

Kenya Important Information



12th Annual
East African Snakebite Conference

18-20 September, 2023
Watamu, Kenya
(in Person & Virtual)

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Need To Know



Climate

Situated on the equator, Kenya has a year-round tropical climate, hotter from December to March (with highs around 35°C), dropping by 10°C from June to September. There are two rainy seasons – the long rains from March to May and short rains in November and December. It is generally dry in the north and Kenya's coast is hot and humid throughout the year with less seasonal variation.



Time

GMT +3

Health

All visitors should visit their health practitioner prior to travel to ensure they are fully up to date with recommended vaccinations. Malaria prophylactics are recommended in certain areas, as is a yellow fever inoculation if arriving from an 'at risk' country.

Please also check with your own government's latest travel advisories regarding Covid restrictions to Kenya or chat to our team.

Visas

Almost all nationalities require a visa for Kenya. Kenyan entry visas are exclusively issued electronically, and tourists are required to obtain their e-visas before departure. You can apply for single entry and transit visas on [Kenya's e-visas website](#).

Before you travel, please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after your intended departure and that you have sufficient blank visa pages in your passport, with at least two consecutive blank pages, and more if you are visiting multiple countries on your trip.

Travel insurance

It is vital that you have a comprehensive travel insurance policy. Please ensure that your insurance covers you for medical evacuation and repatriation, both internationally and locally.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your policy covers you for all aspects of your trip and any activities including cancellation and curtailment of your holiday. We would also advise that your policy also covers loss and theft of your possessions.

Remember to carry your insurance details with you at all times.



Currency

The Kenyan Shilling is the local currency, however US dollars are used by visitors on safari. Generally, all your lodgings, transfers, food and drink will be paid for, but bringing some (new, undamaged) US dollars for tips and incidental expenses is a good idea. ATMs are available if you need extra currency and some in Nairobi dispense USD.

Credit cards

Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted in some camps and lodges and in most larger hotels and shops. However, additional charges are sometimes levied.

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory in Kenya but it is highly appreciated. If you want to tip because you have received good service we suggest the following as a guide:

For specialist guides around \$10-15 per guest per day. For general safari camp or lodge staff around \$10 per guest per day – this is usually placed in a communal tipping box at the end of your stay to be distributed equally amongst all the staff.

For hotel staff around \$5 per guest per day and for portorage we suggest about \$1 per bag.

For transfer drivers, we suggest \$2 per person, or up to \$10-20 for half to full-day drives.

In restaurants, a 10% tip is customary, but only if you are satisfied with the service.

Language

Both Swahili and English are official languages in Kenya. Tribal languages, such as Maa spoken by the Maasai, are commonplace in more remote areas.

You can get by with English in the larger cities and when dealing with those connected to the tourism industry. Outside of that, a few words of Swahili go a long way and be very much appreciated. A few handy Swahili phrases are included in the back of this guide.

Electricity

Voltage in Kenya is 240 volts, and plugs are generally the square 3-pin UK type G style. In some safari lodges and tented camps power is only available in the early morning and evening, and some more basic set ups do not have power points in the rooms but there will often be a communal charging point.



What To Pack

Light layers are recommended. Nights and early morning game drives can be cold, while the day quickly heats up and rain showers are always a possibility. Man-made fabrics such as MaraTech and BUGTech are good as are natural fabrics like cotton or linen.

Clothing

- Light breathable shirts. Long sleeve shirts and t-shirts Lightweight jumper or fleece
- Light rain jacket
- A light and compact down jacket for cooler months
- Long trousers/slacks
- Shorts and/or skirts
- Underwear
- Hiking/comfortable socks
- Swimming costume
- Long-sleeve and full-leg pyjamas
- A smart-casual outfit for the evenings (if you like to dress for dinner)

Footwear

- Comfortable footwear is essential. We recommend trainers, sandals with a thick heel and flipflops
- For long walks sturdier footwear is required, as such closed walking shoes or hiking boots.

Accessories

- A hat that can be packed flat like a baseball cap or sun hat
- Sunglasses (UV protected and preferably polarized)
- A light, neutral scarf

Documents

- Passport
- Flight tickets
- The required visa(s) for the country or countries you are visiting
- Any required health or vaccination documents
- Foreign currency and credit cards
- Travel insurance
- Emergency contact details
- Additional form of ID (in case of passport loss)

Other bits

- Camera equipment including spare batteries, chargers, memory cards and a cleaning kit for lenses
- Good LED Torch (consider spare batteries)
- The correct plug adapter for the country you are travelling to
- Sunscreen
- Toiletries



Useful Swahili phrases

Swahili is a very consistent language, with basically one sound for each letter. The consonants sound the same as English, but q and x are not used, and c is only used in combination with h/ch. Say it as you read it and you will be fairly close to the actual pronunciation.

Hello, good day, how are you?	Jambo	1	Moja
How are things? (literally "news?")	Habari?	2	Mbili
Come in, enter, welcome	Karibu	3	Tatu
Goodbye to one/many	Kwaheri/ ni	4	Nne
Thank you to one/many	Asante/ ni	5	Tano
What's your name? / What are you called?	Jina lako nani? Jina langu ni	6	Sita
My name is/I am called	Unatoka wapi?	7	Saba
Where are you from?	Ninatoka	8	Nane
I am from	Hakuna matata	9	Tisa
No problem	Samahani	10	Kumi
Sorry, pardon	Sana (a common emphasis)	11	Kuma na moja
Very	Ndiyo (Literally "it is so")	12	Kuma na mbili
Yes	Hapana	20	Ishirini
No	-zuri (with prefix at the front)	21	Ishirini na moja
Good	-baya (ditto)	30	Thelathini
Bad	-kubwa	40	Arobaini
Big	-dogo	50	Hamsini
Small	Sifahamu/Sielewi	100	Mia moja
I don't understand	Unasemaje na Kiswahili	1000	Elfu



TAYLOR ASHE

ANTIVENOM FOUNDATION
