



**“If you run over a duck
it will cost you \$5 . . .”**

*Helpful Tips
for Volunteers in Nepal*



Welcome to Nepal.

Help! What do I say?

Some useful words and phrases

Namaste (num-us-tay) - a greeting, like "Hello"
- said with palms together and hands at chest

Dhanyabad (dun-ya-baad) - "thank you"

Maph garnus (muff gar-noos)
- "I'm sorry / pardon me"

Kati Parcha (ca-tee par-cha) - "how much does it cost?"
(then gesture to a calculator!)

Mero Nam *ho*. - "My name is"

Mero desh Australia ho - "I'm from Australia" (Don't say this if you can't barbecue a roo!)

Greet the following persons in this way:

A man older than you: "*Namaste Da*" (older brother)

A man younger than you: "*Namaste Bha*" (younger brother)

A woman older than you: "*Namaste Did*" (older sister)

A woman younger than you: "*Namaste Bahini*" (younger sister)

Small boys are called '*Babu*' and girls '*Nani*'.

Of course, if you know someone's name, use that!

What's the best source of information
on Nepal, ADRA and volunteering?

ADRA Nepal's website

www.adranepal.org

Things to do in Kathmandu

We used to include a list of suggestions in this guide for places to visit, walks, etc., as well as suggestions for trekking, rafting, and jungle safari. However, all of this information and more is in most of the guidebooks. *Lonely Planet* and *The Rough Guide* are two of the most popular guidebooks. If you didn't bring one with you they are easily obtained in Thamel bookshops - new or second-hand. *Nepal Travel Network* is another good book for travel information.

If you just want some advice on interesting spots to visit, just ask!

Holy Cow!

Kathmandu Airport is the only airport in the world that has a cattle grid at the main entrance!

Holy cows are thereby discouraged from entering, and disrupting flight schedules.

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KATHMANDU - GENERAL INFORMATION

Getting Around

Taxis: Metered taxis have black number plates. You should expect the taxi driver to use the meter but you should also bargain at night or for special journeys. If bargaining, always agree on a price in before you get in. Try to use taxis with electronic meters (new cabs) to avoid any hassles.

In Thamel you may like to take a rickshaw ride - a quick way of getting around and you provide income for the drivers. It is usual to agree on a price before taking the ride.

International Time

Nepal is 5:45 ahead of GMT. Don't forget that UK time changes to BST (GMT +1) in March.

Banking Hours

Monday to Friday 10:00 am to 3:30 p.m. (3:00 p.m. in winter). In some banks exchange counters are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. You will find automatic teller machines (ATMs) in several areas around the city. Ask for assistance and/or directions from an ADRA staff member if you need one.

Photography

Many people are reluctant to be photographed by strangers for religious reasons or because of personal modesty. Please ask their permission first. Photographs are generally allowed inside Buddhist and Hindu temples and at festivals, but not at religious ceremonies or cremations (despite what the guides say at Pashupatinath). Before taking a photo please check.

SHOPPING

General

Thamel and trek shops for cotton clothes, jumpers, hats, tourist stuff and books. New Road for ready-made clothes, stationery/electrical things and chemist shops. Asan Tol, Hanuman Dhoka (old Durbar Square) and Dilli Bazaar are full of flip flops, materials, spices, etc.

However most things can be bought in most places. It is a good idea to buy fabric and take it with an item of clothing you want copied, or an idea for a design, to a tailor.

Bargaining

Bargain by all means, but do not insult people by offering a ridiculously low price for something whose value you have no idea of. Look around and compare quality and prices.

Tipping

About 20 or 50 rupees for a minor service and in small restaurants.

About 10% for good service in larger restaurants in Kathmandu.

Give small gifts for special services/favours.

No need to tip taxi/tempo drivers (but catching a taxi after 8 pm will be approximately double the usual day time prices)

Some Tips For Dealing With Freelance Sellers

When you are approached by a 'freelance' seller of wares you don't wish to purchase, simply put your hand up in front of you, shake your head and say "No thank you". Look adamant that you are not the slightest bit interested. If you try to explain why you don't need the item, then it will appear that you could be persuaded to purchase it. Just shake your head, walk away and ignore any further attempts at persuasion. Walk purposefully. If you look like you are just out strolling you are more of a target. Avoid making eye contact with vendors, it encourages them to persist. This is especially true for western women making eye contact with Nepali men, to them it is a come on. "Chaindayna" (chain-day-nah) - which means "I don't need it" is also a very useful phrase in these situations.

General Dress Codes

Nepali people of all ethnic groups are very modest, and will feel uncomfortable around females dressed revealingly. The Nepalese do not usually show their legs and men don't go without a shirt even in hot weather. It is still much more acceptable for women to wear longer skirts. Please be respectful.

Well, I'll be flagged!

Nepal's flag is the only one in the world that is not rectangular or square in shape.

EATING

Please remember your basic health care precautions when eating in restaurants in Kathmandu, especially Thamel. Lack of awareness in choosing eating spots is one of the quickest ways to get sick.

Eating in a Nepali Home

In Nepal we eat with our hands. You should wash your hands before eating. (even if you are using cutlery)

You may be offered more food than you can eat (this is a courtesy). If you cannot eat any more, say no thank you and cover your plate with your hands. "*Malai Pugioh*" (mal-eye poog-ee-oh) means 'I'm Full', and is handy to remember.

Don't offer partially eaten food or a glass which has touched your lips, to another person. Once you eat or drink something it becomes "*Jutho*" (dirty) and generally people don't then share with others.

Restaurant and Street Food

It is safest not to eat raw vegetables in restaurants. They will usually be perfectly fine but you don't want to spend your short visit on the toilet.

If your glass or silverware in a restaurant is not dry, take a napkin or clean handkerchief and wipe it off. A drop of water can give you the trots.

Food and soups should be hot when served to you in a restaurant, and if not, send it back to be reheated.

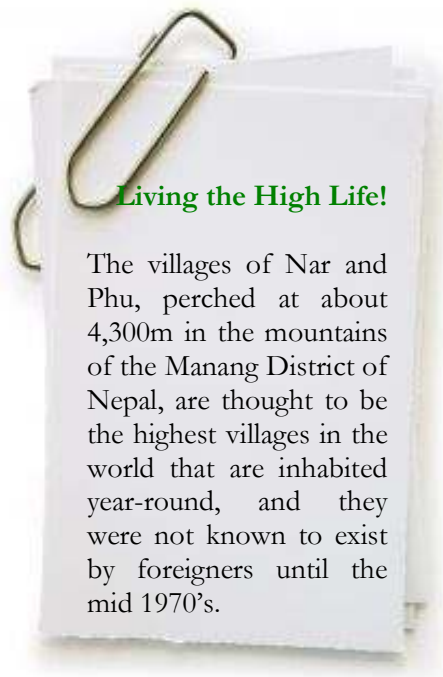
Food Handling, Storage and Consumption

Try to eat food that is freshly prepared, well-cooked and still hot.

Raw vegetables and fruits that cannot be peeled must be cleaned and then soaked in iodined water for 30 minutes. Be extra diligent when cleaning and soaking leafy lettuce.

Avoid custard pastries (unless you know for sure it was refrigerated) and pies with creamy fillings as they can easily cause food poisoning.

Food should be thoroughly cooked to kill germs and eaten while hot, as bacteria love to grow on these foods at room temperature.



WATER

Assume all water in Nepal to be unsafe for drinking unless you know it has been either filtered and boiled or treated with iodine.

Bottled Drinks

Locally bottled versions of Coke, Pepsi, Sprite and Fanta are available. These are generally considered safe to drink. Make sure you closely inspect your bottle for particulate matter and discoloration. Be sure to wipe the rim of your bottle before drinking from it.

Do not drink fruit drinks that are not in closed containers. This includes drinks from vendors on the street.

Water Purification

From the time you get off the plane until you get back on never drink water directly from a tap. All the water you drink **MUST** be bottled or treated water. It can also be a good idea to brush your teeth with bottled water too.

Carry a one-litre water bottle with you, so that you can prepare safe iodined/mineral/boiled water when walking around the city and countryside.

Ice is not safe - freezing untreated water does not kill bacteria & viruses.

Milk and Dairy Products

All fresh milk needs to be boiled before consumption. It is the Nepali custom to drink tea with milk and sugar. Restaurant milk for tea and coffee has been boiled. It is safe to drink.

Powdered milk is widely available and safe when mixed with treated water.

Ice cream is not safe from street vendors; however, it is safe (and yummy) from various cafes and Hotels: Nirulas, Fire and Ice, Nanglos in Kathmandu and many others.

A Tight Squeeze!

Nepal has a population of 23 million, more than Australia, but the whole country is only twice the size of Tasmania!

GENERAL SAFETY ADVICE

Nepal is a fantastic country full of great people - but, like everywhere else it is a good idea to be careful, vigilant and use your common sense. You will find the vast majority of Nepali people to be exceptionally friendly and helpful. It is unusual to strike a bad apple!

Thamel and other parts of Kathmandu can be unsafe late at night. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU ALWAYS TRAVEL IN GROUPS OF 2 OR MORE AT NIGHT. Men, don't hesitate to offer to escort women home at night. It's best not to be out past 9:30 pm.

Theft

Don't flaunt valuable possessions, cameras, walkman etc.. Keep your money and passport etc in a safe place. A money belt may help. If possible use a safe for those valuables for which constant access is not needed. Don't tell strangers where you live or your hotel name. If you are renting a bike, use the ADRA address (ADRA Nepal, Jawalakhel, Kathmandu) – and please return the bike!!

Money

Carry a small amount in a pocket for incidental purposes. Try to use smaller notes. It is quicker and large notes may be a temptation to a passing thief.

Well-founded Pride

Nepal has never been under colonial rule. It was never captured by the British - who made several attempts. The English soldiers were always forced into retreat by the bravery and ferocity of Nepal's Gurkha soldiers. The British finally gave up and instead hired the Gurkha's as British mercenaries. And they remain so to this day!

NEPALI CULTURE

Tips to ensure you don't make a fool of yourself - too often!

These guidelines are helpful to know but honest mistakes are always forgiven by the gracious Nepalese.

Food

Nepalese never touch any thing else with the hand they are eating until they wash it with water. Nepalese never take food from another's plate.

Feet

Nepalese do not point the soles of their feet at another person. A Nepali does not step over people, food, books (anything written) and if he/she does then they apologize. Nepalese take off their shoes before entering rooms/houses. Upside down shoes are a bad luck sign for Nepalis.

The Left Hand

Nepalese do not give or receive with their left hand except in exceptional situations (if some one is eating with his right hand).

Physical interaction

Physical interaction with the same sex (holding hands and linked arms) is acceptable. Interaction between the sexes is never physical in public, even for husband and wife.

Beware ODAs!

ODAs, that's open displays of affection.

Many Nepalis, especially those living outside Kathmandu, regard kissing and even hand-holding between the sexes as distasteful.

Don't be surprised, though, if you see men walking with arms around each other's shoulders or even holding hands.

General

- Generally Nepalese do not knock before entering a room.
- When a Nepali gives both hands in greetings or thanks, it is more respectful.
- Nepalese walk around temples in a clockwise direction.
- Hindu temples do not allow Westerners, seek permission first.
- Leather articles are prohibited inside the temple.
- Most Nepali people consider the head as a sacred place. You should not touch other people on the head.
- Nepalese do not expose their body when they change their dress, even in a room with the same sex.
- Nepali people do not often openly speak about sex.
- Take photographs only with permission.

When Visiting a Nepali Family

If you are invited to visit a Nepali family, please go in smart casual or semi-formal dress. Don't go wearing shorts. For women, wear something that covers your legs to the knee or even longer. Say "Namaste" when you are introduced to the family members. Take off your shoes at the door. If there is

no chair and you are requested to sit on the mat, it is better to fold or cross your legs. Be sure not to point your feet at anyone.

Visiting Temples

You can visit all the Hindu temples and Buddhist shrines in Nepal. In some instances you may not be allowed to enter inside the building, only visit the grounds or outer areas (unless you are Hindu or Buddhist). Some temples have signs which say who is allowed inside. If you are allowed inside a temple or shrine take off your shoes before entering. Taking pictures is not allowed at some temples, you may want to ask first to be sure, or look around you to see if others are taking pictures. Hindus and Buddhists always walk clockwise around the temple, please follow the rules.

Shaking Hands

In Nepal, handshakes are more extended in time and as a gesture of sincerity the left hand may be placed on top of person's hand you are shaking hands with.

Folk Beliefs

- The howling of dogs forecasts that something unpleasant is about to happen.
- To see someone wearing a shirt or trousers inside out or to wear clothes inside out yourself is considered bad luck.
- A menstruating woman should not do any cooking or worshipping; she is untouchable for four days.
- To see a funeral is a sign of good luck.
- No one should leave for a journey on a Tuesday or return home from trip on a Saturday.
- To see an empty vessel before leaving on a journey is bad luck. Therefore families put a vessel full of water near the door/gate at the time of departure.
- It is unlucky for three people to set out on a journey or business venture together.
- When departing for a journey, sneezing is a sign of bad luck.
- You probably broke most of these on your trip to Nepal!!

The World's Taller Mountain

Mt Everest is growing at a rate of 1cm per year

TREKKING INFORMATION

ADRA Nepal can help you if you are interested in trekking in Nepal.

Trekking considerations

- Don't trek alone.
- Use good comfortable boots. Do not use new ones.
- Make sure that your backpack is comfortable.
- Take care of your body - knees and lower back in particular.
- Be wary of village dogs.
- Be wary of water buffalo and yaks. They look docile but have been known to gore and chase unsuspecting trekkers.
- Dehydration is a real danger. Drink lots of water. Four litres a day when trekking over 3000m.

- Trekking is not mountaineering. You may however reach high altitudes where it can be very cold at night and the air is thin. Be aware of altitude sickness and watch for the symptoms in your fellow trekkers.
- The paths may be treacherous and you may be tired with a heavy pack. This is a dangerous combination. Be careful and take your time. People have fallen off trails and been killed.

There Is Always Someone Who Has Done It Faster With A Heavier Pack. It Is Not A Race. Take Your Time. Enjoy The Views.



Want to be 'A First' on Everest?!

Here's how

After combing through the list of Everest firsts (and it IS extensive!) we have decided to help those of you who are interested in making mountaineering history, by making a list of firsts that haven't yet been done. If you are blind, missing limbs, skiing or over 70 your "first" has already done. But here are some other ideas:

- first to bring along a grandparent
- first to get married at the summit
- first to plant a tree at the top
- first to ride a bike from the summit to Base Camp
- (skiing, snowboarding and parasailing have already been done)
- first to summit with no shoes (and first back down with no legs!!)
- first to ascend via the Nepali side and descend via the Tibetan side (or vice versa)
- first to reach the summit without mortgaging their house!
- Move to Tanzania, become a citizen, and then be the first Tanzanian to reach the top.

VISAS

You're here now so you obviously have one of these little smiley stamps in your passport but here's some more information. Government of Nepal has recently changed visa procedures. There are various different sorts of visa facilities such as tourist, non-tourist, residential, business, diplomatic, official etc.

Tourist visa

Any overseas visitors can apply for a tourist visa for a visit to Nepal. All overseas visitors can get this visa either from a Nepal Embassy or Consulate of the respective visitor's country or on arrival at the International Airport in Kathmandu and other overland entrance points to Nepal. It currently costs US\$30 on arrival. Visa extensions of up to 150 days are available.

ADRA NEPAL ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

Due to the large number of volunteers using our office, we have introduced a number of simple procedures to make the administration easier. We request that you follow these guidelines and allow enough time (and patience) to complete the procedures.

Where should I keep my valuables?

You can deposit your valuables, money, air tickets and passport in a named envelope in our safe at the Country office at Jawalakhel. In order to do this you must complete a record form every time you deposit or withdraw anything from the envelope. The administration staff will keep the records. ADRA Nepal or any of the staff cannot be held responsible for the envelopes therefore we request you not to leave large amounts of cash in the safe. We also request that withdrawals be made personally. You must send an authorization note if a friend is making a withdrawal on your behalf. Withdrawals cannot be made on Saturdays and Sundays. Please remember to take your valuables before you leave Nepal. (Thanks for past donations!)

Using the phone

You can use the ADRA telephone. You will not be charged for any local calls within Kathmandu. For all other calls we request you to fill out a form and allow our ADRA staff members to do the dialling. This is because we have been left with huge unpaid bills over the years. All wrong numbers or short phone contacts must be paid for and calls are charged per minute, so as elsewhere - 1 minute 1 second counts as 2 minutes. You also have the option to use the Pre-paid Calling Card (PCC) Service from Nepal Telecom.

Sending a Fax

You can send faxes from the office at the same rate and procedure as making telephone calls. If we receive a fax on your behalf we will send it on to you as soon as we can.

Can I get access to Email?

ADRA office in Kathmandu has wireless internet connection. You may only use your computer to check your emails. ADRA Communication Coordinator can help you setup the connection. If you do not have your computer, please contact the reception to ask if there is a spare ADRA computer. Outside the office, there are a lot of internet cyber stations or cafés in most of the areas within Kathmandu valley and other districts from where you can easily get internet connection and these cyber stations charge you from NRs. 10 to NRs. 30 per hour.

What about posting mail?

If you want to send a post card or letter from the office, please give it to the ADRA staff or the reception desk staff. (Keep in mind that you will probably beat it home - Nepal is not known for speedy mail services!)

ADRA's Office Hours

Office hours are from 9:00 - 5:00 (summertime) or 9:00 - 4:00 (wintertime), Monday to Friday.
N.B. Withdrawals from the safe cannot be made on weekends.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

ADRA Kathmandu	01 5555913/14
ADRA Kathmandu Fax	01 5554251
ADRA Banepa Office	011 661292
Australian Embassy	01 4371678/4371076
U.S. Embassy	01 4419456/4412324
Japanese Embassy	01 4426680
Tourist Information	01 4256909/4256910
Nepal Tourism Board	01 4256909
Tourist Info Pokhara	061 520028
Kathmandu International Airport	01 4470311
Kathmandu Domestic Airport	01 4470668
Immigration Department	01 4221996/4222453
Foreign Post Office	01 4240964/4258393
General Post Office	01 4258393/4240018
Telephone Enquiries	197
Emergency (Police)	100, 211, 162

Please give any suggestions on how we can improve this booklet to **Bidya Mahat** at bidya.mahat@adranepal.org or **Junu Manandhar** at junu.manandhar@adranepal.org.

Enjoy your stay and please come again.