

Packing Checklist & Narrative

- Passport
- Copy of airfare
- Cash
- ATM/credit cards
- Printed itinerary & planning documents
- Journal
- Notebook and pens
- Watch
- Phone/Camera
- Laptop/Tablet (if desired)
- Converter/Adapter
- Flash Drive
- Hand towel and wash cloth (only if you wish to have your own)
- Toiletries – don't forget the basics, such as toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, soap, razors, hair product, floss, etc.
- Prescriptions in original bottles (remember to bring enough for the entire program), including any anti-malarial medication you may decide to take
- Anti-diarrheal medication (just in case)
- Other over-the-counter medication (ie: Ibuprofen, anti-histamine, Pepto Bismol, Lactaid, cold medication, etc.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Tissues, 1 roll of toilet paper, and 1 or 2 packs of Wet Ones
- Vitamins
- At least one pair of closed-toe comfortable walking shoes
- Sunglasses
- Sun tan lotion
- Bug spray (containing no more than 35% DEET)
- Family photos to share with new friends
- Small flashlight (power outages may occur from time to time)
- Small overnight bag/backpack
- Shower shoes or flip-flops
- Modest bathing suit
- Feminine products
- Laundry detergent packets
- Small umbrella or raincoat
- Scarf or shawl
- Water bottle
- Vaccination card
- All clothing (see below)
- Snacks (those high in protein and good nutrition are recommended), especially if you have dietary restrictions, medical conditions, etc.
- Any supplies needed for your lessons/activities
- Any supplies or donations (ie: art supplies, teaching materials, books, sports equipment, games, etc.)

NECESSARY ITEMS

Important Documents

Don't forget your passport, copy of roundtrip airfare & itinerary, cash, ATM or credit cards, vaccination card (if applicable), personal health information (if any), and any other documents you'll need. It is best to keep all documents well-protected in some sort of case or travel wallet. Make at least two copies of all important documents—leave a set of copies at home, take a set of copies with you and put them somewhere else in your luggage that you will not lose them. You should leave irreplaceable items, such as family heirlooms and expensive jewelry at home.

Spending Money

Your program fee does not include personal expenses or souvenirs. The amount to bring depends on the person, but a few hundred dollars usually goes a very long way. If bringing cash, make sure to bring only new, unripped, unmarked bills in larger denominations (as old, torn, or marked bills are not accepted). Money exchangers give a better rate the larger the bill size (ie: US \$100 bill gets the best rate). ATM machines are also readily available. Budget for this in the beginning. Heavy shoppers bring extra. Remember to store your money somewhere safe while traveling.

Bug Repellent

We recommend buying bug repellent with Deet, but not 100%, since the higher percentages can burn your skin. The maximum recommended DEET percentage is 35%. Bug repellent is highly recommended.

Adaptor / Plug Converter

Handwipes/Hand Sanitizer

Flushable Wipes and/or your own roll of toilet paper in a ziplock bag (you never know!)

Femimine Products: bathrooms may be far and few between.

Toiletries, Deodorant, Bodywash, Soap, Shampoo, etc.

Phone / Camera / Laptop / Tablet and their Chargers

1-Pair of Closed-Toe Shoes

Reusable Water Bottle

We will always buy and provide bottled water every day throughout the trip, but it is recommended that you bring a reusable water bottle for the airplane or day use, especially when the weather is hot and/or dry.

Backpack or Bag

To hold up to 2 days of clothes & toiletries and any other supplies you may need during overnight trips and long plane rides. It is highly recommended that you bring at least 1 full change of clothes and some travel-sized toiletries with you on the plane as carry-on luggage. In the unlikely event your luggage is lost, you will not be without a change of clothes and some basic supplies when you arrive while you wait for your luggage to be found.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

Sunscreen

Sunglasses

Laundry Detergent Packets /Soap for Washing Clothes & Clothesline

Laundry service can be arranged, though it may be better to wash clothes yourself, since laundered clothes sometimes come back starchy and a bit stretched. You can wash your clothes in the sink or shower (dry fit or similar fabrics dry best). If you are able to bring a clothesline, fantastic! Otherwise you can drape your clothes over furniture or in the bathroom to dry. You may also want to bring a travel size Febreze and Wrinkle Releaser.

Mosquito Prevention/Plug-in Repellants

There are many products and devices to keep mosquitoes away, such as coils or these little contraptions that make a very high-pitched humming noise.

Calamine Lotion/Cortizone Cream

In case of mosquito bites.

Lotion

Travel and hot, dry weather can sometimes dry out your skin quickly.

Gum/Breath Mints

Flashlight & Batteries or Headlamp

Electricity can go out, so it might not be a bad idea to bring a small flashlight or mini-lamp/head lamp, if possible.

Photos from Home

Bring at least a few photos of your family and friends, since people may ask you about your family and photos are a great way to start a conversation and share with new friends. Most likely these will be on your phone, but physical copies are also an option. It may be best, however, to avoid pictures of your home, cars, or other material possessions.

Magazines, Books, or Kindle

For entertainment, especially on the long plane rides.

Journal/Notebook, Pens

Watch or Alarm Clock

Either bring a watch or travel alarm clock or plan to use your phone, as you will need it.

Snacks

The food while we are traveling is quite different and can be difficult if you have dietary restrictions or are not a very adventurous eater. Even the use of everyday products (like milk, oil, meat, etc.) can cause a little bit of an upset stomach, due to the different ways in which food is cooked or processed. So it is worth emphasizing that you might want to bring some of your own food with you. Foods that are high in protein, like nuts, trail mixes, protein bars, etc. are always good, as well as crackers, snacks, and so forth.

Towel/Hand Towel

Everywhere we will stay will have plenty of towels, so this is only if you prefer to have your own towel / hand towel / washcloth for personal use.

Umbrella and/or Rain Jacket

Heavy rains come and go quickly, and an umbrella can be very helpful.

TIPS ABOUT MEDICATION

****It is your responsibility to consult with your doctor about required or necessary vaccinations and medication specific to the country to which you are traveling (for example, anti-malarial medications and yellow fever vaccination). Check www.cdc.gov/travel for more information.****

Bring a full supply of any prescription medications you'll need to take regularly, as well as any necessary over-the-counter medications such as Ibuprofen or Pepto-Bismol for the occasional headache or stomachache you may encounter when adjusting to a new climate and diet. **Remember to consult a doctor or travel health expert about any health concerns prior to beginning your Visions experience.**

As a preventative measure, some people get a small personal supply of antibiotics (ie: Ciprofloxacin, Azithromycin, etc.) from their doctors before traveling, in case they do get sick and do not have immediate access to medical care. Ask your doctor or a travel health professional for advice about this.

TIPS ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

Where to Pack Technology and Other Expensive Items

Remember to keep all expensive items, such as tablets, cameras, and laptops in your carry-on luggage. Do not check luggage that contains valuable possessions, as they could easily be stolen.

Plug Converter/Adapter

If you plan on charging anything, you need to have a plug converter & adapter. You might want to bring a few, otherwise you'll only be able to charge one thing at a time. A device that serves dually as an adapter is also recommended due to fluctuations in voltage and power surges. Check online for exact information.

Tablets/iPads/etc.

Whatever you bring, just make sure to bring your charger.

Laptops

Having a laptop with you is not necessary, but it may be helpful. It is up to you to decide. Wifi access is typically decent, though it will cut in and out, and may not always be available.

Phone/Camera

Phones and cameras are great to bring along, as they make picture-taking easy. They are usually also immensely popular with the youth—providing nearly instant gratification. However, volunteers should be wary about letting any of the youth handle their cameras or phones, and should always keep a close eye on their equipment. And don't forget your charger!

**It must be understood that each participant assumes the risk associated with carrying expensive equipment, such as a tablet, laptop, or other technological devices, and that Visions assumes no responsibility in the event that such equipment is lost, stolen, or damaged.*

TIPS ABOUT CLOTHING

Tennis Shoes & Socks, Sandals

We recommend footwear that is sturdy but not too heavy or difficult to transport in your luggage. For Ethiopia, warm socks are recommended for cool nights. We also definitely recommend shower sandals.

Long, Lightweight Pants/Skirts

Dress etiquette for women is fairly conservative. Women should not wear short shorts or short skirts, tight clothes, or tank tops. If wearing shorts, they should keep your legs covered more or less to your knees. And for tops, you should plan to keep your shoulders covered. We recommend long skirts /pants and t-shirts or button-up shirts with short sleeves. Keep clothing as light and airy as possible, as you don't want to be uncomfortable. Men can wear shorts and loose-fitting t-shirt or button-up shirts. Please avoid clothing with culturally inappropriate messages—when in doubt, leave it at home.

1 Semi-Nice Outfit / Shirt

We may have special meetings or a nice dinner for which a nicer outfit would be good to have on-hand. A simple button-up shirt and pants for guys, and top with skirt for girls is just fine. A step up from everyday dress, if possible.

Swimwear

For possible swimming opportunities (depending on the particular itinerary of your trip).

Underwear

Honestly, it is always good to bring too much than too little...

Jacket or Sweatshirt

It can on occasion get cool, so it would be best to bring a sweatshirt or light jacket, especially if traveling to Ethiopia.

T-shirts, Shirts

Hats / Bandanas / Hair Ties

Though not common, be aware that lice can on occasion pop up with some of the youth with whom we work. So if you have longer hair, you may want to simply tie your hair up or keep it from hanging freely when around young children, and/or just be aware of your surroundings.