Packing List for Trips to Africa

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Preamble

- This is not an official list! Repeat... this has got nothing to do with TJC, AMC or anything!

- Nor is this meant to be exhaustive - just some personal pointers after more than ten years of wandering around Africa

- Never assume anything! If you are not sure, or have any questions, ASK!!

- In a nut shell, use your **common sense** (and functioning gray cells, if available)!
The Art of Packing Light

- Pack as light as possible - you might be on the move constantly (on foot over rough terrains, crowded public transport etc). Taking the nature of your trip into consideration...
- Bring as few items as you feel necessary / comfortable with
- Use the smallest bag possible
- Consider sharing non-personal items with others where feasible / possible
- If you (hand) wash your clothes everyday, theoretically, you only need three sets max
- A lot of items can be purchased locally *(if you are not fussy about brands / quality)*
Can I Take These....... 

- Electricity might not be available in rural areas. Only bring electrical equipments you cannot “live without”, and consider the power source (disposal batteries / rechargeable batteries / mains only)

- Leave valuable items (incl. jewelleries) at home and use a cheaper alternative instead (e.g. wear a cheap(ish) watch, not your usual diamond-studded Cartier)
1. Essential items

- Passport with valid entry visa(s) *(apply all necessary visas well ahead of time; single or multiple?)*
- Plane ticket
- Yellow fever certificate / Yellow Book
- Other essential inoculations & medical advise *(consult your doctor asap)*
• Travel insurance certificate (or copy) (annual insurance can work out cheaper, but check maximum days allowable per trip + coverage)

• Bible(s) / hymnbook

• Reference material / personal notes (hardcopy) (inkjet printouts tend to smudge when moist (sweat / rain) – laser / photocopy preferable)

• Cash (£ and / or US$) (credit cards / travellers cheque not widely acceptable in Africa)

• Mosquito net (impregnated with permethrin) + hanging implements (string / hooks / tape etc)
• Summer clothing (light coloured; long sleeves recommended) \((long\ skirts\ for\ sisters)\)
• Light jacket / windbreaker
• Underwear
• Towel
• Cap / hat
• Head scarf \((sisters\ only)\)
• Slippers / flip flop
• Water bottle / container (0.5 / 0.75 / 1 litre)
• Small shoulder bag / backpack (for daily use when you are out and about)
• Hand torch (& spare batteries / bulb)
• Insect repellent (DEET or natural ingredients)
• Antimalarial tablets (consult your doctor asap – watch out for adverse side effects. “Lariam” for most people. Be prepared to pay for these on a private prescription)
• Medication (suggestions only - take you pick)
  • whatever prescription medicine you are currently taking
  • paracetamol / ibuprofen *(or similar)*
  • antihistamine
  • diarrhoea relief
  • plasters
  • ointment for insect bites / antiseptic cream
  • pills for travel sickness / indigestion / constipation / Tiger Balm / cough medicine etc etc etc......
• Rope (for drying clothes)
• Plastic mug (not glass / porcelain)
• Small plastic food container (about 0.5 l)
• Bed spread / sleeping bag liner / duvet cover
• Toiletries
  • toothbrush / toothpaste / face towel
  • shower gel / body wash / soap / shampoo
• Nail clipper / nail file
• Stationeries - pens / notebook / paper
• Contact lens solutions (for contact lens wearers only, obviously)
• Dry / wet / electric shaver (brothers only)
• Sanitary towels (sisters only)
2. Optional items

- Clothes pegs / hangers
- Scrubbing brush *(for washing clothes)*
- Suncream *(with a relatively high sun factor)*
- Sunglasses
- Body wipes / wet tissues
- Dettol *(for bathing in water of questionable quality)*
- Mirror (small)
- Comb / hair brush
• Swiss Army knife / multi-purpose tool
• Earplugs
• Antibacterial handwash (no water required)
• Moneybelt (for hiding your wads of cash)
• Kneeling pad / foam (for prayer)
• Neck tie (for Sabbath) (brothers only)
• Raincoat / small umbrella
• Alarm clock (small)
• Emergency sewing kit
• Dental floss
• Vitamins / nutritional supplement tablets
3. “Luxury” (non-essential) items

- Camera / video recorder (+ charger / batteries)
  
(move to first section if you are a first time visitor)

- Toilet paper

- Cutleries

- Pillow

- Washing powder (& fabric conditioner)

- Hairdryer (what if there is no power supply?)
• Mobile phone & charger (coverage in major cities / towns and selected villages only)
  • if using own SIM card, check roaming arrangement & charges with service provider
  • if using local SIM card, make sure the phone is unlocked before your departure
• Shortwave radio (for BBC World Service)
• A book / MP3 player or something to keep you amused / occupied (there will be long periods of waiting and doing nothing)
• Food / snacks (for the ever-hungry people):
  • cereal bars (without chocolate / yoghurt - it can be messy)
  • packets (not cups) of instant noodles (just add boiling water, no need to cook type)
  • dry fruit (aid your digestive system)

• Extra pair of footwear

• Extra sets of clothing

• **OK! Just bring any items you fancy** (only one piece of advice I beg you to heed: please please please leave the kitchen sink alone)
4. Regardless of the above....

- Fully utilize your remaining baggage weight allowance (check with airline, usually 20 / 23 kg) and bring as many as possible of the following:
  
  - old / surplus TJC English publications *(ask local church librarian, local youths etc)*
  - used RE teachers textbooks by USGA *(ask local RE coordinator)*
  - surplus English evangelistic leaflets / booklets *(ask local EPG in-charge)*
  - used but usable Bibles (NKJV only) and TJC English hymn books *(ask local GA in-charge, local members etc)*