



**H**IMALAYAN  
HEALTH & HEARING INC.  
COMPASSION IN *Action*

## General Tips for Volunteers

(Advice from other organizations working in Nepal)

### Planning Your Trip

Here are some general ideas of things to bring or not to bring if you are thinking of visiting Nepal with Himalayan Health & Hearing. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, and you are strongly advised to seek further information from a range of sources.

- Be really clear about your motivation for volunteering – It should not be about your ego.
- Be aware that volunteer activities are restricted by the type of entry visa. A “tourist visa” would permit observer and conference activities, but usually not service delivery
- Give some thought to your personal framework and values around working with people:-
  1. How do you interact with people?
  2. What are your personal and professional values?
  3. How do you feel about living and working in a predominantly patriarchal society?
- Consider the practicalities of working in a different cultural setting:
  1. Limited or unreliable access to wireless communication services
  2. Different eating times and diet
- Be open to learning something new and different
- Have time to reflect on the places you visit and how you related to those there
- Have support networks at home
- Be clear on your skills and interests, what you would like to learn and what you can offer as a volunteer. Best results come from “bringing something to the table” and a desire to share experience.
- Take a book or music with you to fill in time when things don’t go according to plan
- Be prepared to sit and listen – a lot of the time
- Acknowledge that Nepali people have the expertise in knowing what is the most appropriate actions in relation to their issues
- Accept that the project you will be involved in operated before you came and will continue after you leave
- Enjoy the experience of giving of yourself – it can be life-changing!!!!
- **Immunisations / General Health Advice:** Discuss your particular needs with your Health Care Professional.

## **Packing Check list**

### **Communications:**

- Do you have skype set up at home?
- There are many internet centres in KTM – cheap.
- Use a local sim card , make sure your phone will work overseas (some are restricted to Australia by the telecoms)
- Adaptors and chargers
- Camera, (spare lithium batteries not to be packed in check in baggage)
- Camera charger, adaptors
- Spare memory cards
- Diary, note book, pens
- Nepal contacts list – leave copy with family

**Do not take any jewellery (engagement rings etc) or valuable watch.**

**Do not take anything you would be sad to lose!**

### **Personal gear**

1. Teva sandals and warm socks (can buy socks cheaply in KTM) –that’s it unless I use my trekking boots, but not on this trip. Sue also takes joggers and has boots in Nepal. Boots will give your feet more protection, but unless they are light weight, and a good fit, usually do more damage to your toe nails!
2. Flight stockings, ear plugs or noise reducing head phones
3. Eye glasses, spare glasses, sun glasses
4. Scarf – good ones cheap in Nepal
5. Jacket, long sleeve, loose fitting, to go with down jacket, Sue wears hers under her fleecy. Some water resistance is good
6. Down jacket usually short sleeve- buy in Nepal
7. Light weight rain jacket (Gortex), again fairly loose fit so that you can wear your down jacket underneath
8. Poncho, cumbersome to wear – easy to carry, but OK for trekking, covers pack
9. Tracky type pyjamas – can buy in Nepal
10. Beany and sun hat (optimist me)
11. Can buy good soap, deodorant and shampoo / conditioner in KTM
12. Hair brush, Tooth gear, nail clippers, razor,
13. Small packet travel tissues
14. Small bottle antiseptic hand gel
15. Buy toilet paper in KTM
16. Thermal top, wool, some people don’t like it on their skin, long or short sleeves. No one wears thermal pants! We can buy woollen leg warmers there.
17. Long sleeve top, best your arms are covered, loose fit – wear on plane over. Can do more shopping in Nepal
18. Layers of t shirts, 3 or so, they can be bought there
19. Vitamins we can buy in Singapore at the layover
20. Head torch
21. Small towel that will dry easily
22. Sleeping sheet – pillow

23. Water bottle, can refill after security at the airport, good if it can take hot water.
24. Small back pack, with frame to give air flow on back, Only for your day stuff. We use porters for our other bags etc.
25. Nylon cord for clothes line, baby pegs
26. Alarm clock
27. Reading material – small book, phrase book
28. Sewing repair kit
29. Laundry bag – cotton pillow case style with pull string, name clearly marked
30. Zip ties for securing luggage zips

## **Medical**

1. Vitamins- Vitamin C, B
2. Prescribed medications
3. Headache tablets
4. Immune defence tablets
5. Blister plasters, bandaids,
6. Bettadine cream or paw paw cream
7. White Tiger balm- buy in Singapore
8. Lew has insect bite stuff
9. Diarrhoea medicine – mild organic and also lomotil
10. Cold and Flu stuff – buy in Singapore
11. Sun screen
12. Insect repellent
13. Fess nasal spray (Flyer version)

## **Money**

1. Travellers' cheques
2. Or travel with cash (you can take in up to \$5000) (less secure)
3. I travel with cash and take plenty for emergencies etc, so just bring Aussie dollars to spend, large notes

## **Documents**

1. Passport
2. Nepal visa best and cheaply obtained on entry
3. Health documents
4. Driver's licence, Professional ID
5. Spare passport photos for entry visa (at least one)
6. Photo copy of passport
  1. Travel insurance docs
  2. Emergency home contacts
  3. Credit cards
  4. Tickets / itinerary / accom vouchers and booking details
  5. Copy tickets / itinerary
  6. Shopping list