

Vietnam Trip Student Packing Requirements and Recommendations 2009-2010
Mr. Willecke/Mr. Johnston

Time: Being late is the #1 thing that Mr. Willecke and Mr. Johnston do not tolerate; we put this section 1st for a reason!

- Watch: you won't have your phone, but you need to know what time it is—get a watch!
- Alarm Clock: Wake-up calls are not dependable in Vietnam, partly because of the language barrier—get an alarm!

Medications and Hygiene: We have a medical bag for EMERGENCIES, but you should come prepared by bringing:

- Imodium: the food WILL eventually get to you—bring it! Love it!
- Headache Pills: Ibuprofen, Aspirin—headaches happen, especially with air travel and buses
- Electrolyte Packets: Gatorade is typical, but anything to help with dehydration, our #1 health problem in country!
- Allergy: different continent, different plants—if you have ever had allergies, mild or sporadic, you MUST bring meds; choices in country are limited and you want non-drowsy versions like Claritin.
- Cough Drops
- Antibiotic: (typically, UW Travel Medicine issues this when you get your shot)
- Kleenex: keeping a small travel packet might save your life in a rural Vietnamese bathroom
- Feminine Hygiene Products: Travel can upset the system and you might not be as predictable as usual—it happens every year and it is better to be safe than sorry!
- Anti-bacterial lotion: like Purel
- Dramamine: If you are at all prone to motion sickness get some—muggy weather and long bus rides!
- Malaria Pills (See Malaria section below)
- Chapstick

On Your Person at the Airport:

- Your WCE Jacket and MIHS Vietnam/Cambodia shirt—you MUST be wearing them
- Your WCE Carry-on Bag—all students MUST be using this as their carry-on

Carry-On: Anything EXPENSIVE should be carried on, not stowed. Look here for rules on carry-on liquids

<http://www.tsa.gov/311/> Consider the following:

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|--|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photo ID | <input type="checkbox"/> Hat (sun) | <input type="checkbox"/> Kleenex |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Money Belt | <input type="checkbox"/> Book/book light | <input type="checkbox"/> Pillow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications | <input type="checkbox"/> Gum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ipod/headphones | <input type="checkbox"/> Snacks | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sun-glasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Journal | |

Checked Luggage:

- Toiletries:** especially liquids and sprays, which are limited as carry-ons
- Swimsuit:** some of the hotels have pools and Vietnam has world class beaches, not to mention Ha Long Bay
- Clothes:** 3 or 4 days worth. Think lightweight and quick-drying—the weather will be very hot and very muggy and sometimes rainy. Bring at least one light weight long sleeved shirt and one pair of long pants for warm evening walks (mosquitoes). Most students are fine with the WCE jacket for colder evenings in the north, but you might want a sweatshirt.
- Shoes:** Some activities such as bicycle rides and short hikes are best done in shoes and cannot be done safely in flip-flops.
- Sandals/flip flops:** the kind that can get wet at the beach or in a boat
- Sunscreen:** too much liquid for legal carry-on, bring high SPF, we're in the tropics!
- Mosquito Repellant:**
- Ipod speakers/deck of cards:** for downtime at the hotel

Things NOT to bring:

- Ø Travelers Checks
- Ø Cell phones—each teacher leader and the guide has one—unplug and enjoy yourself! If you don't bring it, you can't lose it.
- Ø Travelers Checks
- Ø Hairdryers—the hotels should have them, don't bother to haul yours around
- Ø Travels Checks (yes, its listed 3 times, don't bring them)

Some General Packing Tips:

Money: wear something with a zipper pocket or use a money belt. Avoid over the shoulder purses or wallets in your back pocket—every pickpockets favorite thing! Bring American cash in \$1 and \$5 bills. We rarely use Vietnamese Dong, so don't convert any beforehand. Do NOT bring travelers checks—yes, the banks and hotels say they take them—they lie! Counterfeiting them has become too easy. Typically students spend \$200 to \$400 for gifts and souvenirs, and extra food, drinks, etc. Vietnam has ATMs in the cities, but diverting an entire bus to get you cash sucks, so bring enough cash. All the hotels will have a safe. Some students have found taking a small calculator helpful.

Flying: It's a very, very long flight with a layover—have your mp3 player and a good novel. Consider a battery backup for you mp3 player. Consider taking a book light if you like to read on the plane—the person next to you may not want the overhead light on for the entire flight! Airplane food sucks—consider packing snacks. Willecke likes pop-tarts and Snickers, Johnston likes Beef Jerky. Don't forget your gum, Dramamine, etc. Buy your water after we get through security, or they will confiscate it.

Luggage: Take ONE piece of checked luggage; make sure it has wheels. For the flight over, we will be giving you a 2nd WCE blue bag full of supplies for the orphanage—this will be your 2nd piece of checked luggage. You can use it as a 2nd piece of checked luggage on the return flight if you need room for all of your souvenirs and gifts. You MUST use your blue WCE bag for a carry-on.

Laundry: The hotel laundry services could be cheaper and they often require a 24 hours turn-around (expediting your laundry is even more expensive). Pack enough clothes that you only have to do laundry two times during the trip and turn it in as soon as we get to the hotel! Having a plastic garbage bag for transporting wet clothes is a good idea.

Electrical Adaptors: Northern Vietnam uses British 3 prong plugs (type G); Southern Vietnam uses the Southern European two-prong plugs (type C, same as most of continental Europe). Most hotels have universal plugs, but not all, so an adaptor is handy. Having a splitter is a good idea if you have multiple devices to charge. Vietnam uses 240v systems, so check your device to make sure they are 110-240 compatible (almost all cameras and battery chargers are). Purchase a 240-110 adaptor if you need one. Your system for Vietnam will work in Cambodia.

Photography: Many students end up taking more pictures than they expect, so buy the largest storage card your camera can use and enough of them to last the trip. Bring extra batteries. Don't leave your camera anywhere (the usual places are at restaurants and on the plane). If you are an avid photographer and will be carting some serious gear, talk to Mr. Willecke. Mr. Johnston has an external 500GB hard drive for storing pictures if you need to.

Internet: Most of the hotels have internet connections and a small computer room for emailing home, but they are sometimes crowded and slow. You should be able to send an email home off and on throughout the trip.

Cell Phones: Please do not bring your cell phone—the chaperones and the guides have them, and in case of emergency you will have access. Unplug and immerse yourself in your travels.

Malaria: You should bring mosquito repellent. You might also consider treating your clothes. There are currently two types of treatment. The first is the traditional military treatment that comes with a plastic bag and liquid repellent—you soak your clothes in the bag for a period of time. Mr. Johnston tried this last year and did not like the mess or the smell. The other method, which Mr. Willecke tried, was a spray on repellent where you hang the clothes in the garage and spray them down and let them hang dry. This worked well and only smelled slightly, and this was easily fixed by spraying on some Febreze before packing. Both of these treatments are available at REI. Consult US Travel Medicine for advice about Malaria; they have offices at UW, Issaquah, and in Factoria.