

Panama Packing List

THINGS TO KNOW

Before you begin planning what to pack for the course, it is important to note that you will need to **dress conservatively**. It is better to be deliberately conservative in your appearance than to risk offending our hosts or anyone in the communities we visit.

Everyone has their preferred style of packing for travel, so please use this list as a helpful guide and be mindful of your own needs. Other than a few items, we do not recommend a certain number of items as this is left up to each family.

It is very important that you try to fit all of your belongings into one backpack/duffle and a daypack that you are comfortable carrying on your own. Your backpack/duffle cannot exceed 50 lbs. Here is a helpful article [on how to pack light](#).

Note: There is laundry service available for \$6 per load of laundry. Keep in mind that if it is rainy it will take the clothes a long time to dry, so it is best to pack as if you will not be able to do laundry.

DOCUMENTS & ESSENTIALS

- Passport** Your passport needs to be valid for six months after the day of arrival and have at least two blank pages. Also, bring a copy of your passport.
- Health Insurance Card** Copy of front and back
- Prescription Medications** Carry medications in their original containers, clearly labeled, and make sure you have enough for the entire trip. Bring medications in your carry-on, so you will still have access to them if your luggage is delayed or lost. Consult with a travel doctor for recommendations and a prescription. Ask the physician about the possibility of obtaining prescription drugs commonly used by travelers such as Cipro and Z-packs

GEAR

- Backpack/Duffel Bag** 4- 5,000 cubic inches (65-80 liters). Bring all your clothes in just one backpack or duffle, with a few essentials in a daypack.
- Day Pack** Small, light, nylon bag with shoulder straps. This is what you'll take with you as a carry-on and on excursions. It should be big enough to hold a water bottle, headlamp or flashlight, some food, a raincoat, and a book or journal.

FOOTWEAR

- Sturdy Shoes** Bring a good pair of solid, tough, durable, closed-toed shoes for working and walking on muddy roads. These can be tennis shoes, but they should be sturdy.
- Mud Shoes** A second pair of shoes to wear when it is muddy.
- Sport Sandals** Waterproof sandals (i.e., Tevas or Chaco-style)
- Flip Flops**- These are nice to have for shower shoes

CLOTHING

- Raincoat** Waterproof material is required. Best if lightweight and breathable.
- Hat/Bandanas** Can be nice for sun protection.
- Socks** Thin synthetic socks can dry more quickly.
- Underwear** Cotton is fine, but synthetic quick-drying underwear is best.
- Bras/Sports Bras**- Bring a few sports bras and one or two normal bras.
- T-Shirts 5-7**: *Do not bring revealing shirts.* Quick-drying material is best. *May get dirty.*
- Long Sleeve Shirt 1**: Light and loose-fitting button-up shirts are great
- Long Pants 1-2** pairs: Suitable for work and play that will dry quickly. Avoid denim.
- Shorts 3-5** pairs. Something lightweight & quick drying. Please be conservative. *May get dirty.*
- Casual Outfit** You may want something a bit nicer for school or community functions.
- Swimsuit** Please be conservative when selecting a suit to bring.
- Pajamas** Bring something comfortable but culturally appropriate to sleep in.
- Synthetic Camping Towel** Synthetic camping towels dry faster than regular towels.

PERSONAL ITEMS

- Water bottles 2**- Each should hold one liter.
- Sunglasses**
- Toiletries** Bring a supply of everything you need for grooming and taking care of yourself (hairbrush, toothbrush, toothpaste, personal hygiene, etc.)
- Headlamp/Flashlight** Preferably rechargeable otherwise, bring a few extra batteries.
- Sunscreen** - SPF 30+ (water/sweat proof)
- Kleenex** A few packets.
- Glasses/Contacts** Bring enough contact solution for the entire program
- Alarm Clock/Watch** Small travel clock or a watch with an alarm.
- Insect Repellent**
- Lip Balm** SPF 15 or higher.

OPTIONAL

- Card/Travel Games**
- Good Books**
- Hand Sanitizing Gel/Wetwipes**
- Ziplock Bags** Having a few small and large sizes can be handy to keep things dry.
- Spanish-English Dictionary** Useful to assist in communication.
- Duct Tape** Wrap some around your water bottle and pull it off as you need it.
- Energy Bars** Recommended for picky eaters or those accustomed to especially high-calorie diets. These will not be used to replace meals, however.
- Emergen-C** Water-soluble vitamin and electrolyte packets that dissolve into water. These are great for combating dehydration
- Over the Counter Medications** Field staff carry an extensive medical kit. Most students bring a supply of whatever they use at home along with some cough drops, Pepto-Bismol tablets, and whatever they need for motion sickness, headaches, or menstrual cramps.
- Gold Bond/Medicated Powder** Helps avoid/treat heat rash in humid environments
- Dramamine** Bring some Dramamine if you tend to get motion sickness.
- Camera** We may not always have access to electricity, so you may want to pack an extra battery. For people using digital cameras, bring a few memory cards.
- Luggage Padlock** A way to lock/secure your bags.

SPENDING MONEY

Although your tuition covers the course costs, it is still a good idea to bring some extra cash. You will need it for baggage fees, souvenirs, gifts, and snacks.

- ATM CARD/CREDIT CARD** You can bring one, but keep in mind many small shops don't accept credit cards.
- CASH** Please do not bring more than \$150 in cash. Most places in Bocas are CASH ONLY. Small bills (\$1, \$5, \$10) are best.

DONATIONS

If you would like to bring donations, the following items have been requested by Give& Surf.

For children ages 4-12:

- Puzzles
- Costumes/Dress Up
- Coloring Books
- Markers & Colored Pencils
- Books in Spanish (or bilingual)
- Arts & Crafts supplies (pipe cleaners, googly eyes, sequins, tissue paper, etc.)
- Beads
- String/Lanyard (for friendship bracelets, etc.)
- Stickers
- Board games
- Race cars
- Legos
- Flashcards
- Science experiments & materials
- Chalk
- Sports Equipment
- Basic medical supplies (bandaids, Neosporin, antiseptic wipes)