



## Preparing for your trek in Nepal Our tips for a safe and enjoyable trip in Nepal:

### Drinking water / Food / Staying healthy:

**The water in Kathmandu and throughout Nepal is NOT safe for us to drink – use bottled water even to brush your teeth.** (I keep my toothbrush by my water bottle, not by the sink to break the life-long habit of putting my toothbrush under the tap).

Don't eat uncooked food (salads, unpeeled fruit. Avoid any drinks which may include ice cubes or tap water which hasn't been boiled, treated or purified. Be scrupulous with your own handwashing and hand sanitizing. If you suffer from diarrhoea, we recommend that unless you have a long journey to make, never block up your system with Imodium. Limit your food intake to a low-fat diet, use rehydration salts (the locally brand is Jeevan Jal) and drink flattened coke. If the problem persists, antibiotics are sometimes the only solution. They can resolve the problem quickly.

Your trekking guide will be carrying Jim Duff's excellent book on trekking first aid in the first aid kit.

### Paperwork:

You should take your passport and insurance documents with you on trek.

Bring a few passport photos with you – always useful for things like buying an in-country sim card.

In case of an evacuation, don't sign anything! Our in-country agent will handle all signing of documents.

Do carry a credit card with you in case of evacuation. Helicopters are not cheap!

### Visas:

If you haven't already got your Visa / ETA (Electronic Travel Authorization) in advance online, you can obtain a visa at Kathmandu airport.

Take a pen with you, the correct fee in US Dollars, and ideally print off a copy of the visa form before you leave home and fill it in before you arrive.

Tourist Visa fees are currently: 15 days: 30 USD      30 days: 50 USD      90 days: 125 USD

Read your own country's government travel advice for entry into Nepal as well as the following web pages:

<https://www.immigration.gov.np/en/page/faq> and <https://nepaliport.immigration.gov.np/>

### Money:

Nepalese rupees are not available until you are in-country. The exchange rate at the airport is usually worse than it is in Kathmandu – there are many money changers in the tourist area of Thamel.

Once you are on trek, you cannot assume you will be able to use anything other than Nepalese rupees.

Try to stockpile small notes while you are in Kathmandu for use on trek for drinks / snacks etc, as it is hard for the mountain folk to get small change.

Cards and ATM machines can be used in the big cities of Kathmandu and Pokhara, but assume you need cash elsewhere. An ATM I like to use is in the grounds of the iconic Kathmandu Guest House – the ATM is off the street and provides a safe location to get cash out in rupees.

### Phone / wifi:

An NCell sim card is advised for the area you are trekking in, available from the airport or in Kathmandu.

You will need your passport, visa and a passport photo to buy a sim card.

Some tea houses now offer wifi, especially on the more popular trekking routes, but don't assume you will get wifi or a phone signal everywhere.

### Electricity:

A European 2-pin type-C adapter is required in Nepal. Some tea houses offer the chance to recharge your electronic equipment for a fee, but voltages fluctuate and phones, particularly i-phones, are vulnerable to this. Better to charge a power pack and then use that to charge your equipment.

### Baggage:

The weight limits for any internal flights in Nepal are now: check-in bag 10kg, cabin bag 5kg.

Bags are frequently weighed at the airport and you will be charged by the airport for any excess.

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### Life on trek:

Hot water for washing, and in some places, showers can be purchased locally from tea houses. Toilet facilities vary in style and cleanliness— expect everything from squat long drops to flushing toilets, and you won't be disappointed.

You will be accompanied by a sherpa guide and porter/s. Porters carry your kitbag up to 10kg per person.

You will carry your own daysac with things you'll need during the day and your valuables.

Your guide will ensure you are supplied with safe drinking water.

Your guide will be carrying a basic first aid kit (and depending on how remote your trek is he may also have a sat phone and PAC bag). Your guide has been employed to ensure your safety and his word is final.

Carry any medication which is essential to you in your daysac, and please ensure that you let the guide know if you are self-medicating, particularly if you are taking anything for altitude.

### Altitude:

- **Drink** around 4 litres of liquid per day at altitude (and keep off the alcohol at least on the ascent).
- **Walk slowly** – think 'marathon' rather than 'sprint'. This needs to be the slowest walk of your life!
- **Listen to your body** – Headaches, nausea, breathlessness, dizziness, loss of appetite and difficulty sleeping are not unusual, but you should report any of these symptoms to your guide so that they can help prevent them turning into anything serious.
- **Descent is the most effective treatment for altitude sickness.**
- **It is better to slow the trek down slightly / spend another night at a lower altitude than risking not being able to continue the trip at all, or even worse, having to be evacuated due to altitude sickness, which can quickly become very serious or even fatal if action is not taken immediately.**
- Diamox is a prescription drug which won't mask the symptoms of an oedema, but can be used to help treat altitude related problems. In cases where the onset of an oedema is suspected, diamox must never be used instead of descent. The first aid book in the guide's first aid kit is a respected and useful resource.

**Weather:** There are 2 main trekking seasons in Nepal: pre-monsoon (March/April/May) and post-monsoon (October / November).

- **Pre-monsoon (March/April/May):** This is a beautiful time of year to trek, when many flowers are in bloom, and the temperatures are warm. It is often 15-25°C in these months during the daytime, though it can drop to -10 °C at night at the higher camps. As you trek above 3000m the temperatures will drop. Typical weather (though it is getting harder to generalise in the current state of global climate change) would see clear blue skies in the morning, with clouds rolling in from late morning obscuring the views, usually clearing again in the evening. The temperature drops sharply when the sun disappears from your part of the valley. The cloud build-up becomes more significant in the run-up to the monsoon, so the later in the spring you trek, the greater the chance of more cloud and perhaps some rain. For trekkers to the Everest region, you are likely to encounter the climbing expeditions on their way to, and at the base camps at this time of year.
- **Post-monsoon (October/November):** This is the most popular time of year to trek. Although it is colder than the spring, the visibility is usually better after the monsoon has cleared the air. It can be 15-25°C in these months during the daytime, though it can drop to -15 °C at night at the higher camps. As you trek above 3000m the temperatures will be much cooler in the day time, especially if you are out of the sun. Typically clouds build-up later in the day than in the spring, and usually clear skies again in the evening. The temperature drops sharply when the sun disappears from your part of the valley. The weather becomes colder the later in the autumn you trek.
- **Winter:** Trekking during the winter months is also possible, but temperatures drop considerably then.

### General notes about the weather:

Temperatures vary wildly depending on the altitude and whether you are in the sun or the shade. Carry a warm layer in your daysac in case you arrive at your destination before your porter.

Rain is not unusual, especially in the pre-monsoon months.

Kathmandu is around 1350m: a t-shirt is fine for daytime, but you may want a fleece in the evening.

Pokhara (around 800m) and Chitwan (around 400m) are lower and therefore warmer than Kathmandu.

Annapurna treks can be quite hot to start with, as some start from 800m.

Everest treks start higher (Lukla is 2800m), so temperatures are usually cooler than Annapurna.

All treks get cold in the evening, so the range of clothing in our kit list is recommended.

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