



Kilimanjaro – Info & Packing List

FITNESS AND TRAINING: Climbing Kilimanjaro is a physical challenge requiring proper preparation. If not doing so already, start a training program to improve muscle strength and heart and lung function and slowly build up to a more strenuous level. Include aerobic exercise that increases the heart rate for a minimum of 45-60 minutes four times per week. Strengthen leg muscles used for trekking by running, skiing, bicycling, rollerblading, hiking, stair-climbing or working on equivalent machines in a gym. You should be able to walk several miles/kilometers for several consecutive days with a light backpack (10-15 lbs / 5-8 kgs). If you intend to use hiking poles, practice using them on both ascents and descents. Consult your physician if your body is not responding well to exercise or if you have questions concerning your underlying health.

WEATHER: Weather conditions on the mountain vary through the year, through the days of a climb, and even through each individual day. Mountain weather is highly unpredictable and can change almost instantaneously. Days can be sunny and pleasant, but it often clouds over and gets cold in the afternoons. Rain and snow can occur at any time of day and any time of year. The final stages of the ascent will be extremely cold, especially if there is wind.

General patterns: January, February, and March are the warmest months and the sky is generally clear each morning and evening. Late March to mid-June is Tanzania's main rainy season; temperatures will be warm but clouds drop snow on the summit and rain on the lower slopes. The long dry season starts in June and cooler temperatures and clearer skies prevail through August. It grows warmer through September and October and the days remain clear, though mist may girdle the middle of the mountain. In November and December, Tanzania's short rainy season, it can be wet in the rainforest; however, clouds often disperse in the evening, allowing for excellent visibility in the night and morning.

Mountain zones: Ascending through the different mountain zones, average temperature and rainfall decrease. On the lower slopes expect warm temperatures, with highs from 60-70° F (15-20° C). Nights are considerably cooler and will be below freezing above 12,000ft (3600m). Above 15,000ft (4500m) day time high temperatures may be only a few degrees above freezing, while at night the wind chill may make it feel as low as 0° F (-18° C). Permanent ice and snow, sub-freezing temperatures, and wind are found on the summit (however, neither crampons, ice picks, nor ropes are needed).

PACKING LIST: Be prepared with clothing for all weather conditions. Dress in layers. Polypropylene is an effective lightweight under layer and works better than either wool or cotton. Layering yourself in polypropylene, pile, down, and a rainproof shell is best. Clean clothes keep you warmer than dirty clothes as dirt and oil work to conduct heat away from the body. Each climber's duffel bag, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad are placed into a large water-repellent canvas duffel bag provided by SENE and carried by the mountain crew. *If your duffel bag is not waterproof you may want to use plastic garbage bags for extra rain protection.*

Your gear should not exceed 44 lbs / 20 kgs in weight.

Clothing and Equipment.

- Duffel bag (60 – 90 cu. liters) to hold your personal gear (excluding your sleeping bag and pad). Waterproof. Roller duffels are not acceptable; internal frame backpacks are.
- Sleeping bag rated to 0°F (-18°C). To protect from rain line your stuff sack with a plastic garbage bag.
- Sleeping bag liner (for extra warmth and comfort).
- Sleeping pad.
- Hiking day pack (15-20 cu. liters) that you will carry with the items you want during the climbing day (extra clothing layer, rain gear, water bottles, snacks, camera, first aid, etc.). Your day pack should hang from both shoulders and have a waist belt.
- Hiking boots - medium weight, waterproof, warm, comfortable, and broken in.
- Outer shell jacket – made of water-repellant and breathable fabric (such as Gore-Tex®).

- Pile or down jacket, or 2 layers of medium weight polypropylene.
- Rain/wind pants with leg zippers for easy on/off.
- 2-3 Hiking pants or Fleece/Pile pants.
- 2-3 Polypropylene tops and bottoms - medium weight.
- 2-3 T-shirts.
- 1 Pair sturdy hiking shorts (for days 1-2).
- Wool hat/balaclava.
- Shade hat.
- Sunglasses that block UV rays.
- Wool or Gore-Tex mittens or gloves.
- Glove liners - lightweight material such as silk or Capilene®.
- 6-9 Pairs socks, including thick wool socks for higher elevations (a clean pair for each day).
- Light walking shoes or sneakers (for lower elevations and evenings).
- Gaiters (for extra warmth, and to prevent snow, stones, and dirt from entering your boots).
- 2 Bandanas.
- Small towel and washcloth – quick-drying (for sponge baths on the climb).
- Headlamp with extra batteries and light bulb.
- 2-3 One liter wide-mouth reusable water bottles.
- Trekking poles.

Energy Snacks & Sports Drinks.

- Energy and snack foods that you will eat even when not hungry (altitude causes a loss of appetite): trail mix, hard candy, jerky, energy gels, chocolate, or bars of any sort.
- Powdered sports drink mixes (such as Gatorade, Acli-mate, or PowerAde). Enough for 6-12 liters.

Personal First Aid Supplies. Consult with your physician as necessary.

- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher).
- Lip balm with sunscreen.
- Hand wipes or hand sanitizer.
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or *Tylenol*. Ibuprofen is also an anti-inflammatory.
- Moleskin, Second Skin blister pads, or Bodyglide lubricant to prevent blisters.
- Moisturizing cream.
- Band Aids.
- Topical antibiotic.
- Ace bandage or elastic supports for weak knees, ankles, or sore joints.
- Antibiotic, such as Cipro.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets for stomach problems.
- Feminine protection.
- Contact lens wearers also bring a pair of glasses for back-up.
- *Diamox* - effective against the symptoms of altitude sickness.

Optional Items.

- Thin rope and clothes pins or safety pins for hanging clothes.
- Money belt/neck pouch.
- Small mirror.
- Neck gaiter (scarf).
- Urine bottle (for use at night in your tent). Women may also wish to consider using a feminine urination device such as Freshette or GoGirl. Practice at home first!
- Reading material (paperbacks only).
- Journal, pens, writing paper.
- Deck of cards or other travel game.

STORAGE: We safely and securely store in our SENE office any clothing, money, passports*, electronics, and other items not needed on the mountain. They are returned to you at the completion of your climb.

*Keep with you a photocopy of your passport identification page for check-in at the park entrance gate.