



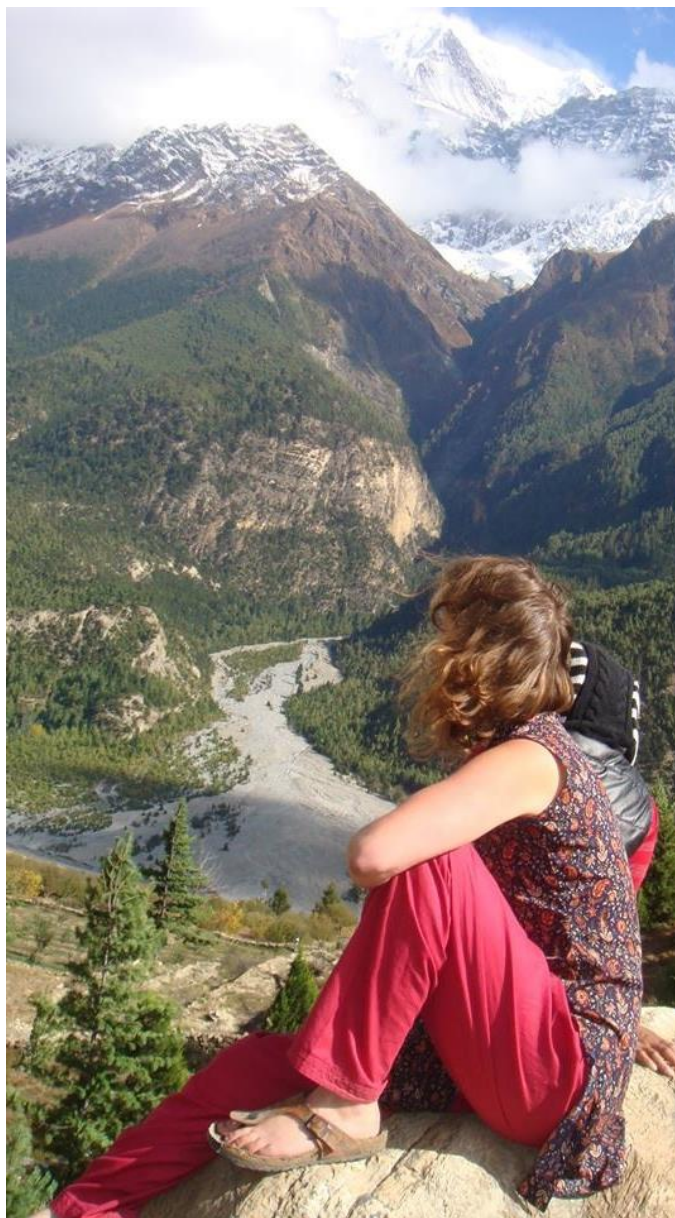
COUNTRY OVERVIEW

& PACKING GUIDELINES

**Nepal: Development, Gender, and Social Change in
the Himalaya**
Spring 2020

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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. 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 new 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.



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

[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

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 heat 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 *dhal 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.

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. 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 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.



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.



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

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

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. **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 major 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 mini-buses). 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 bikes 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 and on foot. You should be prepared to walk a lot. Sometimes

this is walking in areas of high altitude, and while you do not need to be an Olympic athlete, you should be in good physical shape as what are considered hills in Nepal are mountains most anywhere else. Porters are increasingly difficult to hire for shorter treks, so be prepared to carry your own belongings.

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. Many students recommend making an appointment to call home or to receive a call. 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 throughout the duration of the program. We can provide you with phone, but keep in mind that these will be "dumb phones" that students can use for calls and text only. Students who prefer using smart phones, are required to bring them on their own (confirm they have an unlocked phone thus enabling you to insert a local SIM card into your U.S. phone upon arrival). You will be given a SIM card with a local number, and your local SIT Study Abroad staff will assist you during orientation ways to recharge your SIM card. You will also be informed about required minimum minutes for calls and texting. SIT Study Abroad requires that each student has a local number for communication with the homestay family, program staff, etc. Students are required to keep their phone charged and on at all times.

While we recognize that alternative communication methods can be free or cheaper than cell service i.e. facetime, skype, WhatsApp, etc. those do not satisfy our need for regular communication with the local program staff and partners nor do they meet our emergency communication needs. Therefore, local cellular capacity on each student's phone is required for the duration of the program. Full compliance with this policy is expected. Students are responsible for maintaining a minimum amount of credit, keeping their phones charged and on their person at all times.

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. Homestays may not have internet access. Most neighborhoods have businesses such as cafes or restaurants that provide fee wifi as well. *(Include information about internet access on the program.*

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, and UPS 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 (+9771-4417012) 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 is difficult and 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 card usage for purchases is rare and only in larger shops, keep in mind that debit/ATM cards will usually not work for purchases the same as a credit card would, so we recommend both.

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 \$1,500**. 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:

Personal spending (from past student suggestions):	400 USD
Books, printing, supplies:	100 USD
Up-front medical costs:	200 USD
Potential ISP travel expenses:	250 USD
Visa and permits:	410USD
Typical Internet café usage:	x USD
Estimated total:	1360 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.

Opportunity for independent travel during the program is limited and cannot be guaranteed due to the rigorous schedule and disruption independent travel may cause to semester responsibilities. Requests to travel independently will be considered on a case by case basis by the academic director. Further details regarding the independent travel policy can be found in the [Student Handbook](#).



PACKING GUIDELINES

LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage 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. While we will be trekking on this program, keep in mind that this isn't like hiking in the states where you must carry food, cooking utensils and the like: while trekking 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

Nepalese 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 orn and worn clothes should stay at home! T-shirts are generally for wearing around the house, not for school functions. 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 "dressy" outfit for important appointments, homestay family events, presentations, or evenings out. 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.

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 salwars*) 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 Nepalese 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 associated with manual labor in Nepal and 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 and treks, 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. Water purification equipment is not essential to bring with you, as treated water is available at our Program Center in Kathmandu and on excursion.

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

It is highly recommended that you 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 during business hours 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 internet cafes.

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.

A digital recorder can be invaluable for fieldwork, recording interviews, music, street sounds, etc. These are increasingly hard to find in Kathmandu, so if you think you may use a recorder, it is best to bring one with you, especially as prices are much lower in the states.



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.

Bring a small pocket-sized album with photos of your family, home, neighborhood, school, holidays, etc., as these are invaluable in breaking the ice when meeting your homestay families. When selecting photographs, you should remain aware of the Nepalese attitudes regarding dress and displays of affection between men and women. Nepalese 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!

These packing guidelines are based on suggestions from past students and your academic director.



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 (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

WOMEN

- 1-2 long, full skirts
- Shirts with somewhat conservative 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 (see the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document for more information)
- Two photocopies of your passport, stored separately from your actual passport
- 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 pills (or dropper bottle for iodine solution for purifying drinking water – can be purchased locally if needed)
- Feminine hygiene products if you are particular to a specific brand

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
- Photos of friends/family from home to share with homestay family

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)
- Small travel alarm clock

OPTIONAL

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



Remember to place all valuable items and any prescriptions in your carry-on luggage while traveling and all sharp items in your checked luggage.