



THE ESSENTIAL

What To Pack Guide



Welcome to The Essential What To Pack Guide! Here we will discuss everything you will possibly need in order to never miss a beat on your adventure to Namibia.

While in most countries you can easily buy something you had forgotten, it might be an impossible task in rural Namibia. Good preparation will save you lots of frustration and make your trip more comfortable. Whether you are planning to drive across the whole country or just go there for a couple of days, here is an essential packing list.

First Aid Kit and Medicine

This is kind of self-explanatory and of the utmost importance in Namibia. Whether you accidentally cut yourself, get stomach problems, or bruise your knee while climbing granite rocks in Spitzkoppe, this is an absolute necessity in Namibia.

Make sure to pack any prescription medicine you may need during the trip. I always recommend clients to pack a pain killer, probiotics, nose spray, disinfectant, diarrhoea medication, medicine against travel sickness, and something against allergies – in case you get bitten by an insect and have a severe reaction.

Hand Sanitizer

Always good to have to keep the germs away!

Insect Repellent

Never travel to Africa without a mosquito spray!

Flashlight

Ask any traveller that has been to Africa about one essential item to take with you, and most of them will advise you to take a flashlight. It gets dark early and you will need a flashlight more than you think.

GPS and a Good Map

A good map is essential for any road trip. Get a recent detailed map which indicates petrol stations, lodges and other attractions. Most of the great car rental companies provide you with a complimentary map. Your road trip will be much more relaxing if you take a GPS with you. You can rent one, of course, but if you travel a lot, it's cheaper to buy a GPS with worldwide maps (and make sure the map of the country you are going to is loaded on it before you leave home).

Electrical Adapter

Namibia uses type D/M electrical adapters and you should buy a couple of these in advance.

Car Charger

Essential if you'll be self driving as not all vehicles are equipped with a USB port.

Camera, extra batteries, charger, memory cards

If your camera uses rechargeable batteries, you should be ok with just one spare, unless you are camping and have no possibilities to recharge – in that case you may need to take a few extra batteries. Don't count on buying extra batteries in Namibia, so make sure you take everything with you (or buy some in Windhoek upon arrival). The same counts for the memory cards – you cannot count on buying them in Namibia (except in Windhoek or Swakopmund). So make sure you have plenty of memory cards with you.

Power Bank/Battery Pack

This is a great gadget to have when the time comes, and believe me it will come, where one or more of your devices are low on battery. Make sure to get a power bank to ensure you never miss a beat.

E-reader with built-in light

Often, the light is very minimal in hotels in Africa. Reading a book in the evening can be a challenge. An e-reader is not only compact and light to take with you, it also allows you to read in the evening. It's especially helpful if you share a room with the kids as you can read when they sleep.

Binoculars

Don't forget binoculars — you will be watching a lot of animals and birds and it's always a pleasure to have a good pair of with you.

Cooler

You can order a lunch pack at your hotel and take it with you or stock up on food and drinks every time you pass a town and a shop. In that case you will really need a cooler.

Pocket Knife

A good Swiss Army knife is a must on any road trip.

Small backpack

You'll want to have a good day backpack with you to take on safari rides, when you go hiking, or any other excursions.

Soft shell travel bags rather than hard shell suitcases

Whether you travel to Africa on a group tour, take a small airplane, or make an individual road trip, you are better off taking a soft-sided travel bag rather than hard shell suitcase. They take less space and offer more flexibility when loading bags in a trunk, on top of that, they can sometimes be more durable as well. *Note: Group tours and small airplanes always advice against hard shell luggage.*

What else to pack for a Namibia trip – small, but important

- Locks for your luggage in case you leave it somewhere.
- Sun hat, sun glasses, and sunscreen
- Body cream, hand cream, lip balm. You will need those all the time as it's very dry in Namibia. Most hotels and lodges have all kinds of toiletries provided, but to be on the safe side, you can always take some soap and a small bottle of shampoo with you.
- Big trash bags to cover your luggage (otherwise they will be covered with sand, even in the trunk). Small trash bags are also very handy. You can use them as motion sickness bags, to separate dirty laundry, or as trash bags in your car. You can buy these bags at any supermarket in one of the larger cities in Namibia.
- Small brush (like a hand brush, or a scrub brush) to clean your shoes and bags. There will most probably be sand all over your luggage and belongings.
- Toilet paper (to have in the car), tissues, and sanitising hand wipes
- Safety pins and a sewing kit
- Clothesline and a laundry detergent — if you need to do some laundry or just to dry your swimwear

Let's look at clothing

You don't really need smart clothing in Namibia and you'll probably hardly ever wear it. If you stay at the luxury lodges then you may want to take one or two smart outfits for in the evening, but jeans and a shirt is also fine. During the day you will only need casual clothes. Most people travel to Namibia in dry season (May-October). While it's very warm and you can wear shorts and t-shirts during the day, take into account that it's the colder season and that you will need warm clothes for when the sun goes down or before it rises. Most safari rides go early in the morning or late in the evening and you will definitely need warm clothing – sweater, jacket, long pants... The same for the whale watching tours, watching sunrises in the dunes, and some other activities.

- Windproof Jacket
- 1-2 sweaters or a fleece (*it dries fast if you need to wash it*)
- 2x long pants, can also be jeans, but light trekking pants are probably more convenient
- 2 pairs of shorts
- 8-10 t-shirts or light cotton shirts (*can be with long sleeves*)
- 8-10 sets of underwear and socks
- Swimsuit
- A buff.
- A pair of old socks – you will use those when climbing the sand dunes and throw them away afterwards

Do you need neutral colour clothing while on safaris in Namibia?

It is advisable not to wear bright colours on a safari, but in my experience it doesn't matter that much if you are sitting in a car or an open jeep all the time. If you have a choice between a bright red fleece or a grey one, go for the latter. If you have to buy something new for the trip, better go for the neutral colour clothing in light brown, grey, or similar colours. If, however, the only windproof jacket you own happens to be bright green, I'd say save your money and pack what you have.

What kind of shoes should you pack for Namibia?

I would recommend taking a pair of hiking sandals, flip flops, and walking shoes. It's best to wear closed shoes in Namibia. You don't really need hiking shoes (unless you plan on doing lots of hiking), but low hiking shoes are advisable. In principle, one pair of shoes is sufficient if you want to travel light.

What not to pack for Namibia

- Don't take too many electrical appliances with you. Take only what you really need. Unless you really need a laptop, leave it at home. Smartphone and eventually a small tablet is more than sufficient.
- As already mentioned, smart clothes are really not necessary in Namibia. High heel shoes, women's sandals, ballet flats — you can leave all of these at home. They are completely useless in the Namibian desert.
- Don't take your newest suitcase or travel bag with you as the bags will be covered with sand every day you drive on the gravel roads. Pack an old travel bag or a backpack instead and make sure it's well closed.
- Unless you are really attached to it, leave your jewellery at home.

What to Pack in Your Carry-on

- Books or e-books
- Earbuds/headphones
- Travel pillow
- Ear plugs/eye mask
- Tissues
- Lip balm
- Extra set of clothes (*in case your luggage gets lost*)
- Food/snacks/gum

- Empty water bottle (*fill post-security*)
- In-flight medications
- Valuables, such as jewelry
- Camera
- Passport/visa/ID
- Paper/pen (*to fill in Namibia immigration form*)
- Cash
- Credit/ATM cards
- Insurance cards (*medical, travel*)
- Itinerary
- Maps/directions
- Guidebook
- Glasses/sunglasses

This guide will be updated frequently.

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