.

What type of credit cards should be taken? There are places that don't take American Express in England. The advice is to take a Visa and Master Card credit cards. It is recommended to call the card companies before you leave the U.S. to inform them of the countries you will be visiting.

Should you purchase travel insurance? Setting up a metal detecting trip usually has a fairly long lead time (four to six months). Many things can happen over that period of time; the recommendation is to strongly consider to purchasing a good travel insurance policy. There have been people who had to cancel a trip and lost their money because they didn't have travel insurance. [Travel Guard: Travel Insurance](#) is one reputable provider. Even cancellations as a result of preexisting conditions are covered provided you purchase the insurance within 14 days of your first trip deposit.

Should you contact the U.S. Embassy letting them know you will be in a specific country? Sign up for the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program so the State Department can better assist you in an emergency. Let

the State Department know of your travel plans through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. This is a free online service at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. This will help the State Department if they need to contact you concerning any family emergency or if there is a crisis in the country you are traveling.

Should you get vaccinations for England? You should visit your doctor and make sure that you are caught up with all your vaccinations. Your doctor should know if any further shots are needed for the location you're traveling to.

Should you check your medical insurance overseas coverage? Ask your medical insurance company if your policy applies overseas, *and if it covers emergency expenses such as medical evacuation*. If it does not, you may want to consider supplemental insurance to cover this expensive area.

There have been occasions on an England metal detecting trip where there was a need to go to a local doctor. For this service there was no charge for the office call or the medication.

In the UK, prescription drugs are free in Wales, Scotland and in England there may be a charge per item, over the counter drugs are available to purchase.

Are there emergency medical services available where you are going? You should check in advance with your Tour Organizer about emergency medical facilities in the area you will be visiting. This may vary from location to location in the country.

Should you take additional medicine? If so how much? Take at least one additional week's medications in case you have a travel problem and may need to stay longer. It is always wise to be prepared for the un-expected.

Will U.S. cell phones work in England? Most countries including England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland use a GSM wireless protocol. If you want the

convenience of carrying a cellular phone, then you will need a GSM cell phone.

Most U.S. phone services will not work in U.K. the exception may be T-Mobile and Cingular but check with them before leaving and be aware of heavy roaming charges. Cell phones can usually be rented by the week in England.

Is there internet access offered by the Tour Organizer? Generally wireless internet is available either through the lodging provider or you may gain internet access with permission from a local business. Local pubs may also have wi-fi service.

Is an A.C. power conversion kit required? Yes, you will need to have an AC conversion plug that can work with England's AC receptacles. These will be required for charging batteries, to charge a laptop and to use other forms of U.S. personal electrical appliance. I would suggest taking two AC conversion adaptors on a trip to England.

How to transport your detectors and other gear? On the flight over pack one complete detector, the electronics for a second detector and raingear in your carry on luggage. If the checked luggage is delayed, you will still be able to go detecting. All target recovery tools will need to be in your checked luggage.

It is always wise to carry the detectors electronics in your carry on luggage since it is very sensitive to damage and expensive to replace.

Also carry a change of clothing in the carry on luggage if room is available.

What type of additional gear should be taken on the trip? Traveling and using metal detectors in a remote location from your primary residence requires some planning. Putting together a metal detector repair kit to take on your travels can turn a potentially disastrous broken metal detector situation into a great trip. The kit can handle repairs for two different major detector brands. The contents are:

- Two Lower Rods (different types)
- Tie Wraps: 4 & 8 inch
- Roll of Black Tape
- Plastic Bags for Detector Rain Cover
- Spare Headphones
- Lower Rod Bolts and Bushings
- Two Stainless Arm Cup Bolts
- Multi-Purpose Tool
- Screw Driver (Common & Phillips)
- Knife and Set of Small Allen Wrenches
- Spare Knob and Rubber Seal Lubricate
- Two Rod Stainless Spring Clips
- First Aid Kit

This kit should model your detectors hardware and may have a slightly different content based on the detector model however it needs to be equipped well enough to handle emergency detector repairs in the field. If traveling by plane always keep the kit in your checked luggage. Put the kits small items into a heavy duty zip-lock bag for transportation. Use zip-lock bags to hold down the air travel weight factor.

The recommendation is to take two detectors on a trip. The detectorist should be very familiar with each detector, never take a detector you have little or no operational experience with on a trip.

Some detecting locations have many small metal targets in the ground the suggestion; take a small coil for these situations. Normally take the largest search coil you can comfortably use since a larger coil covers more area and the fields are huge.

The popular detectors used on these trips are the Minelab E-trac, Fisher F-75 and White's MXT.

The recommendation is to have a 'swingy thing' to help in handling the detector's weight. Detecting for 10 – 12 hours a day can be tough on the back. There may be days the mud builds up so badly your detector feels like it weighs a ton. In these cases it's good to have your digging knife to scrap mud off the detector's coil and to clean your boots.

Last put not least; create a list of personal items to take to the hunt field in your back pack. Be prepared for all emergencies.

What does a trip organizer furnish in the way of detecting tools? This is one of those questions that can vary with each Tour Organizer, some supply digging tools others may not.

For a reasonable charge the Tour Organizer may have a few detectors available to rent if yours doesn't arrive or if it should become defective.

How many batteries to take on the trip? (AA or Rechargeable?) Many rechargeable units have been fried in England so it probably should not be your primary source of battery power. However, taking one rechargeable battery and charger should be on the packing list.

This is where you need to know your detector and how long you can use it on one set of batteries. If you are going to detect seven days I would suggest eight sets of batteries.

Batteries can be purchased in England but they are very expensive. March 2011 a purchase of 24 AA batteries cost 22 pounds. That's over \$35.00 US. However, battery prices should be virtually the same in either country.

What should one's expectations be on finds? The Tour Organizer does not 'plant' targets in the hunt fields. So you're better off not to expect anything of importance. You'll find whatever your detector's coil is swung over. You can go several trips and not find anything exciting or you can find a fantastic relic on your very first trip.

Can you take all your finds home? You cannot take any of your current trip's finds home when you depart. All finds that are returned to you must have export paper work and this takes time. The finds can be mailed to you or you can pick them up on your next trip.

If you have any finds of great value, it would be best to have someone bring them home for you or pick them up yourself.

Keep in mind that valuable finds put in checked luggage have on occasion not made it back to the U.S. destination. It is suggested that you place valuable finds in your carry on luggage. No sharp items in the carry on luggage they must go in checked luggage.

Oh yeah, you'll be hooked after one trip and will be back. Even if you find very little, the other people will be finding very interesting items. It's just too exciting of an experience when you realize that if you had walked right instead of left you would have found it!

How does that finds' reporting process work? On tours, the Tour Organizer should do all the finds paperwork. The Tour Organizer will report any treasure find to the museum. Again, it is best to have read the English Treasure Act before you leave on the tour. Paperwork goes through the Coroner in the local area and yes, the coroner does the same thing in

England as they do in the U.S. plus they processes export license.

What can be expected of the England's customs?

Sarah has only heard of one person who had his finds checked by English customs. She brings home a heavy bag of finds from a previous trip and has never been questioned.

What other activities are available during the evening hours?

After 10 -12 hours a day metal detecting other activities may not be high on one's list. Generally, all of the living areas have television and there are usually pubs located within a few miles.

Conclusion: Going on a metal detecting trip takes a good deal of advanced planning, research and making that all important final decision "what Tour Organizer to sign on with for the trip". Hopefully, this question and answer article will provide you with enough information and material so that you can develop a list of your own. Do your own research so that you will have a very successful metal detecting adventure in England.