





EYES4EVEREST



# Logistics

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# Logistics

## Exercise

A good fitness level will contribute to your enjoyment of the trip. Walking, jogging and running several times a week will prepare your leg muscles for the trek especially on uphill surfaces. Seek out hills or find a tall building and repeatedly walk up and down the stairs. Regulate your breathing and try not to hyperventilate.

Once you can do 7km comfortably, it's time to strengthen your ankles by going bushwalking where the surface is uneven. Walk through it just to get familiar with the track and when you are ready, start jogging. If you haven't sprained your ankle you are doing well. After that start wearing your new leather boots so your feet can 'wear' in. You can also carry a 29 to 35l day pack. Aim for a five-hour walk once a week. Other exercises I found helpful in the gym was squats, dead lifts and burpees.

Nothing can really prepare you for the trek's extreme hills and altitude of up to 5545m. But don't be put off – people with average fitness can do this trek. 'Slow and steady' is the key to achieving, and enjoying, your trek.

## Accommodation

We will be staying at teahouses throughout the trek. Each room has two beds with mattresses and blankets. It is advisable to sleep in your sleeping bag on top of the mattress. Blankets can be added over your sleeping bag for extra warmth. Food and drinks are provided in the dining room. Shower facilities are only readily available at lower altitudes like Lukla, Phakding and Namche and will incur an extra cost (250-500rupees). Bucket showers are available at higher altitudes.

## Telecommunications

On your first day in Kathmandu our guides will take you to a telecommunication shop to purchase SIM cards for your phones and prepaid card for Internet use. Cellular reception is available throughout the treks and Wi-Fi is available at most teahouse lodges however the connectivity can be very weak. During our last trip we were not able to use the Internet much at all! However isn't that one of the great things about trekking? Being disconnected from the rest of the world and just enjoying the peace of the mountains?

## Travel

In Kathmandu we will be hiring shuttle buses for transport between the airport and our hotel accommodation in Thamel. There are many restaurants, bars, trekking stores and souvenir stores in Thamel. Traffic is very chaotic in Kathmandu and the roads are very rough yet the risks of accidents are very low in Nepal.

From Kathmandu domestic airport, we will take a domestic flight to Lukla from a small 16-19 seats twin-engine propeller aircraft with local pilots. The planes are well maintained but the flying condition is difficult given the length of the runway and its location in the mountains. All flying is visual so if it's too cloudy on the day, we can't take off as there's a good chance of flying straight into a mountain! Despite this, the safety record is surprisingly good.

If our flights are delayed and we are unable to find accommodation in Kathmandu, we will stay at the medieval town of Bhuktapur 9km west of the airport. The town is quieter and cleaner than Kathmandu and is famous for honey yoghurt and clay pottery.





# Food

## Breakfast:

Oatmeal boiled in water is usually available for breakfast, along with French toast served with jam, butter or honey.

More original and tasty will be homemade bread in the form of Tibetan bread or Chapatti.

Hashed brown and eggs will also be available for breakfast, pancakes, muesli, cheese and juice from packs.

Oatmeal is healthy and replenishes your body with energy for longer and maintains a higher level of glucose in your bloodstream.

## Lunch:

The selection of meals on offer for lunch is extensive – starting from simple snacks in the form of Tibetan bread with jam right through to various soups, steaks, sandwiches, Momo (steamed dumplings), macaroni dishes and pizzas.

Hiking food menu in teahouses will differ depending on the altitude reached along the trekking route. As a rule, the higher you have climbed up; there'll be less meat and fewer choices on the menu.

My favourite hiking foods are garlic soup which is a natural means of preventing altitude sickness, as well as the Nepalese national food – dal bhaat or boiled rice with a specially prepared lentil soup with side dishes: vegetables, root vegetables, curry and the like. Dal Bhaat in the mountains is very nourishing; it is a light and healthy hiking food.

## Dinner:

On the way to your destination, you will mostly make your overnight stay at a new altitude, which will be higher than before, and it is recommended that you start dinner by consuming a lot of fluid. Even if you don't want to eat and have a mild headache due to the new altitude you've reached, it is important to eat, because this reduces the risk of contracting symptoms of altitude sickness.

You can order all the same meals for dinner at a lodge that are available for lunch. There is only one menu at trekking lodges and it doesn't change. On the Everest Base Camp Trek, we usually start dinner with a big pot of black tea and then choose one of the meals i.e. momo, steak, dal bhaat, oatmeal, pasta or pancakes. The sun sets rapidly and disappears behind the mountains within about half an hour and it gets cold. Trekkers spend the time until bedtime in the dining room having dinner, drinking tea, beer and talking.



## Advice: Being Vegetarian:

As tempting as it is to try a juicy yak steak or 'buff burger', be aware that all meat is carried up by porters from below Lukla due to the no-killing policy in Sagarmatha National Park, so by the time you have it, it's getting old.

The safest, healthiest option is to eat dal bhat (lentil soup with rice) – it's made fresh daily and is a great source of protein and energy.

Meat is generally safe up to Tengboche. Be careful of flour products at higher altitude as well.



## Managing Altitude Sickness

- ▶ **Go slow.** Do not compare your pace to sherpas or porters on the trail who have adapted to these conditions. Again, this is when a good guide is vital as they won't push you beyond your limit just to keep the group going.
- ▶ **Hydrate more than you think you need to.** The average heart rate of a trekker at rest at 12,000 ft. is close to that of their jogging heart rate at sea level. Just sitting there your heart is beating faster and you are breathing a lot more, which causes water-loss. Drink lots of water.
- ▶ **Bring Diamox with you,** which can treat and relieve symptoms of altitude sickness.
- ▶ **Pressure breathing helps.** Instead of just your normal panting, force the air out of your lungs to take good, deep breaths.
- ▶ **Rest and enjoy the view.**
- ▶ **We will use acclimatisation** days to help your body acclimatise by going higher than where we sleep. This means pushing maybe 700m higher and then returning back to your lodge or camp.
- ▶ **Catch signs early and monitor them.** In the past, I've used a pulse-oximeter to monitor those trekking with me, in addition to general questions and observation. This simple device clamps on a finger and monitors pulse as well as the saturation of oxygen in blood. I start this in Kathmandu before we head up as a baseline and check each morning and night, typically at meals. It's just another tool to see if trekkers are getting enough oxygen or if they have symptoms that are worsening.



## Sightseeing

Aside from breathtaking scenery, travellers to the region can experience unique Sherpa culture by visiting monasteries.

We will give volunteers the opportunity to visit the Sherpa museum at Namche along the way. Days are filled with walking for the sheer pleasure of it, pass colourful prayer wheels and across swing bridges, while evenings are rewarded with hot food and conversation with like-minded people around the dining-room fire.

The mix of natural beauty, fascinating culture and a personal sense of achievement, as well as warm Sherpa hospitality from the people of the Solukhumbu region makes the Everest Base Camp trek one of the world's most unforgettable trips.







## Clothing

### During the Day:

#### ► Base Layer or thermals

Please avoid cotton and go for Merino wool (like ice breakers), they don't smell, itch and keeps you warm. A thin long sleeve top and long johns will do.

#### ► Mid Layer

Polyester jumper (something that dries quickly and have some water repelling effects) - these are always on sale in Kathmandu/Macpac and outdoor outlets. Pair of shorts.

#### ► Outer Layer Jacket & Pants

This is the most important layer when you meet bad weather like heavy rain and/or strong wind. Go for a "HARD SHELL" jacket with a head pouch and "SOFT SHELL" trousers.

- Thin woolly hat, baseball cap, wrap around sunnies, ski gloves

### During the Night:

After trekking 6-7 hours a day, you will produce sweat and your clothes will get wet. The easiest way to get a cold/hypothermia is stay in wet clothes. I always quickly change into dry clothes after a trek.

This is what you need:

#### ► Base Layer - Thermals – Ice breaker

#### ► Mid Layer

Could possibly use the day polystyrene jumper from the day

#### ► Outer Layer - Down Jacket

This is a really puffy jacket and insulates well (you would have used it before if you gone skiing). However I would find the 'least' puffy jacket that will do the job so it can fit comfortably in your pack.

- Gloves, woolly 'dry' socks

### Footwear:

Boots provide ankle support and are great for outdoor trekking. I like leather boots because they are strong and waterproof. However they can get heavy so try finding the lightest one you can. I would wear in your boots prior to any trek to avoid blisters. Goretex shoes are ok as well. Long woolly socks will provide your and feet from blisters and will dry quicker too. I would bring at least 5 pairs for a 2 week trek (Save some money and buy them online [www.outsidesports.co.nz](http://www.outsidesports.co.nz)).

We will be staying at teahouses so thongs and sandals for indoor use would be adequate.

### Other Accessories:

**Walking Poles:** I highly recommend the Black Diamond brand. Avoid any poles where the length of the pole is adjusted by turning the knobs.

**Sleeping Bags:** Down sleeping bags are light and provide incredible warmth. You can also buy sleeping bag liners and this will keep them clean and provide you with extra warmth. A down sleeping bag is comfortable at 1-2 degree Celsius with your thermals on. If it gets colder than that I pop on a down jacket as well before I go to sleep. Sleeping bags can be rented at 1 USD a day.







## Money

### How much money should I bring on the trip?

Previous volunteers recommend bringing \$600 to \$1000AUD cash for your trip. Below is a range of items that are commonly purchased on our trips:

1L Bottled water (You will need to drink 4L a day)	100-300 NPR
Chocolate Bar	100-250 NPR
Chocolate Brownie	300-500 NPR
Coffee	250-300 NPR
Soft Drinks	250-400 NPR
Beer	500-1000 NPR
Hot Shower	300-500 NPR
Battery Charge	200-300 NPR
Toilet Paper Roll	200 NPR
Packs of Tissues	100-150 NPR
NCell Sim Card	500 NPR for iPhone (No credit)
Wifi/ Mobile Credit	200 NPR

We recommend a minimum of \$100AUD when it comes to tipping our Sherpa guides and porters.

### Minimising Cost

Carrying enough money will reduce the need to withdraw from costly ATMs. Plan what personal items you will need each day and budget for it. I normally bring my own chocolate snacks, electrolyte powder, tissues and toilet rolls to save money. I also carry a portable solar panel to charge my phone.

## FAQs

### I never trekked before. Can I do an Eyes4Everest mission?

Yes. We have taken many new trekkers on our mission before. If you are unsure about your fitness, try the Annapurna sanctuary, which is not as physically demanding as the other treks.

### What if I get tired during the trek?

We understand some of you are new to trekking and will provide you some training tips before you go. However no training can replace actual experience. If you feel tired or unwell during the trek, please inform the guides who will manage appropriately. Guides often pick these signs before you do so listen to their advice. Please do not overtake the guides who are setting the pace for the entire group.

Our itineraries are trialed and tested by previous volunteers. We have more acclimatisation and rest days compared to other commercial companies. The itinerary should be strictly adhered to avoid physical exhaustion.

### Am I guaranteed to reach the proposed destination?

Eyes4Everest has a high success rate on EBC, Kalapather and Gokyo Ri compared to most commercial trekking companies. However we cannot guarantee that you will reach the proposed objective for reasons such as poor weather, health or fitness. . Your chief guide will arrange an alternative objective that will be equally rewarding. We want to remind volunteers that your safety is important to us and we are primarily here to provide Eyecare to the mountain communities. You will have an amazing journey either way.

To improve the success rate of the entire team, we encourage you to train for your trip, do your own research and experience multi-day trekking if possible. Please be aware of hygiene as gastroenteritis can weaken your body. You should also be alert of signs and symptoms of altitude sickness and inform your guides if you feel unwell.



### What if the weather turns bad?

Your itinerary includes two contingency days in case of flight delays due to bad weather. Eyes4Everest travel in Spring or Autumn when the weather is most stable. In the unlikely event that the weather turns nasty during your trek, your guide will make a decision whether it is safe to continue. You will stay in a comfortable teahouse until the weather improves. The clothing listed on the brief is more than enough to keep you warm.

### Where can I exchange money?

We recommend bringing Australian Dollars (AUD) into Nepal. You can pay for your 30 day Tourist Visa at the Tribhuvan International Airport for \$80AUD. On arrival, the hotel will send a shuttle to collect you. In the unlikely event that you cannot find your ride, you can exchange a small amount at the airport. A taxi ride to the hotel should cost 1000 NPR.

There are many foreign exchange agencies in Thamel, Kathmandu. At our Meet & Greet, our Kathmandu coordinator (Julie Lam) can help you find a place with good rates.

Note: It is difficult to exchange New Zealand currency. If you are a kiwi, we recommend you bring Australian or US Dollars.

### Do I get to choose my own food?

Yes. However your guides will choose a set menu if the kitchen is busy. This ensures everyone is fed on time.

### What should I carry in my first aid kit?

Here are some recommendations for a first aid kit for a trekking trip

- Diamox for managing altitude sickness
- Panadol or Nurofen
- Sunscreen SPF 50+
- Chapstick
- Gastro medication i.e. Imodium
- Regular cold medication i.e. Advil cold and sinus
- Band aid
- Blister band aid or moleskin
- Nasal moisturiser - altitude can dry up your nasal cavities
- Tiger balm
- Tweezers
- Cotton buds

### What are some of the pre travel costs?

- Travel Insurance that include helicopter rescue i.e. World Nomad start from \$185 AUD
- International Flights start from \$880 AUD return
- 30 Day Tourist Visa start from \$80 AUD
- Trekking Gear start from \$1500. You can minimise cost by borrowing from friends and family. Eyes4Everest volunteer are entitled to a 20% discount on any Mountain Design store.

### Where can I get more information?

When you register for an Eyes4Everest mission, you will automatically be added to the associated Facebook group. You will be able to ask any questions there, and one of our committee members will get back to you. There is a good chance that your question has been answered already.

For more personal matters, please contact [info@eyes4everest.org.au](mailto:info@eyes4everest.org.au)

For inquiries about donations, please contact [grace@eyes4everest.org.au](mailto:grace@eyes4everest.org.au)

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