

CLC Mission Helper

East Africa Handbook

(Kenya/Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia)



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East African Culture & Etiquette

Visiting East Africa for the first time can be intimidating, especially if you are not aware of the **cultural differences**. East Africans often treat foreigners with much respect as honored guests, and are usually very understanding amid

cultural mistakes. The following guidelines explain some cultural differences that can help you adapt and enjoy your time in East Africa.

A Respectful Culture -- East Africans are extremely **hospitable** and helpful to visitors – sometimes to an almost embarrassing degree. You may respond by bringing your host flowers or a small gift. If you face delays, inefficient services or bureaucracy, it is far more efficient and Christ-like to be firm and polite than to lose your temper.

Respect for elders is very important. An elder is anyone older than you or who is in a higher position, such as ministry leaders, pastors, missionaries and your team leaders. One way to show respect for your elders is to stand up when they enter the room. It is normal to reserve front seats for leaders; if there is no available chair, the younger person should give their seat to the elder. During meal times, please reserve the ends of the table for them. Please don't sit there unless you are asked to by a leader. In East African culture, it is also respectful to walk beside or behind your leaders.

Meeting People

The Swahili language is widely spoken in Tanzania and many areas of Kenya. The **traditional greeting** in the Swahili language is Habari (Literally "news"). The response to this greeting is "Mzuri" (Fine). You may find that East Africans will take the time to share the news, or what is happening in their life when they greet each other. The Swahili phrase for Good Bye is "Kwa Heri".

In Urban areas the English language is widely used, and you should have no trouble communicating. In rural settings like when you visit a village far from the big city you may find very little or no English spoken or understood. If you find yourself visiting a Church where every communication must be translated, just say hello with a smile. You will likely enjoy a silent fellowship with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Your joy in this fellowship will be obvious, even without words.

The **Western handshake** is also widely used, you may find different variations of the handshake in the different areas you visit.

Using first names only can be taken as overly familiar, so it's best to **address new acquaintances** as "Mr.", "Miss" or "Mrs."; when greeting other Christians you may address them as "Brother" or "Sister".

East Africans will think nothing of asking **personal questions** within minutes of first meeting you, so don't take offense if a stranger asks you your age, whether or not you are married or where you are going. Such questions are seen as nothing more than being polite and showing a normal friendly interest in a new acquaintance.

Language-Swahili (Kenya and Tanzania)

- Habari – news or 'how are you?'
- Mzuri – response to above question 'fine'
- Asante – Thank You
- Asante Sana – Thank You Very Much
- Karibu – 'You're welcome' or simply 'welcome'
- Mzungu – White Person, this is how you will be known, be prepared to hear this word many times as you are traveling (can also mean a wanderer or someone who is lost)
- Sawa – 'Okay' a multi-purpose word, serves many functions in Kenya, especially. Just nod, smile, and say 'Sawa'
- Mungu – God
- Bwana – Lord
- Bwana Asifiwe – Praise the Lord

Body Language

An older person may bless someone younger by touching his or her head. Some Christians in East Africa have a difficult time understanding why some men from the West have long hair. To them, short hair is a sign of their commitment to Christ.

Living in close quarters with family and neighbors gives East Africans a different sense of **personal space** than many Westerners are used to. If you find yourself crowded or jostled, particularly while traveling, be as tolerant as you can, since space is often at a premium.

Suitable Dress

East Africans tend to **dress conservatively**, keeping the body well covered. In small towns, most women wear a long decorative cloth wrapped over the body. In cities, jeans, skirts and t-shirts can be common among the younger generation.

Please wear modest clothing. Men, going shirtless with white skin will attract attention, and should be reserved for tourist type areas. It is common for tourists and visitors to wear shorts, although in East Africa shorts are generally thought to be for young boys to wear, and for the purpose of swimming. Nice blue jeans without holes would be acceptable to wear for pants, although it is uncommon to see Africans wearing them in rural areas. Most Africans wear lighter weight dress pants.

Ladies, avoid wearing short skirts, shorts, tight fitting pants, tank tops, sleeveless tops, sheer garments or anything that might attract unwanted attention. Longer loose fitting skirts and pants are the most acceptable. In a rural or church setting women are not seen wearing pants, they wear longer cloth type skirts which are available to purchase at any market.

It is not always necessary to dress as East Africans do, they understand that we are visiting and it is unlikely that they would be offended by the way we dress. On the other hand it would be wise to take these customs into consideration, especially as we present ourselves in a teaching position with the young children. After a day or two you will have a very good idea of what to wear.

Table Manners

There may be times when you will not be given a fork or spoon to use. If unsure how to eat a particular dish, don't be embarrassed to ask.

A water bowl and towel are often provided to wash your hands after the meal.

Do not feel that you have to eat all the food that is prepared for you. Simply explain to your host that you would prefer a smaller portion. If you are polite they will certainly not be offended.

Don't be surprised if you observe an East African picking his nose, and being in no hurry to finish the job. This is common and not considered impolite in East Africa.

Gifts, Money and Beggars

It is best that you **do not give money to others**, even as gifts.

Be sensitive when handling money in front of others. Never reveal large amounts of cash at one time from your purse or wallet. Rather, take out a little, then if that is not enough, reach in and take out some more. Remember that though it may not seem like much money to you, it may appear to locals as a lot. It is usually best to carry only enough in your wallet or pocket for your daily expenses. Some of you may prefer to bring more than one wallet keeping your dollars separate from your shillings. Keep the bulk of your money in a money belt or in the hotel safe. Never leave your money in your hotel room, even if your suitcase is locked.

Be sensitive when you shop. It is difficult for our native brothers and sisters to see American Christians purchasing or carrying items whose cost would feed an entire family for a year or more. If possible, please purchase expensive items only at the end of the trip.

As a foreign visitor you will get more attention from **beggars**. Although a persistent beggar is very difficult to refuse, visitors who give money to one will soon find themselves surrounded by a throng of beggars. Be especially careful of being pick-pocketed in the confusion. The best strategy is to ignore them until they leave you alone. Although when one is moved with compassion it is certainly not forbidden to help the needy. . If you are moved to help someone make sure it is at a time and place where you will not be loitering for much longer, make it a "give and go" operation.

In Church

In congregational settings, you may see **men and women** sitting on separate sides or front and back of the church. This also applies during meal times. Please make sure you sit in the proper place, according to your gender. If you are unsure where to sit, simply observe the natives and follow their example. Most often, you will be given a place of honor at the front of the church.

If you are in a church please try your best to **sit up straight** and do not slouch or put your feet on the chair in front of you.

Communication and Relations

As guests in this land, remember to respect your hosts' culture. Too often, westerners do not have a sense of their surroundings, especially in public places. While in East Africa please **do not talk or laugh loudly**. Respect leaders when they are speaking or making public announcements. Try to be aware of your surroundings, and follow what the natives are doing.

In East Africa, **people may stand very close** during conversation. When in a church or when traveling, people may sit very near to you. This is quite normal. Do your best to adjust with your surroundings. You will also see men holding hands with other men in public. This should not be seen as a homosexual act but simply part of the very close and friendly attitude of the East African culture. If you are a man, do not be surprised if one of the African pastors or young men attempts to hold your hand as you are walking along.

When **addressing people in East Africa**, especially elders, it is impolite to use their first name alone. Please be sure to precede a believer's name with "Brother" or "Sister".

In East Africa, **certain statements** may be misunderstood by foreigners as criticism. For example, you may be told that you look tired or sick or someone may point out a blemish on your face. This is only meant to show that they care about your health. Someone may say to you that you look fat, which does not mean that you are overweight but instead is a complement that you come from a good family that takes care of you.

There are some **subjects of conversation** that would be unwise to discuss while in East Africa, such as dating, politics, divorce, sex, homosexuality, and movies. Avoid sarcasm. These all may lead to great misunderstanding. Please make sure that you avoid these topics in general conversation, during public speaking, and when sharing from God's Word.

Most of the time you will be communicating through a **translator**. Please keep in mind that certain words in the English language do not always translate directly into the local language. Therefore, one sentence in English, may take up to five sentences of the local language to translate the meaning well enough for the people to understand.

Please **be careful when you encounter different customs** from your own; do not laugh or make jokes. Though they may not show it, the natives can be deeply hurt by this. Try your best to understand and appreciate their culture.

When talking to people, please **do not use Western slang** such as, "cool", "awesome", "dude", "whacked", "tight", "stoked", "cheesy", "wicked" or other words with double meanings. This may work within the Western culture where it is immediately understood. However, outside of the West, it is neither understood nor able to be translated.

Please be considerate if you brought snacks to eat in public. In East Africa, it is only right to **share food with those around you**. Eating in front of someone without offering anything is considered rude.

One of the best things to do while you are in East Africa is to **get to know East Africans** by talking with them. Ask them, "What is your name?", "Where are you from?" and "What does your father do?" Asking questions like these mean that you care enough to take a personal interest in them.

When giving and receiving things, such as food, money and gifts, please remember to **use only your right hand**. Using your left hand would be impolite in this culture since it is often used, along with a jug of water, in place of toilet paper.

It is common for **foreigners to feel strange** when people stare at them or intently watch what they are doing. However, this is nothing more than mere curiosity and should not cause you to be afraid or uneasy. Make sure that you **smile a lot and say hello** to people whenever you see them. East Africans are a very happy people for the most part and appreciate a happy face. 😊

East Africans are of a very **helpful nature**. Please do not feel strange if someone, like your host, tries to help you by carrying your bags or insists on doing something for you that could be easily done by yourself. To them, it is a privilege to assist you. It is better to accept their generosity with a thankful heart.

Male-Female Relations

If someone of the **opposite gender** asks you to pray for them, please do not lay your hands on them directly. Instead, you may stretch out your hands toward them as you pray.

Even when joking, please **be careful not to touch** the opposite sex. Even small things, like patting someone on the shoulder or playing with someone's hair, could be misunderstood in this culture.

You should also be aware that **public displays of affection** between couples is disrespectful in East African society. Conversely, it is acceptable for people of the same gender to hold hands in public, only as a cultural sign of mutual friendship.

How to Be a Blessing as a Visitor

Pray. There is no greater preparation for this journey. You will be challenged spiritually, emotionally and physically by what you see and experience. Have a morning prayer in your heart, "Lord, help me to be open and willing to learn what you are going to teach me today." Share needs with your group and pray together. God is with you!

Take time to observe what the Lord is teaching you in the midst of your busy day. Record these things so you will not forget them when you go back home.

"Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not break." Expect changes and delays in itineraries, dinner times, departure time, meetings, etc., due to weather, strikes, unavoidable circumstance, and the typical "East African time." It is better to stay flexible and continually ready for change. Walk with an attitude that chooses to praise God in all things.

Be willing to give up rights and convenience for the sake of others. Allow the Lord to build you together as a team. You are not in East Africa for your own selfish gain but to allow the Lord to use your lives for the furthering of His kingdom.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Philippians 2:3-4

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. ⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Ephesians 4:1-7

Seek to serve one another and the brothers and sisters you meet.

Ask your leader if you are ever unsure about something. Most mistakes are made unintentionally due to lack of information. **Always check with your leader** before splitting your group, never wander off alone, help your leader with his responsibility of keeping the team together and safe. Your leader can discuss the dangers you may encounter day or night. Your leader can tell you what to watch for and be aware of.

Be punctual! It's your responsibility to find out when and where to assemble for the next meeting. If one person is late, the whole team could miss a flight, causing major complications since it could be a full day or more before the next available flight out.

Travel Information

Voltage in East Africa is 230V, unlike 115V in the west. To operate electric devices, both a voltage transformer and a plug adapter must be used. Note that some computer A/C adapters are labeled "Input: 100-240V"; in this case, a separate voltage transformer is not required. It is strongly recommended that a surge protector be used for electronic devices.

Exchange money only at airports, hotels, and banks to avoid receiving counterfeit bills. **NOTE: You MUST bring new or newish \$100 dollar bills no older than 2013 for exchange to local currencies.**

Always carry your passport with you. You may be asked to show your passport when entering certain areas of the country. Keep your passport, money, camera and other valuables close to you at all times. **Never leave your bags unattended.**

Always watch your luggage, especially if you allow a porter to carry your bags. Know your bags and watch carefully as they are loaded and unloaded.

Local public transportation may be used at times. This can be very crowded with literally **no** personal space. If you cannot handle the crowded conditions, try sitting next to your friends / roommates, or talk to your leader to see **if** less crowded (more expensive) travel arrangements are possible.

Tipping of **taxi drivers** is not customary. It is best to negotiate the cost of the trip before you leave and expect an attempt to re-negotiate the price once you arrive. **Do not pay more than the price you agreed upon.**

In East Africa, **traffic runs in the opposite direction** as in the United States, and **pedestrians do not have the right of way**. When crossing the street, first look to the right and then to the left. Cross the street only when you are sure it is safe. Vehicles will not stop for you!

Hotel room security -- **NEVER** leave any valuables or money in your room while away, even if hidden.

Teaching and Preaching

When sharing **the Gospel** in East Africa, here are a few things to keep in mind.

1. **Simplicity** is the key since many people here have no idea who Jesus is.
2. **Do not use slang** words or expressions.
3. **People will listen** to you and respect what you are saying because you are a foreigner and you are considered an expert in your field, so please know that your words carry a lot of weight.
4. **Do not be discouraged** if some of the people you are teaching do not seem to believe what you are teaching them. Remember, the important thing is that they were able to hear the Gospel. Remember the promise from God that His Word will not return to Him void. You can be sure that the Lord will continue to work in their heart. What you have shared with them will not be forgotten.
5. **Do not** include derogatory remarks about other religions in your teaching and preaching. It is best to simply teach and preach God's Law and Gospel.
6. **When teaching through a translator**, remember to use simple, short, and complete phrases. Try to avoid words or expressions that would have no meaning in their culture or daily lives. Example: don't use an illustration about driving a car or buying a new TV since most of the people we will work with have no opportunity to do either of these things.

Health and Cleanliness

For extensive information on travelers' health and vaccinations, please visit the website of The Centers for Disease Control at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

As soon as you are certain that you are going to be going to East Africa do not delay in getting your vaccinations. Find a clinic that deals with International travel, they will provide you with the vaccines and medicines that you need to have.

Please **do not touch animals** on the street or anywhere else. Many of them carry diseases. If a dog or any other animal bites, please inform your group leader immediately. Don't be afraid of the many harmless geckos that often climb room walls and prey on mosquitoes.

Scratches and scrapes can lead to a bad infection. Clean them well and keep them covered.

Food and Drink

Please make sure that you **drink plenty of bottled water** even if you are not thirsty because your body can become quickly dehydrated. Bottled water should be frequently available from your leaders and hosts.

Tap water is unsafe for drinking, brushing or rinsing. Drink and brush your teeth only with bottled water. If you develop stomach or intestinal problems such as diarrhea, a likely cause was drinking impure water.

Make sure water bottles are sealed before opening. Always order cold drinks without ice, since ice is often made from local water.

Hot tea and coffee are okay to drink and are usually served with milk and sugar already added. If you are allergic to milk or cannot have sugar due to a medical problem, please inform your leader.

Do not assume foods are okay to eat; always check with the leader. Be careful to not eat raw vegetables or uncooked food. Try to eat freshly cooked foods and beware of food that has been left sitting around for a long time. Do not eat fruit that cannot be peeled, such as grapes and apples. Do not eat food given to you by strangers. Your host will normally let you know of food you should not eat. Many places along your itinerary prepare safe meals specifically for your visit.

In case of illness:

1. **Advise your group leader right away so he knows when the sickness began.** Do not be embarrassed (diarrhea will likely be a part of your trip to East Africa) and you will most likely not be the only one with a problem. Your host is prepared to assist you when aware of the need.
2. **Prevent dehydration.** Replenish lost fluids by drinking plenty of fruit juices and bottled water. If you feel dehydrated, ask your host for re-hydration fluids.
3. **Limit food intake** to hot tea, soups and bananas. As your appetite returns, follow with bland crackers and dry toast. Then try simple baked foods.
4. **Take non-prescription medication.** Your host may have some available or can take you to a pharmacy to buy some.

How to Avoid Traveler's Diarrhea



ONLY drink purified and **sealed bottled water and soda**, hot beverages, and fresh 100% fruit juice.



DO NOT drink or brush your teeth with **tap water**.



DO NOT consume **non-pasteurized milk** or dairy products.



ONLY eat fresh **fruits that can be peeled** like bananas and oranges.



DO NOT eat **fruits that you are unable to peel**.



DO NOT eat **uncooked vegetables**, including salads.



ONLY eat food that **arrives hot** and is well cooked.



DO NOT eat **undercooked or raw** meats, fish, or shellfish.



DO NOT eat foods sold by **street vendors**.

Jet Lag

Jet lag is a physiological disturbance experienced by air travelers on flights across different time zones. It affects the body's internal clock, disrupting sleeping patterns, eating schedules, and body temperature. Increased noise levels, changes in atmospheric pressure, low humidity, and stress are all influences.

The body will naturally readjust its biological rhythms to the new schedule and environment after a period of time, normally one day for each time zone crossed. However, there are some steps you can take that will lessen the effects of long periods of travel and shorten the time required for readjustment:

1. **Prior to departure, adjust your sleep patterns** to fit those of your destination if your schedule permits. Go to sleep and get up an hour earlier or later each day until your pattern begins to approximate the one you will have at your destination.
2. **Avoid a last-minute rush** by packing and finalizing details well ahead of the day of departure. Reducing unnecessary stress will improve your energy level and help your body adapt.
3. **Wear comfortable and loose-fitting clothing** during long flights. This improves blood circulation and resting ability. Wear comfortable shoes that can be easily loosened or removed in case your feet swell.
4. **Drink plenty of fluids**, such as fruit juices and water. Try to drink one glass of water for each hour of flight. This will help counteract the tendency of pressurized cabins to cause dehydration.
5. **Regulate caffeine intake wisely**. Caffeine speeds up body functions and contributes to dehydration but might be helpful to avoid drowsiness during daylight.
6. **Avoid alcoholic beverages** on the flights.

7. **Avoid foods with high levels of salt or sugar**, such as sodas, snack foods, and desserts. Salt increases fluid retention, causing more swelling of your feet, and sugar will decrease your blood-sugar level after the initial rise. Also, avoid heavy foods or overeating that will consume more energy for digestion.
8. **Eat potassium-rich foods**, such as bananas. Water loss from perspiration, etc., depletes the potassium in your body.
9. **Exercise by stretching and walking** at least five minutes every hour when the fasten-seat-belt sign is off. Exercise will keep your blood circulating and prevent blood from pooling in your legs and feet, causing swelling or dangerous blood clots.
10. **Try to fully relax and sleep if possible**. If the flight is not full, look for multiple seats to stretch out. Sleeping when dark and staying awake with minimal napping during daylight can help your body to adjust to the destination's time zone.

Travelers Health Insurance

CLC Mission Helper Guidelines require each participant to have a traveler's health insurance policy. This policy will cover any health problems, injuries, or accidents that may occur while in East Africa. This policy will also cover evacuation from East Africa in the case of a serious illness or injury. Your trip coordinator will send the necessary information.

Travel Visas

Your team leader will send the necessary steps for obtaining your visa. **Make sure you have a copy of your vaccination records available and easily accessible when you arrive.**

Arriving in East Africa

Before landing in Kenya, Tanzania, or Zambia you will be given a required form to fill out. Be ready to supply the following information as you fill out the Arrival and Departure Cards.

- Surname (last name)
- Other names (first and middle)
- Passport number
- Place and date of issue (Passport)
- Date and place of birth
- Male / Female
- Nationality
- Country of current residence
- Occupation
- Number of persons traveling on your passport
- Purpose of travel / visit (select holiday or tourist)
- Intended length of stay
- Flight / Bus number
- Full physical address in Kenya / Tanzania / Zambia, contact person. (For security reasons never list Church or pastors names, or addresses. Check with your team leader on day of arrival for this information. Since we will be visiting multiple places in East Africa we will use the hotel that we will be arriving to and departing from. Your team leader will have this information.)

- Mode of travel (Air, Water, Rail, Road)
- Date (In East Africa the date is presented in this order. Day / Month / Year. To avoid confusion just write the month instead of using numerals than either order will work.)

Suggested Packing List

Clothing –

- 4 pants/skirts covering the knees (remember that the women should wear very loose fitting clothing)
- 6 shirts (Casual, cool and light fabric, no words or confusing graphics. I bring button down short sleeve shirts) (light weight long sleeve shirts help with sun protection, and are commonly worn by East Africans.)
- 1 warm sweatshirt or jacket (evenings and early mornings can get cold in the higher elevations.)
- Undergarments
- Sleep and lounging around the hotel clothing (*modest shorts and t-shirts*)
- Sandals
- Swimsuit (may make semi-private bathing in some rural village areas more convenient, and some hotels have a swimming pool)
- Boots or shoes (you may find yourself in a rural area where livestock and manure are plentiful)
- Handkerchiefs (For wiping sweat from your weary brow and blowing dirt and dust from your nose)

Toiletries –

- Soap and shampoo
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Body powder
- Feminine hygiene needs
- Towel (some of the hotels do not provide towels)
- Toilet paper (one roll, take the tube out and smash it flat for easy packing. You can buy toilet paper once we get there but don't count on finding it in restrooms)
- Eye contacts needs (contacts may be very difficult to care for due to the dust in the air—BRING YOUR GLASSES)

First Aid Kit –

- Aspirin, Tylenol
- Insect Repellent
- Thermometer
- Band-Aids
- Cold-flu medicine or nasal decongestant
- Cough drops or lozenges
- Diarrhea medicine
- Laxative
- Dramamine for motion sickness (only if this is a problem for you)
- Eye drops (there is lots of dust in the air)
- Cipro (a multipurpose antibiotic. You can probably get a free sample from your doctor)
- Anti-fungal spray for athletes foot or other types of "itch"
- Any prescription meds you need
- A few hypodermic needles (Some hospitals require you to use your own or to share one of theirs. I've never needed any but better safe than sorry)
- Antiseptic, antibiotic ointment, hydrogen peroxide

Miscellaneous Items –

- Journal, pens and pencils (I strongly encourage everyone to keep a daily journal. You will appreciate it if you are asked to give any presentations, it will be handy when you pray for those you have met, and it will be the best memento of your trip for years to come)
- Playing cards
- Books (plan on doing a lot of reading)
- Travel book for East Africa
- Bible
- Safety pins
- Camera
- Address, e-mail, and phone # list
- Money belt (one that fit around your waste and tuck under your pant...Walmart for a few bucks)
- Wallet that you can carry in your front pocket for spending money and ID
- Backpack/daypack
- Alarm clock (battery travel)
- Travel sewing kit (plan on losing a few buttons when you have your clothes laundered)
- Electric Outlet Transformer (Small, inexpensive adapters for blow dryers, etc...Walmart.)
- Pocket knife (Be sure to pack in your checked luggage, not in your carry-on)
- Small flashlight and batteries
- Credit Card/ATM card (you will have limited use for this but good to have)
- Snack type foods (just a few candy bars, granola bars, gum, hard candies, and beef jerky)

DO NOT FORGET –

- Passport and necessary visas
 - Money – NOTE: **You MUST bring 2013 or newer \$100 dollar bills to exchange.**
- Teaching materials and notes

Packing Tips –

- Carry-on luggage – I pack enough clothing for 1 day in addition to all my toiletries and first-aid kit. I also pack my outlet adapters, a few snacks, teaching notes, Bible, pen, book, flashlight, medications, journal, laptop, and anything I don't want to be without if my luggage gets lost.
- Checked luggage – extra clothing, snack supply, extra books, day-pack.

Timeline

Pay special attention to the timing of passports, visas, and immunization these are time sensitive.

Time Line	Need	X	Comments
6 months before trip	Prayer Discuss health issues of trip with your doctor, Immunizations, US Passport,		Pray daily for this ministry and your part in it Make a list of questions to ask your doctor based on your health history, travel to the third world, and suggested immunizations. You may need to go to a clinic that specializes in foreign travel. Make sure that you receive the required Yellow Fever injection. For extensive information on travelers' health and vaccinations, please visit the website of The Centers for Disease Control. Passport info: http://travel.state.gov/passport/
2 months before trip	Lesson Plans		Begin working with your team to develop lesson plans and divide teaching duties.
30 Days before trip			

	Financial Support	Send thank you notes to those who have helped make this trip possible. Trip cost and goal is \$3,500. Check with your funding sources to make sure you will have the money you need for this trip.
	Immunizations, Visa Application,	Get any final immunizations. Contact Team Leader for more information
Final week before trip		
	Start prescribed medications	
	Pack for trip,	Begin packing (1 suitcase – 48 pounds max) See suggested packing list You will receive an additional bag of ministry items to check in at the airport.
Day of departure	Prayer	Begin the day in the Word and prayer, asking God to use you for His glory
	Re-read Handbook,	
	Check List:	Passport, Teaching notes, Bible, Medications

Journaling and Blogging Guidelines

One of the most important parts of your trip experience is expressing the personal impact the trip has had on you. Sharing it with others will help others to see the incredible opportunities and open doors that the Lord has shown to you on your trip. **Personal websites, blogs and email lists** make communicating more simple, convenient and up-to-date than ever before. Depending on your location you will often have access to the Internet. I would suggest that you make use of e-mail or blogs to journal your experience. A personal, hand-written journal will also provide a long lasting memento of your journey.

As you report about your trip using a website, blog or an email list, please consider who else may be reading it, acting wisely to protect our East African brothers and sisters. Please refrain from mentioning specific names or places. This may seem a little extreme but excerpts from Pastor Todd Ohlmann's 2001 Mission Helper Trip report have been quoted in a derogatory manner by an anti-Christian website.

Returning Home

Some may get a bit of culture shock visiting a foreign country, you may also feel some culture shock when you re-enter the United States. Small things that you may have taken for granted all your life might now be seen as true blessings from God. Rejoice in this, this is the proper perspective to have, not only having the knowledge that God has blessed you greatly, but really feeling blessed. When returning from a foreign country, we may find ourselves judging or looking down on others. This is only because our view of the world has been changed by what we have seen and experienced. However, it is important to keep in mind that others have not yet seen or experienced what we have. We should instead **be a window through which they can see what God is doing in East Africa** so that through our life they will also be challenged to reach the lost world with His love.