

## Packing List for Your Service Trip

### ***What Do You Value?***

For a period of 10 days to four weeks, what do you really need? We remind our group to keep the most important things close to them and to work their way out from there – but not too far out!

Believe it or not, you do not need to take all of the luggage that the airline will allow. We go with the clothes on our back, a personal item and a carry-on bag. (Wisdom says: DO NOT OVERPACK)

In the past, I saw our team members arrive at the airport with a backpack, a carry-on and two large suitcases that could be used as a life raft in case of emergency!

*What does that say to those we are traveling to meet when we take more for two weeks than they own as a family? More importantly, does it reflect the instructions of Jesus to not be anxious about food, drink and clothing? Does it say that we are dependent upon God or upon the store near our home?*

But what about ministry supplies? It is only in the rarest of places and ministries – like a disaster relief project – that we might need to carry in items not available.

While your local big box store might have super sales, many places where you are going will have the same things: pencils, paper or crayons, for example. *What if we purchased from local merchants and viewed those as opportunities to minister? What if we purchased deworming medicines or vitamins from local stores?*

This list is most appropriate for heading to Latin America, but you can always and should always modify it to fit your context: Keep the most important things closest to your person.

## Your Packing Essentials

### **Shirt Pocket(s)**

- Passport
- Wallet with driver's license, a credit or debit card, insurance card and crisp, fresh \$20 bills)
- Cell phone (camera)
- AirPods

### **Pant pockets**

- Small bills for buying snacks on the plane or airport
- Phone charger
- Color copy of passport
- Scriptures or tracts in the language of where you are going (some of the most important people in that country are likely on the plane with you, so start planting the seed of God's word)

### **Cargo Pockets**

- Prescription medicines and/or allergy medicines
- Pepto-Bismol tablets, favorite headache remedy
- Hand sanitizer

- Wisp (disposable pre-pasted toothbrushes)
- 2 pairs of socks
- 2 pairs of underwear (I recognize that we are *really* at the practical level, but if your luggage gets lost, do you really want to go underwear shopping in country in which you do not speak the language well?)

**Personal Items** (purse or small backpack or computer case)

- Remember that anything in your carry-on must meet [TSA regulations](#) and liquids are limited to 3.4 ounces. Believe it or not, many countries have shampoo and toothpaste
- We *suggest* a small bag that you can carry to the bathroom
- At least one day's change of clothes (you should not open your pilot case until we get to the final destination)
- Sunglasses and eye glasses
- Local language phrasebook
- Paperback Bible
- Shower shoes (flip-flops)
- Feminine product/supplies as needed
- Power converter
- Earplugs
- Deodorant
- Shampoo/bodywash/facewash/lotion/moisturizer (travel size)

**Pilot Case** (a small case that is typical carry-on luggage – this may end up getting checked, but it will be great if it isn't)

- 2 travel sheets (sleeping bag liner) and a pillow case
- 2 Quick dry washcloths and towels
- Shorts and T-shirts (or pajamas) for sleeping, etc.
- Sunscreen
- Bug repellent (natural and DEET formulas)
- Appropriate clothing for your activities. Clothes need to be neat and modest. Jeans, shirts with sleeves, socks, etc. Men should reserve a nicer shirt and pants for church. Ladies, at least one dress or skirt and blouse to wear to church and church services in the evenings. Avoid tight or revealing clothes.
- A hat
- Portable rain jacket
- Enough socks and underwear for the length of your trip
- A water bottle that can be refilled with clean water
- Handbook/Devotional to reflect and record what your experience
- Ziploc bags (large for packing dirty clothes, small for packing out used toilet tissue)
- Shoes for work and for church

It is hard to put on a list, but be sure to take with you the love of God, the mind of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, you will return with pictures of a really difficult vacation, rather than an experience of being on mission with God!

\*this list was adapted from <https://www.gcu.edu/blog/theology-ministry/theological-packing-list-short-term-mission-trips>