

Packing List - PeerCorps Trust Fund

This list was originally created by volunteers serving in Tanzania with the United States Peace Corps and is based on their experience. We have updated and adapted it based on our observations on the ground with input from past interns. Use it as an informal guide in making your own list, bearing in mind that experience is individual. There is no perfect list. You obviously cannot bring everything we mention, so consider those items that make the most sense to you personally and professionally. As you decide what to bring, keep in mind that you have an 20 kilogram weight limit on baggage per suitcase. Luggage should be durable, lockable and easy to carry. Because you will probably travel a lot by bus, duffel bags or small internal frame backpacks are substantially more practical than suitcases.

There are numerous used clothes markets throughout Tanzania where you can purchase inexpensive clothing. Tailors can also make clothing for you. It is possible in the early weeks of training to buy most clothing you will need or to expand on what you have brought. Think of East Africa as the world's largest thrift store; the clothing will all be familiar to you. Once at site, you can pick up quality used clothing at markets that are adequate for your service. Clothing found at markets generally range from \$1-\$5 USD for an article of clothing. In addition, clothes in Tanzania are hand washed, hung dry and ironed. Therefore, cotton items generally tend to last longer than other materials that may not endure hand washing.

General Comments on Clothing

Tanzanians generally dress conservatively. You will be expected to dress professionally. This means closed-toe shoes or sandals, trousers (slacks or pants) instead of jeans, and shirts with collars for men and below-the-knee dresses or skirts for women. Although you can dress more casually while at home, most Tanzanians do not approve of short shorts, tank tops, or dirty or ripped clothing.

In the following lists, items marked with an asterisk are difficult to find or very expensive to buy in Tanzania or are of poor quality.

- One or two pairs of comfortable khakis;
- Sleepwear;
- A sweater, fleece top, or warm jackets (some places in the southern highlands get cold in June and July);
- Hat and sunglasses;
- Swimsuit;

- One or two long-sleeved collared shirts;
- Windbreaker or rain jacket.

Note: If you have a specific brand you like or a unique piece of clothing or size that is hard to find, bring enough of that item to last you for the duration of your stay. Items like US size 13 shoes or sports bras are very difficult to find.

- **Women:** Three to five cotton or polyester dresses or skirts (below the knee or longer);
- **Women:** Two or three blouses or dressy shirts (no bare shoulders);
- **Women:** One extra-nice dress for official functions;
- **Women:** Socks (Tanzanian women generally do not wear pantyhose);
- **Men and Women:** High quality cotton underwear and socks (chafing on long bus rides is not pleasant!);
- **Men:** Five or six short-sleeved collared shirts.
- **Women:** Three-to-five cotton or synthetic, dark-colored dress or casual pants;
- **Men and Women:** Six or seven button-down shirts (mix of short and long sleeved);
- **Men and Women:** Two pairs of lightweight, quick-drying pants for travel, bike riding, and exercise;
- **Men:** One jacket and tie for official functions;
- **Men and Women:** Two pairs of nice but comfortable shoes (to wear with professional clothes);
- **Men and Women:** Durable walking shoes or hiking boots*. Strongly recommended (a must for those in rural areas);
- **Men and Women:** Sandals for showering;
- **Men and Women:** One pair of sneakers or running shoes;
- **Men and Women:** Closed-toe shoes or dressy sandals.

Note: hiking boots are only necessary if you're going to be doing a lot of mountain climbing. Even then, fairly high-quality used boots are available in-country. Your best bet may be to buy a decent pair of tennis shoes which will

be more than adequate most percent of the time. Also, flip-flops are available in abundance; don't bring any!

Personal Hygiene and Toiletry Items

Most toiletries are readily available in Tanzania, but you may not find your favorite brand. You may not find good-quality hairbrushes or toothbrushes and certain items will be comparatively expensive.

Kitchen

Most household items are readily available but may not be of the best quality. If you like to cook, consider bringing some of the following items:

- Plastic storage bags of various sizes (to keep out unwanted insects);
- Multipurpose cookbook;
- Good kitchen knife;
- Measuring cups and spoons;
- Your favorite, unique spices (most other spices are available especially Italian and Indian spices);
- Various powdered mixes (e.g., soft-drink mixes, salad dressings, soups and sauce packets).

Entertainment

Interns and volunteers will often have downtime, so bringing some of the items suggested below can make a difference. But remember that most rural areas do not have electricity. Consider bringing a good supply of batteries, including solar-powered batteries or rechargeable batteries and a charger. Please note that in Tanzania the electricity that is used is 210V.

- iPods;
- DVD movies;
- A digital camera;
- Binoculars;
- Musical instruments (plus extra strings, reeds, etc.);
- Sport, hobby, and art equipment and supplies;

- Games (e.g., cards, dice, hacky sack, yo-yos, frisbee, juggling balls, dominoes);
- Camping gear (tent, backpack, sleeping pad, etc.), if you are interested in camping;
- Books (also bring some of your used books to donate to local school libraries).

Miscellaneous Items:

- A small current converter (if you bring small appliances like a shaver, etc.);
- One set of sheets with pillowcase;
- Dictionary and/or thesaurus;
- Multi-purpose knife (e.g., Swiss Army knife, Leatherman or Gerber);
- Flashlight/headlamp and batteries (Note that AAA batteries are hard to come by);
- A small amount of seeds to plant, especially herbs for a garden;
- A solar battery charger and rechargeable batteries;
- Combination padlocks of various sizes (good key locks can be found in-country);
- Sewing kit;
- Photos of your home and family (your neighbors will love them);
- Sturdy water bottle;
- Money belt (for traveling on public transport);
- Travel alarm clock;
- Duct or packing tape;
- Day pack journal or diary;
- Traveler's checks for vacation travel;
- For education volunteers, a couple of high-quality secondary-level textbooks.

Special Considerations for those in rural areas

Women: Cut back on the number of skirts you bring. And remember that loose-fitting skirts are best because you will be jumping gullies and riding bikes in them. Cut back on blouses, too. Substitute one pair of pants with a pair of Capri pants.

Men: Cut back on the number of pants. At most, bring three button-down shirts.

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