



# COUNTRY OVERVIEW

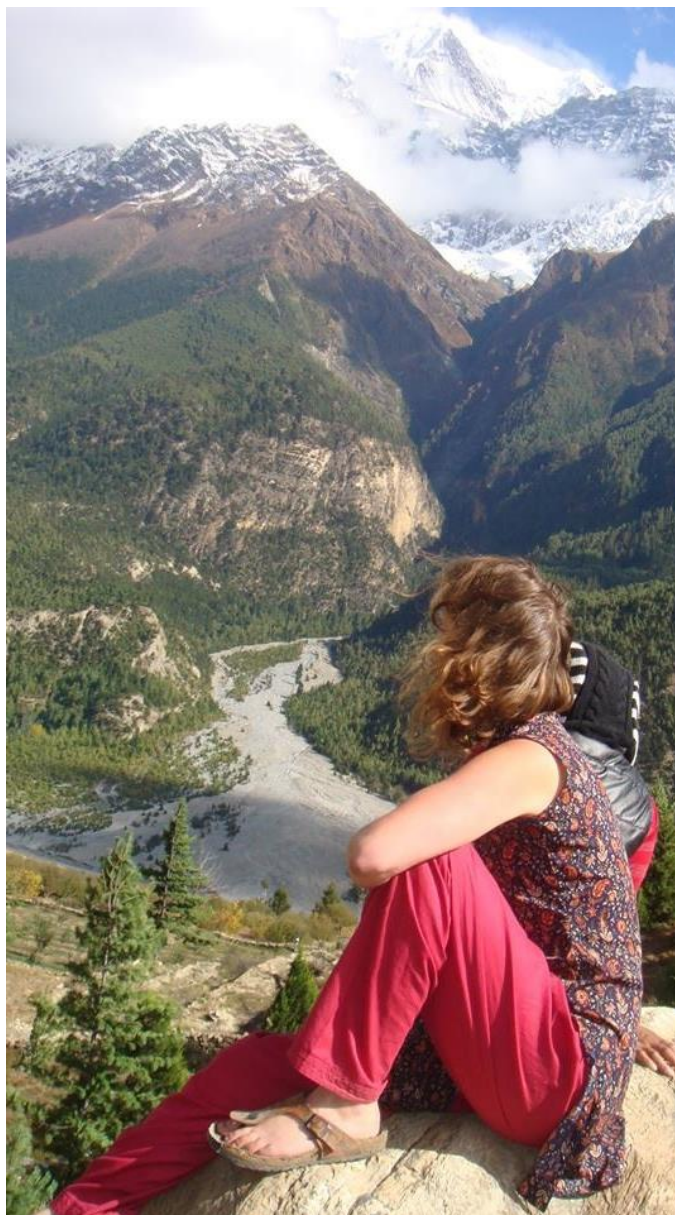
# & PACKING GUIDELINES

**Nepal: Development, Gender, and Social Change in the Himalaya**

**Spring 2024**

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# COUNTRY OVERVIEW

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Nepal, land-locked between China and India, is small in terms of square miles, but has the highest mountains in the world. Geographically, ecologically, and culturally, it is very diverse, with a topography that stretches from sea-level (sub-tropical jungles) to the world's highest point and a complex mix of ethnic, linguistic, and religious traditions that structure their way of life. The program is based in Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, a busy South Asian city where the traditional and modern are side by side. Program excursions include visits to rural areas in Nepal allowing for a transection of Nepal's geographic and cultural regions.

With a young constitution, Nepal is grappling with the challenges of minority representation and multicultural differences. As the country explores how to empower and include its citizens in its dynamic political process, Nepal exemplifies the importance of participatory and open dialogue among citizens and state. In this program, you will have an opportunity to learn from scholars, activists and community members who play an important role in creating an inclusive society that address the issues of inequality, rights, and community approach to conservation and development.



### [Kathmandu]: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)

FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
67/39	77/45	83/53	86/61
SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
83/66	80/56	74/45	67/37

## CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

Climatic regions vary widely in Nepal, ranging from hot tropical jungles in the Tarai to the permanent snowfields of the Himalayas. Kathmandu stands at an altitude of just under 4,500 ft.; at times during excursions, students may be traveling to altitudes of approximately 13,000ft. Homes and buildings in Nepal do not have heating systems in the winter, and the summer monsoon means almost daily rain, so please plan accordingly.

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

Many different ethnic groups have their own complex customs but there are enough commonalities where the student does not need to worry. To Nepalis, "guest is god" which leads to a spirit of open welcoming of visitors of diverse backgrounds. Despite the impression you might get from Bollywood films from India, Nepalis are conservative when it comes to dress (see guidelines below) and interactions between the sexes and are somewhat formal with new acquaintances. Do not worry, though, during orientation we cover all the cultural do's and don'ts and introduce you to common customs and courtesies.

## DIET

SIT Study Abroad provides experiential learning opportunities where students become embedded in their host community. As such, we strive to accommodate serious food allergies where possible but simply cannot ensure that all dietary restrictions or non-medically mandated diets can be accommodated.

Students are encouraged to participate in the local food culture as a central aspect of daily life. By trying to replicate your diet at home you may miss out on an important part of your host culture. Due to the unique living and learning community central to all SIT programs, we cannot separate food and eating communally (including with your host family) from the program experience. Please consider local diet seriously when selecting your program of choice. Your admissions counselor is a great resource in better understanding the local diet.

The staple of the Nepali diet that is served for most meals is *daal bhaat*, a meal centered on rice and lentils with sides of curried vegetables, pickle, and sometimes meat. It is quite easy to maintain a vegetarian diet in Nepal, though it is more difficult to be vegan or to maintain a kosher diet. In urban areas, most people eat three meals a day and mealtimes are similar to those in the west, but in rural areas, there are usually only two main meals, at mid-morning and late evening, supplemented by snacks late afternoon.

## SAFETY, SECURITY, AND HEALTH

Maintaining good health is critical to having a successful semester. To help you do that, we have provided [Health Guidelines and Requirements](#) for your program.

It is very important that you read the Health Guidelines and Requirements document as early as possible and examine it with your medical provider. The guidelines include recommended immunizations; a suggested calendar for immunizations and other prophylaxes; and valuable information on how to avoid exposure to common carriers of disease.

SIT no longer requires vaccination to participate on programs except for locations where host country governments require it.

However, we strongly encourage students to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 per CDC recommendations. SIT continues to closely monitor COVID-19 conditions in each program location and will advise students on any location-specific COVID-

19 requirements and regulations prior to and during their program.

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. For instance, coming prepared with face masks for personal use if individual venues/location requirements deem in necessary after arrival. For information regarding safety and security, emergency communications, SIT policies, health and personal property insurance, and general program tips, please read the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document and [Student Handbook](#).

Kathmandu is a large, crowded city, and like any large city anywhere in the world there are risks from theft and traffic. We will have many sessions devoted to safety and security in our orientation and will cover safety tips and program policy.

In past years we have had few issues with safety or security as long as students follow guidelines. Most issues arise from students being careless with their belongings and loose things. In general, students from past semesters have said that they felt quite safe in Kathmandu and in other areas of Nepal.

Politically, Nepal is in a state of transition. Political jockeying has, in recent years, sometimes taken place on the streets in the form of protests and *bandhs* (a strike where transportation is halted, and people do not generally go out). These strikes generally pose no real safety or security risks; *bandhs* are generally more of an inconvenience to travel and trade than anything else.

Kathmandu can have very narrow streets and a lot of truck, car, bike, animal, and pedestrian traffic, so students will need to be careful. Horns are used to both warn you and move you out of the way, even if there is nowhere to move to! Recently Kathmandu police has enforced a no-honking policy, but it is not always followed.

Our program has run in Nepal for over 40 years and our local networks are quite strong, including being part of the US Embassy's local warden system. We carefully assess the situation in Nepal throughout the semester. The Academic Director, local experts,

the US Consulate, and many other contacts analyze the political situation with an eye on student safety and program continuity. During orientation and throughout the semester, SIT provides students with thorough security briefings. In addition, we have contingency plans in place that can be enacted quickly should an emergency arise. Students are responsible for remaining thoughtfully cautious, maintaining a low profile, and adhering to program rules and the Academic Director's advice.

While we cannot answer specific questions about what medication is and is not available locally, in general, all common medications (most antibiotics, malaria medications, some vaccinations, etc.) are available locally at reasonable prices.



Because of its topography, the Kathmandu Valley can sustain high levels of pollution, fog and smog. Students with asthma and/or allergies may find that the environment exacerbates these allergies. It is therefore recommended that you make sure to bring extra medication and talk to your doctor about self-care during the program.

Malaria does not exist in the Kathmandu Valley due to its altitude; however, if you plan to travel to other parts of Nepal or South Asia after the program, you may need to consider malaria medication, which is available locally at low cost. Consult a travel medicine specialist in the U.S. for advice.

You might consider browsing the website of one of Nepal's foremost Western medical clinics, the CIWEC clinic in Kathmandu. CIWEC has been at the forefront not only of treating travel-related and

tropical illness for nearly two decades, it has also been in the lead in medical research on gastrointestinal parasites and altitude-related sickness. They have an excellent website that gives information specifically on health recommendations for Nepal: [www.ciwec-clinic.com](http://www.ciwec-clinic.com)

Mental health counseling and psychiatric care is not as widely available nor utilized in Nepal in the same way as in the United States. Students should not plan on having regular access to local psychological services, although we try our best to provide students with psychological services when necessary. Make sure to bring all your medications with you, enough to last you during your stay in Nepal, since those might not be available in Nepal.

## HOMESTAYS

As many SIT Study Abroad alumni will tell you, the homestay experience can be one of the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of the program. We hope you will come prepared for the experience and committed to moving beyond cultural immersion as you begin to question, distinguish, and analyze the host culture vis-à-vis your own culture and come to a deeper understanding of both.



Family structures vary in every culture. SIT Study Abroad values the diversity of homestay families, and your family may include a single mother of two small children or a large extended family with many people coming and going all the time. Additionally, please bear in mind that, in many countries, the idea of what constitutes a "home" may be different from what you expect. You will need to be prepared to

adapt to a new life with a new diet, a new schedule, new people, and new priorities and expectations.

Each program's homestay coordinator will be responsible for placing students in homestays. These placements are made first based on health concerns, including any allergies or dietary needs, to the extent possible. When possible, we also select homestays based on students' interests, young people and children in the family, etc. **Please note: in order to ensure the best fit for students and families, SIT may make final adjustments to homestay placements after student arrival in country. Therefore, SIT will not provide information about your homestay family before you depart for the program.**

On this program, you will be staying in two homestays. You will be staying in one extended homestay in urban Kathmandu during most of the program, and a short rural homestay during the village excursion. It is difficult to say how many, or of what ages, your family members will be and whether they will be wealthy, more educated or less affluent families. In general, though, if a family has extra space to accommodate a student it means they are more middle-class in the local context.

## OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

During orientation, the group stays in a guesthouse in a town just outside of Kathmandu. While on the village study tour, students may stay in any number of different accommodations in small villages. These accommodations are typically guesthouses in towns and trekker teahouses in more remote areas.

During ISP, accommodations vary according to the needs of student research. In some cases, students continue to stay with their homestay family during ISP; in most instances, students stay in a guesthouse or small hotel.

## TRANSPORTATION

In Kathmandu, you will mostly travel by foot or public transportation (local minibuses). Taxis are widely available and cheap. Students should expect traffic congestion during commuting times and pollution related to the traffic in Kathmandu. The

Nepal program center does not provide motor bikes/scooter for student use but bikes can be rented nearby. However, most students prefer to walk given the chaotic nature of the streets in Kathmandu, which are narrow and frequently unpaved.

Outside of the larger cities, there are many locations in Nepal that are only accessible on foot. To get to excursion locations, students will usually travel by chartered bus along with short flights, jeep, and on foot. You should be prepared to walk. Sometimes this is walking in areas of high altitude, and while you do not need to be an Olympic athlete, you should be in a fairly good physical shape. However, in case of emergency or if any student is unable to walk for any reason, we can hire transportation.

## COMMUNICATION

While you may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during the term abroad, please bear in mind that different time zones, unreliable internet connections, and changing program activities can complicate communication.

It's important to be clear with family and friends about your availability during the term. Due to the rigorous nature of classes, site visits, you should plan your communication time with friends and family accordingly. You should also consider the impact of constant communication with friends and family at home on your cultural immersion.

## PHONES AND E-MAIL

As part of SIT's commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working cell phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls, including a data plan so that your phone is operational when you are away from wifi.

For that purpose, students are required to either (a) bring an open, unlocked smart phone from the U.S. to the program that is able to accept a local SIM card, and is compatible with and usable at the program location, (b) work with the academic director within the first week upon arrival in country

to purchase a smart phone locally, or (c) bring a dual SIM smart phone. If needed, during orientation SIT Study Abroad staff can assist students in purchasing a local SIM card, and how to acquire minutes for calls and texting.

**E-mail:** There are many Internet cafes in Kathmandu from which you will be able to access your home e-mail account, but connections can be slow.

The SIT program center provides wireless internet access, but keep in mind that this is only during non-class hours and bandwidth is limited. All homestays in Kathmandu have wireless internet, but rural homestays will not. Most neighborhoods have businesses such as cafes or restaurants that provide free Wi-Fi as well. You can also use data from your Nepali phone service, if necessary.

## MAILINGS

Unlike receiving a package here in the US, receiving a package at your program site is usually **expensive** and **problematic**. Customs agents must inspect all packages and you, as the recipient, are responsible for duty and storage fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient is nearly back in the US by the time the items are received. For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations. Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged.

For this program, **DHL, FedEx, UPS and General post office (GPO) services are available in country**. For this program, we have found DHL to be the most reliable. Using U.S. Postal Service is not advised; while they may send packages for a cheaper price, timeliness and reliability have been more inconsistent than with the preferred express mailing agencies. When given the option, it's always a good idea to send packages certified and with a number that allows the sender to track the package. Be sure to include the program center phone number with the address; the carrier will call us when the package arrives.

If it is necessary for someone to send you mail then posted letters and packages should be sent to the following address:

### Student Name

c/o SIT  
PO Box 1373  
Kathmandu, Nepal 44600

For express services (e.g. DHL, FedEx, etc.) include the Program Center phone number (+9771-4457012) with the address and the courier will contact the office when your parcel arrives.

## MONEY

In addition to tuition, SIT Study Abroad program fees cover room and board throughout the program. When room and/or board are not taken with the group, students will be given a stipend to cover related expenses. SIT will cover daily commuting costs, if any, and excursions that are part of the normal



program itinerary. During the ISP period, students will receive a stipend for basic room and board only, based on the cost of living at the program base. **Any domestic travel, interpretation services, or supplies necessary for the ISP are the students' responsibility.** Please plan accordingly.

The local currency in Nepal is the Nepali Rupee. Nepal is generally inexpensive, although inflation rates are rising steadily. ATMs are readily available in Kathmandu and in most large towns throughout the country and can be generally relied upon to withdraw Nepali rupees (up to 25,000 rupees at a time).

Although possible, it can be expensive to transfer or wire funds to Nepal. It is also possible to get cash advances, in rupees, against a MasterCard or Visa,

but only in limited amounts. Credit/ATM card usage for purchases is not common and only in larger shops.

Please consider what balance of cash and credit/debit cards you will need. There is a safe in the program center to securely store your excess cash and cards.

Check current exchange rates:

<http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

If using a debit and/or credit card, you should contact your bank and/or credit card companies regarding your travel plans. If you don't inform these companies that you will be away, they will often assume the card has been lost or stolen and will put an immediate hold on the card. You should also check on costs of withdrawal, as these costs vary and can sometimes be very expensive. Renewing and receiving reissued credit and debit cards while on the program will be an expensive and highly inconvenient process. Before you leave for your program, please check the expiration dates on your cards to ensure that they will not expire while you are abroad. It is also very important that you make photocopies of all your debit/credit card information and leave them with someone you trust in case your card(s) is/are lost or stolen.

Following are suggestions for spending money during the program, including estimates for textbooks, ISP-related expenses, medical expenses, personal spending, and gifts. Figures are based on recent student evaluations, though individual spending habits vary widely and **these costs are averages**.

A suggested total amount of money to budget ranges from **US\$1,000 to \$1,600**. To determine where you might fall in this range, please examine your spending habits during a typical semester at your home school and consider any exceptional expenditures you may have on the program, including travel costs for your planned ISP or a specific personal expense.

Please budget approximately:

<b>Personal spending (from past student suggestions):</b>	600 USD
<b>Books, printing, supplies:</b>	100 USD
<b>Up-front medical costs:</b>	300 USD
<b>COVID-19 Test(s)</b> (may be required for entry; subject to change and costs may vary)	100–250 USD
<b>Potential ISP travel expenses:</b>	250 USD
<b>Visa and permits:</b>	425USD
<b>Estimated total:</b>	1600 USD

## VISITORS AND FREE TIME

**SIT strongly discourages and will not provide support for any visitors to students during the term**, due to the rigorous nature of the program and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that relatives and friends are aware of this policy and that visits are scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. See the Attendance and Participation section of the [Student Handbook](#).

Please note that any visitors during the course of the program must plan their own independent accommodations; SIT Study Abroad homestay families can accommodate only their assigned student and, due to cultural and contractual understandings with SIT, should not be asked to host students' guests.

During the program, students follow an intense schedule of classes and field-based learning assignments, even during the ISP. Free time for pursuing an independent interest or hobby during the program will be limited. Your admissions counselor can advise you about particular interests you may have. For example, if you must keep in shape for your next athletic season, or if you play a musical instrument and want to know whether to bring it, we can help you to understand your schedule and any concerns or limitations that may



exist. Please note that you will not have a long break during the program, such as Thanksgiving or Spring Break.

SIT Nepal closely monitors the security situation in the country. Students should be prepared to have limited areas in which they can conduct their ISPs based on security considerations and ability to support students in remote areas. , Apart from program schedule, if a student wishes to travel

independently, they must submit a waiver form request that will be reviewed by the Academic Director and/or the Student Affairs coordinator. . SIT reserves the right to deny independent travel requests. Further details regarding the current independent travel protocols can be found here: <https://studyabroad.sit.edu/health-safety-and-well-being/risk-management/covid-19-risk-management-protocols/>



# PACKING GUIDELINES

## LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage to significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad. During the rural excursion, we will be walking in the mountains, while it can be strenuous with lots of uphill and downhill hiking, it is more a social and cultural experience of walking from village to village where we stay in tea houses. So, while you will not need technical or camping gear (though sleeping bags are nice) be prepared to carry your backpacks and pack accordingly.

Students report that a medium sized backpack (about 40 liters) is useful for most travel in-country, but if you do not have a backpack already, it is not necessary to go out and buy one just for this program; adequate locally made backpacks are available for sale and for rent.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the “General Health Tips” section in the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) pre-departure document.)

Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (<http://www.tsa.gov>) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions.



## CLOTHING GUIDELINES

Nepali have high standards for how they dress and will expect the same from you. As you will be living with communities in both urban and rural Nepal, it is important to dress nicely and present yourself as neat and well-groomed at all times. Your favorite torn and worn clothes should stay at home! T-shirts are generally for wearing around the house and for daily use. If you do bring T-shirts, make sure they are newer ones that are clean and appropriate. In general, clothing is fairly conservative in Nepal, typified by covered legs and shoulders. Also, remember to bring at least one “nice” outfit for important appointments, homestay family events, and presentations. Shorts too are generally for inside the house and these should be modest length – if you run for exercise, this is fine, just make sure your shorts are not too short. In any formal activities like program lecture, visit to NGOs, language class and any other day excursions, students are required to wear formal dress, as appropriate in the Nepali culture

Climatically, keep in mind that fall semester starts off as fairly hot and gets colder over time and spring semester is the opposite – starting off cold and getting warmer as the semester progresses.

Clothing is inexpensive in Nepal and you are encouraged to wear local styles. It is best to pack planning to purchase some things here. Your Kathmandu families will not mind if you wear Western styles, including pants. In fact, most of them will be sporting fashions that you are used to seeing in the U.S.

**Women:** Many women find local dress (like *kurta surwals*) to be very comfortable and have some made for use throughout the semester. In Kathmandu, young women wear pants, including jeans, but make sure yours are clean and well-tailored. You may have little privacy during your time in Nepal, especially while in your homestays, so bring something conservative to sleep in as well; a t-shirt and long pajama bottoms would be fine.

Rural Nepal is a different story. For women, long skirts or locally made garments really are the best and easiest things to wear, even while trekking. Trekking pants are also fine on the trail. You may feel more comfortable in the local styles, and you might find that many Nepali people will notice and appreciate your style of dress. Shorts and tank tops are culturally inappropriate, though generally acceptable if they are modest, and you are engaging in sports activities.

**Men:** Clothing should be neat and kept clean. Again, local clothes are inexpensive and comfortable. Jeans and khakis should not be ragged, faded or patched. Shorts are not for regular wear except around the house and for sports activities. Remember, much emphasis is put on appearance.

**Shoes:** It is very important to have a comfortable pair of boots or walking shoes with decent ankle support. Lightweight boots and walking sneakers are perfectly fine – it is not necessary and not recommended to have heavy-duty (e.g. high altitude mountaineering) boots. Make sure the shoes fit and are suitable for cold and rain. Same as with clothing, don't bring ragged, beat up, shoes and make sure that they are comfortable as there is lots of walking in Nepal. If you have big feet, do not expect to be able to find shoes to fit you in the local market, so please plan accordingly.

## EQUIPMENT

During the program, including excursions, little equipment is needed. Other than shoes that fit and have good ankle support, most any equipment you might need is locally available.

In the past, students have been happy to have their own backpacks and sleeping bags (rating from 0 to 30 degrees F) and have felt a bit foolish bringing other camping gear, especially because they have to carry it all. If you have any water purifier (equipment or tablets) please bring it with you and use it whenever you are not sure if the water is safe. Treated water is available at our Program Center in Kathmandu and in homestays.

You can actually get away without much else besides your clothes and toiletries. The rule of thumb is: if you don't already own it, don't go out and buy it just for the program as most gear is available locally.

## COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

You are required to bring a laptop computer. If you bring a laptop, it is your personal property and responsibility. Before leaving home, remember to back up your computer to the cloud or on a hard drive that you leave at home to safeguard all your data in case your computer is lost or stolen. It is also recommended that you insure your computer, smart phone, and other valuables for full coverage in the event of loss or theft. SIT is not responsible for theft, loss, or any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country.

The program provides Internet access and has two computers for student use. You will also be able to find access to the Internet/e-mail through shops/cafes in Kathmandu. Printing is not available at the program center so, for printing papers, we recommend a flash drive to take to printing place.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage and electrical adapters. <http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/>. If you plan to bring electrical equipment, check first to see if it will work on 220v. It is recommended that you bring a traveling adapter.

Many laptops and other electrical equipment work on 220v but check what it says on your gear. If you need a power converter, these are available locally. Plug converters are readily available in the local market, so you won't need to bring any with you. Be aware that Macintosh laptops have had some power issues in the past, and in general they are more expensive to get fixed.

A digital recorder can be invaluable for fieldwork, recording interviews, music, street sounds, etc. If you have a phone with a built-in recorder, you can use that during your fieldwork.



## GIFTS

As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with a gift to offer your homestay family in gratitude for their hospitality and as a means to share a part of your culture with them. We suggest one or two gifts that the whole family can enjoy. You may also wish to consider gifts for people outside your homestay family. Try to choose gifts that represent you or the part of the country and/or community you live in. Think about what your city, state, or local artisans produce. Draw upon your personal interests or hobbies for ideas. Pack a couple of small gifts for children, such as small games, bubbles, or a Frisbee. Even if your homestay family does not have small children, chances are that you will engage with children in your homestay community. Once you are on the program and learn more about the local culture, you will discover other ways to thank your family. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

Be prepared to bring and share pictures of your family, friends, neighborhood, etc., as these are invaluable in breaking the ice when meeting your homestay families. When selecting photographs, you should remain aware of the Nepali attitudes regarding dress and displays of affection between men and women. Nepali will generally dress in their finest outfits when having their pictures taken. It may be taken as a sign of disrespect rather than informality to appear disheveled or untidily dressed. In addition, pictures of boyfriends and girlfriends should be tasteful and somewhat conservative.

## WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT OBTAIN IN COUNTRY

Most consumer goods are now available in Kathmandu, though maybe not exactly what you are looking for. Imported products carry a price tag comparable to the U.S. and offer a very limited choice in brand names or varieties. Items from Nepal and other Asian countries are less expensive alternatives. Therefore, although the quality may sometimes be questionable, you should be able to find some form of almost all goods.

All of the things listed on the packing guidelines above are available in Kathmandu, though they may not be exactly the kind you want, they may cost more than in the U.S., and you may spend time searching them out locally. If you are very particular about the type and quality of your notebooks and other school supplies, then plan to bring them with you.

Past female students have reported dissatisfaction with locally available feminine hygiene products, so if you are partial to a particular brand, it is advised you bring a supply with you.

## ALUMNI CONTACTS

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor and/or ask an alumni contact: <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/admitted-students/contact-a-former-student/>.

**Don't miss the Packing List on the next page!**



# PACKING LIST

## GENERAL

- One week's worth of shirt tops
- 1 sweater or fleece
- 3-4 pairs of socks, including heavy wool and sock liners
- Underwear/Undergarments (1 week's supply)
- Bandana or scarf
- Lightweight hiking boots or sturdy sneakers with good, ankle support
- Rain jacket, poncho and/or windbreaker
- Warm jacket, packable
- Long underwear (1 set, not cotton; polypropylene is a good option)
- Wool or fleece hat
- Neck warmer
- Sun hat, sunscreen and sun glasses

## WOMEN

- 1-2 long, full skirts
- Shirts with high necklines
- 2-3 pair of neat, light pants for Kathmandu (depending on the number of skirts you bring)
- Leggings to wear under skirts in cold weather or under shorts for doing sports
- Modest sleep wear

## MEN

- 2-3 pair neat, comfortable pants
- 2-3 button shirts
- 2-3 long-sleeved shirts

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- Yellow WHO Card/International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (see the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document for more information)
- Two photocopies of your passport, stored separately from your actual passport
- Proof of COVID-19 Vaccination and/or booster encouraged
- Photocopy of visa (*if applicable*)

## HEALTH/TOILETRIES

- An adequate supply of any **prescription** medication you are already taking and a copy of the prescription

- A list of any medications you are currently taking with the generic name of each (if there is one)
- Extra pair of eyeglasses or contacts and plenty of cleaning solution, if used.
- Iodine or chlorine-based water purifier for purifying drinking water – can be purchased locally if needed
- Bottle water purifiers- Students in the past have recommended LifeStraw Go or Water to Go bottles. This is useful during the trek or ISP in the remote villages.
- Feminine hygiene products if you are particular to a specific brand
- A list of generic medicines that you are allergic to.

**To avoid pollution and other air-borne contagious diseases, we recommend that you use facemasks. If your doctor has prescribed you any specific facemask, get it for yourself otherwise face masks are locally available.**

## OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS

- Laptop
- Visa or MasterCard credit card for emergencies
- Debit/ATM Card
- Combination padlock (for storing your belongings at the program center) & mini combo locks (for daypack and backpack)
- Homestay gifts, small tokens from your home
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## GEAR

- Sleeping bag (10 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit); can be purchased/rented locally if needed
- Backpack – not too big or fancy; can be purchased/rented locally if needed
- Water bottles (2 one-liter unbreakable bottles)
- 

## OPTIONAL

- Ace bandage
- Moleskin
- Dental floss
- Sunscreen and sunglasses
- Digital voice recorder and batteries
- Camera