

## Kit-List

When preparing for Kilimanjaro, there is a difficult balance to strike between packing enough so that you have all you need, and packing too much and therefore carrying too much weight. Bear in mind in particular that there is a **15kg weight limit** on the bag containing the majority of your belongings. This bag will be carried for you by a porter between the day's camps. The remainder of your possessions will go into your daypack for you to carry, and suffice to say that your primary objective should be to keep this bag as light as is possible. The following therefore provides you with a list of the items that you will need; anything else should be carefully considered before being packed for travel.

It is worth noting however, that if you have extra items you want to take on the trip for when you're off the mountain – including swimming attire, fresh clothes for dinner or other home luxuries – you will be provided with an opportunity to securely leave these at the hotel and collect them upon your return.

### Clothing:

On the ascent to Kilimanjaro's Uhuru summit you will experience a very wide range of temperatures – from 30°C during the day on the lower slopes, to -15°C (or lower with wind-chill) on the summit day; Even on clear nights at camp the temperature can drop to freezing. The key to being prepared for them all is to have a number of thin clothing layers available – allowing you to easily control your own body temperature day-to-day. This should include:

- **Thermal Underwear (x1):** for the upper and lower body.
- **Trousers (x2):** loose and comfortable (not jeans), and a second pair which is thick and warm.
- **Shorts (x1):** for walking and relaxing at camp.
- **T-Shirts (x3):** ideally with a collar for added sun-protection. Synthetic materials are generally lighter and will dry quickly.
- **Fleece (x1):** good for both the ascent and as a warm, comfortable layer during the cold nights.
- **Jacket (x1):** very thick & wind-breaking – essential for the ascent. Can be one-layer down or insulated jacket, or multi-layered fleece jacket.
- **Waterproofs (x2):** jacket and trousers. You will be very glad of them if needed.
- **Socks (x3):** thick and walk/trek-specific.
- **Gloves (x1):** thick and wind-breaking. Glove liners are optional for added warmth.
- **Headwear (x2):** sunhat with good-sized protective rim; thick beanie and/or balaclava.
- **Footwear (x1):** properly sized, ankle supporting walking boots of proven quality and worn-in prior to travel are essential. Trainers for camp optional.
- **Sunglasses:** useful day-to-day but particularly so on summit day.

### Essential equipment:

- **Baggage:** a daypack with rain cover (approximately 30L capacity) to carry only the items you need on the walk from one camp to the next; a larger duffle bag or soft kitbag (approximately 70-100L capacity) in which the porter team will carry the remainder of your kit (suitcases or hard-sided bags are not suitable).
- **Sleeping Bag:** four-season with a stuff sack for storage. Sleeping bag liner is optional.
- **Sleeping Mat:** high quality and compressible. You will be very grateful for the existence of this piece of kit.
- **Water Storage:** 3-litre platypus/camelbak style water system; a separate plastic drinking bottle for use around the camp.
- **Lighting:** a head-torch is essential for the ascent and useful around camp. A separate torch is optional. Don't forget batteries.

### Recommended:

- **Walking Poles:** optional and depends on personal preference. Can be particularly useful on the summit descent.
- **Snacks:** a good supply of energy/snack bars is highly recommended. They are also popular with your porter team!
- **Water Flavouring Sachets:** optional but may help to take the edge off the taste of treated water – Wahoo water for example.
- **Gaiters:** optional and depends on personal preference. Can help avoid scree or water getting inside footwear.
- **Travel Pillow:** non-essential but will be very welcome if you can spare the space/weight.
- **Document Wallet:** for safekeeping of essential items such as passport, insurance certificate, money etc.
- **Camera:** for stills and/or video. You will regret it if you have nothing with which to capture this amazing experience.
- **Music:** if available, a very small, lightweight music player can help with rest and relaxation in your tent.



- **Plastic Bags:** a small stock for keeping clothes/equipment dry is recommended.
- **Water Purification:** boiled and treated water is provided, but you may prefer to treat the water further still.

#### Personal hygiene and health:

- **Wet-Wipes:** a good supply will be very welcome and useful for multiple purposes.
- **Anti-Bacterial Hand Spray/Gel:** a reassuring addition.
- **Travel Towel:** useful for achieving at least some level of personal hygiene.
- **Sun Cream & After Sun:** high factor protection is absolutely vital. Lip balm protection is also recommended.
- **Painkillers:** your preferred choice of paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin.
- **Medication:** imodium for severe diarrhoea; anti-malaria and DIAMOX tablets after consultation with your doctor.
- **Plasters/Blister Kits:** for alleviating discomfort caused by blisters.
- **Teeth:** toothbrush and toothpaste. Ideally travel sized.
- **Eye Drops:** the dusty, dry conditions can result in sore eyes. Eye drops can assist for those affected.

It is possible to rent some of these items prior to the trek at your own expense should you wish. For example, renting a down duvet jacket would cost \$55, a four-season sleeping bag and liner \$45, a safari-style mattress \$25, and a pair of walking poles \$10. It may also be possible to rent other items and any requests in this regard should be made in advance of travel.

## Currency

The local currency in Tanzania is Tanzanian Shillings, which can be purchased in advance of travel. However, US Dollars are also a recognised and accepted currency in Tanzania, indeed prices are often quoted in US Dollars ahead of the local currency. However, please note that older versions of US Dollar notes are not accepted. Notes issued from 2003 onwards are accepted and you should ensure that any US Dollars you have meet this requirement.

The amount of currency you will need will be largely dependent on your own intentions and preparations. If you haven't arranged your visas in advance, you will need \$50 for visa application fees. Tipping is customary in Tanzania so arranging to have sufficient \$1 available would be advised. You'll also want money for tipping our guide and porter team at the conclusion of the trek – planning to have around \$150 available for this would be sensible. It's also worth planning to have some money available to buy water, drinks or for other incidental expenses along the way. Otherwise, there will be opportunities throughout to purchase Kilimanjaro or Tanzanian souvenirs, whether for yourself or as gifts, so you may also wish to have currency available should you decide to take up any such opportunities.





## Training

**Make no mistake, reaching Uhuru Peak atop Mount Kilimanjaro is a gruelling and physically demanding challenge that will test all who attempt it. However, it is also a truly achievable challenge and, with the right approach, anyone can succeed.**

The most sensible first step is to make an appointment to see your doctor to explain what you're doing and check whether there are any particular personal issues you ought to be aware of when undertaking a challenge of this kind. This is particularly important for anyone with any pre-existing conditions or ongoing health problems. Making an appointment for general advice can also be combined with consultation on required vaccines and travel medication – as detailed below.

The biggest problem faced by those attempting Kilimanjaro is not lack of physical fitness but some degree of High Altitude Illness (see below). Almost all participants will experience at least some of the symptoms associated with being at high altitude. Sadly however, there is no way to prepare or train yourself for the effects of altitude and the most sensible advice is simply to be aware of the condition when on the mountain and take all available precautions should you experience any symptoms.

However, this is certainly not to say that no training is required. Improving your general fitness in advance of travel really could make all the difference. The simple fact is that your fitness level will be in direct correlation with your ability not only to undertake, but also to enjoy the experiences that Kilimanjaro presents you with. Above and beyond this, the harder you have worked in advance of departure, the greater the sense of achievement come the end of the trip.

The most effective preparation directly mirrors what you'll be doing on the mountain: walking. Take any opportunity you can find to walk – ideally over long and increasing distances. This will help to a limited extent with general fitness but, more importantly, it will help condition you to daily trekking. With this in mind, it is also highly advisable to walk in the very same walking boots that you intend to wear on the challenge. This will both wear the boots in so making them more comfortable, and allow you to become used to the boots and walking in them. It is also sensible to wear a daypack containing some of the items you're likely to have with you on Kilimanjaro: a water bottle, fleece, and camera for example. Vary your walks and try to identify routes that allow you to experience different inclines – steep uphill and downhill as well as more gradual inclines or flat sections.

For more general fitness improvements, it is recommended that you undertake a mixture of the following:

- **Cardiovascular or Aerobic Exercise:** These terms describe exercise of moderate intensity performed over a long duration. The benefits are wide-ranging, but most notably include strengthening and improved efficiency of your heart and lungs. Exercise of this nature can include jogging, cycling, swimming, rowing, using a cross-trainer, or taking part in an aerobics class – to name but a few. Any of these exercises, or perhaps a combination of them, would be of considerable benefit.
- **Strength, Resistance, or Anaerobic Exercise:** These terms all describe exercise of a higher intensity performed over a very short duration, and the benefits include the strengthening and conditioning of specific muscles or muscle groups. Exercise of this nature includes the use of weights or weight machines to provide resistance. As a result, always ask for advice from a trained instructor prior to exercise to ensure the safe and correct use of all equipment. It is also possible to use the body's own natural weight to provide resistance via exercises such as crunches, push-ups, pull-ups or lunges for example. For climbing Kilimanjaro in particular, it is recommended that resistance exercises that specifically strengthen the legs and back would be particularly beneficial.

Please remember that you do not need to resemble a professional athlete in order to climb Mount Kilimanjaro! Moderate and fairly regular exercise using a combination of techniques will be entirely sufficient. The aim should simply be to make you feel comfortable in undertaking physical activity, and confident of being able to trek for consecutive days over varying terrains and inclines.

## Health: High Altitude Illness

**High Altitude Illness refers to the three conditions that can be experienced by individuals ascending to altitudes typically higher than 2,500m: Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE), or High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE). There is no question that the biggest threat to your wellbeing on Mount Kilimanjaro is some degree of High Altitude Illness, so being aware of the risks and symptoms will help you react appropriately should it be required.**

Illness at altitude occurs because of the change in atmospheric pressure as you ascend. Many people refer to the air, or oxygen in the air, being thinner as they get higher and higher. In fact, this is not the case – the composition of air remains the same no matter the altitude. The problem is that for every 1,000m of altitude gained the atmospheric pressure drops by approximately 1/10<sup>th</sup>. The result is that it becomes harder and harder to fill your lungs as there is less pressure to push oxygen into your body. Given time however, the body will adjust to this atmospheric change through deeper and more frequent breathing, your blood thickening through the production of more red blood cells, and a faster heart beat. Much of this will happen almost immediately so easing the feeling of illness. However, your blood can take days to thicken so the body simply not having sufficient time to adjust can result in varying degrees of High Altitude Illness. There is an increased risk of susceptibility to High Altitude Illness for those with cardiac or pulmonary disease so consulting your doctor in advance of travel is highly recommended.

**Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS):** AMS is a mild and commonly occurring condition for those attempting the summit of Kilimanjaro. It is usually self-limiting with symptoms including loss of appetite, nausea or vomiting, headache, fatigue, irritability, insomnia or dizziness. The majority of people climbing to this altitude will experience some degree of AMS and symptoms may take days to develop or can occur within hours. The milder versions can be managed through sufficient rest, and the use of pain-killing medication (most notably Ibuprofen) or Acetazolamide/DIAMOX (see below). Responding to milder forms of AMS in this way may well result in the symptoms subsiding either in part or entirely. Almost all will experience some of these symptoms and the majority, whilst being sensible in their response, will be able to continue. However, symptoms should be carefully monitored for any signs of further deterioration – in which case descent should be undertaken.

**High Altitude Cerebral Oedema (HACE):** HACE is usually the result of the deterioration in condition for those suffering from severe AMS. The symptoms therefore include those of AMS but can also include hallucinations, disorientation, confusion, drowsiness, decreasing level of consciousness, blurred speech and double vision. Since HACE is the result of worsening severe AMS, it should be considered preventable by simply responding appropriately to signs of AMS in the first instance. Whilst the incidence of those experiencing HACE is less than 1%, any signs showed of the condition should be treated extremely seriously and immediate descent with supplementary oxygen undertaken.

**High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPE):** HAPE is a severe condition experienced by fewer than 1% of those at high altitude. HAPE is not always preceded by AMS and symptoms can include difficulty in breathing at rest, cough, weakness or decreased exercise performance, chest tightness or congestion, crackles or wheezing from either lung, a blue skin colour, rapid shallow breathing or a rapid heart rate.

Serious High Altitude Illness will very, very rarely develop. Our practical experience shows that, whilst you will probably still suffer some mild symptoms of altitude before adapting and functioning normally, there are three key steps to achieving successful acclimatisation: drink plenty and eat well, walk slowly, and walk high / sleep low. Your guide team are trained to recognise the symptoms of High Altitude Illness and respond accordingly. They also carry an emergency oxygen system which can dramatically help with the symptoms listed above.



## Health: Vaccines and Medication

All participants should make an appointment with their local health centre to check that they have been suitably vaccinated for travel to Tanzania. Your doctor or practice nurse will be able to advise you on what vaccines you will require according to your own individual medical history. Whilst there is no vaccine requirement, you are strongly advised to have the Yellow Fever vaccination in advance of travel. The National Travel Health Network and Centre website ([www.nathnac.org](http://www.nathnac.org)) provides more information about the vaccine preventable risks for Tanzania.

In addition, all participants should consult their doctor in relation to anti-malarial medication. Whilst malaria is a lower risk at high altitude, there will be times during the trip that you will be exposed to at-risk areas, so adequate awareness and protection is essential. Please follow the directions for use, but be aware that you may be required to start your medication course prior to departure.

It is also recommended that you discuss the impact of high altitude with your doctor. How altitude will affect you is unfortunately impossible to predict or prepare for. However, being aware of the potential impact of altitude and what the symptoms are is the best preparation you can make. Acetazolamide (commonly known as DIAMOX) can be used as a treatment against altitude, and should be considered if your doctor advises that it would be suitable for you. In addition, it is recommended that you bring a supply of standard painkilling medication such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or aspirin. More information on this can be found via: [www.nathnac.org/travel/factsheets/altitude.htm](http://www.nathnac.org/travel/factsheets/altitude.htm)

## Health: Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

Deep Vein Thrombosis is the name given to the blood clotting in a deep vein – usually the legs. Symptoms vary but can include pain and/or swelling. DVT should be taken seriously as it can result in the clot being dislodged and travelling through the body to become a pulmonary embolism.

There are many risk factors associated with DVT – the majority related to old age, obesity or existing medical conditions. However, one risk factor to specifically note is long periods of inactivity or immobilisation such as during long-distance travel. This itinerary includes long-haul air travel as well as long overland journeys, and it is therefore worth taking precautions against the onset of DVT during such journeys.

Good practise includes the following: Stay well hydrated with regular on-take of non-alcoholic fluids (which will also be of considerable benefit in preventing altitude illness); do not wear restrictive clothing; regularly flex and extend your legs and ankles so as to improve blood flow and circulation – including by walking and stretching your legs regularly; take frequent deep breaths; and consider wearing properly sized compression stockings. Further information and advice about DVT is available via: [www.nathnac.org/travel/factsheets/dvt.htm](http://www.nathnac.org/travel/factsheets/dvt.htm)



## Travel Insurance

You must take out an adequate personal insurance policy that covers you sufficiently for all aspects of this trip. Details, including policy number, insurer and emergency contact number, will be required prior to travel. Please be aware that, whilst you may have an existing policy in place, most insurers have a limit on activities of the kind included on this trip, or list a maximum altitude to which their policy will cover. Please do check the precise details of any existing policy to ensure that you do have adequate cover in place for this specific trip.

When considering policy options please ensure that it includes an emergency contact number and provision for medical attention, rescue and repatriation if required. It is also worth considering the excesses applying to the policy should a claim be made.

## Visas

You will need a tourist visa for travel to Tanzania and there are two options available to you for acquiring this:

**1)** It is advisable to apply for your tourist visa to Tanzania in advance of travel in order to have peace of mind at the time of entry. The process for applying for an advance visa is as follows:

An application for a single entry tourist visa costs £38 and can be made in person between 10am and 12.30pm Monday to Friday at the Visa Section, Tanzania High Commission, 3 Stratford Place, London W1C 1AS, or by post to the same address.

All applications should include a completed Visa Application Form (link below), a passport that meets the general requirements listed above, and two recent passport sized photographs. For applications made in person, you will also need to pay the fee in cash or by a postal order made payable to '**Tanzania High Commission**' – your visa will then be ready to collect three working days later between 2 and 3.30pm. For postal applications, you are required to firstly arrange payment – either via an enclosed postal order made payable to '**Tanzania High Commission**', or by paying the £38 fee at any Barclays bank branch to the following account: Tanzania High Commission; Sort code: 20-47-35; Account No 50914126, and then enclosing the original receipt/bank deposit confirmation with your application. You will also need to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope (preferably special or recorded delivery) for return. Postal applications should be sent by tracked or guaranteed mail, and will take approximately ten working days from the date of receipt.

Visa Application Form: [http://tanzaniahighcommission.co.uk/images/stories/tanzania\\_visas.pdf](http://tanzaniahighcommission.co.uk/images/stories/tanzania_visas.pdf)

Further information:

[http://tanzaniahighcommission.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=116&Itemid=112](http://tanzaniahighcommission.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=116&Itemid=112)

**2)** Alternatively you can purchase your visa upon arrival into Tanzania. You will be required to fill in an application form upon landing and, having queued to see an immigration officer, this will be processed immediately. You will need to ensure your passport is valid for six months from the date of arrival and that you have two unused pages available. You will also need to ensure that you have sufficient currency to pay the required fee. A visa fee of US\$50 will apply.

