

# Appendix A – Travel Preparation and Packing Checklist

## ANNOTATED PACKING CHECKLIST

This is meant to be a checklist from which to pick and choose from, depending on your situation. No one in his or her right mind would take everything on this list on any trip. In fact, the less weight you can get by with the happier your travels might be. And, if you have special interest (i.e. bird-watching, SCUBA, astronomy) you will have an additional list of must brings that likely don't appear below. Most airlines now restrict the weight of one bag to 23 kg (50 pounds), and some are even more restrictive, so if flying is part of your trip, so it is a good idea to check with your airline before you start to pack.

- *When you check your baggage (planes and trains, most likely) carry all documents and valuables that you will need during travel (i.e. medicine, toothbrush, reading materials) (marked on the list by asterisks \*) and items that the thought of losing for a few days (or permanently) is more painful than the thought of lugging them until you are back on your bike.*
- *Label all of your luggage, inside and out, with sturdy contact information tags.*
- *For trips to less developed areas, it can be win-win to take items that you are willing to give away at the end of the trip (cloths, bicycle, wellness supplies, tools, toiletries, flash lights – almost everything). As you shed items, it physically lightens your load and is spiritually liberating. It feels good to give things away and ultimately, it will allow more space for souvenirs.*

## DOCUMENTS & VALUABLES

Carry these on your person when you have to check your main baggage (i.e. by airplanes and some boats, trains and buses). After you arrive, in some cities, valuables may be safer left in a (reputable) hotel than on your person as you walk/travel around. If the hotel has a lock box/safe, use it. If a safe is not available concealed and bury your valuables in your luggage and button-up all of your luggage so it is not clear where the valuables are and none of it is inviting to tamper with. Leave valuable jewelry at home!

- **\* Waterproof holder for documents.** This can be as simple as a zip-lock bag – freezer-grade are more durable.
- **\* Photo ID and/or passport with visa(s), and copies.** *What is appropriate will be determined by the specifics of your domestic or international itinerary. Photocopy the ID page of your passport and keep it separate, in case of loss. Once you have entered a country, and if you are not traveling to another country, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be prudent to leave your passport in the safe or safety deposit box at the hotel and just carry the copy during your travels. It may be worth paying a little more for your first and last hotel to get one that offers this service. Bear in mind that besides entering the country, passports or ID can be requested when changing money and other official transactions. Sometimes a copy will work and sometimes they won't.*
- **\* Airline ticket: domestic & international.** *With the invention of e-tickets what constitutes a "ticket" and "passenger coupon" can be a little vague, but it is always good to have some paper documentation of your reservation. Carry a copy the "passenger's coupon" separate and keep it safe. Once you have entered a country, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be advisable to leave your documents in the hotel safe.*
- **\* Vaccination certificate with record of appropriate vaccinations.** *This is usually a yellow booklet, which is only necessary for entering countries that require proof of vaccinations – usually in the tropics. If you don't need to be carrying your vaccination record, once you have entered a country, and if you aren't traveling to another country, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be advisable to leave this in the hotel safe.*
- **\* Money belt or chest, angle or shoulder pouch.** *Travel with your valuables and documents in a protected place.*
- **\* Travelers checks.** *Keep TC's separate from passport and store TC receipts separately. Note that TCs are difficult to cash in many less developed countries. Check to see if a debit card is a viable alternative – again possibly problematic in less developed countries. Once you have entered a country and done your foreign exchange transactions, and if you will only be in small towns and rural areas where foreign exchange facilities are non-existent, and if you aren't traveling to another country, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be advisable to leave some excess TCs in the hotel safe.*
- **\* Cash (international)** *One of the most universally accepted, and easiest to exchange notes, around the world is new denomination of U.S. \$100 bills. Almost as good and occasionally preferred, are large denomination euros. Once you have done your foreign exchange transactions, and if you will only be in small towns and rural areas*

where foreign exchange facilities are non-existent, and if you aren't traveling to another country, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be advisable to leave all but an emergency supply of cash in the hotel safe.

— **\* Cash (local).** While it is better to carry international currency primarily in large denominations it may be advantageous to exchange it for local currency in smaller denominations, more matched to the size of transactions that you expect to be making. Split your local cash into at least two separate groups; quick cash that you are likely to need on the immediate outing, which is kept reasonably accessible, and the rest – reserve cash – in a more secure, less accessible location. When needed, and when you have some privacy, you can transfer resources from your reserve supply to your quick cash location.

— **\* Cards.** Driver license, credit or debt (limited usefulness in many less developed countries), insurance, prepaid phone, membership (Youth Hostel, frequent flyer, airline clubs). Keep a separate list of numbers, expiration dates and phone numbers to call in case of loss. Once you have entered a, and if you will only be in small towns and rural areas, and if you are returning to your starting point, it may be advisable to leave all the cards you are unlikely to use in the safe or safety deposit box at the hotel.

— **\* Vouchers, confirmations and receipts.** For accommodations, transportation and other pre-arranged services.

— **\* Trip itinerary.** Now-a-days, in some parts of the world, for security reasons, you should be selective about who you share and discuss this information with.

— **\* Medic alert ID necklace or bracelet, personal medical summary.** Listing allergies, blood type, medicines.

— **\* “In case of emergency list”, travel insurance policy.** With names and numbers to call in case of an emergency.

## CLOTHES

Dress in most of the world is modest, conservative and informal. While cycling, loose shorts and bright shirts are generally acceptable. Off the bike different attire may be much more appropriate. In many places, when meeting people, be prepared to cover your legs and midriff. It is also not unusual to meet people of importance, so it is good to have one nice, clean outfit along. You can control the size of your load by selecting versatile items and washing the day's riding clothes every afternoon. Laundry is often done by hand so avoid fabrics that are heavy, stiff and take a long time to dry (i.e. blue jeans/denim.) Look for sturdy, temperature appropriate, quick drying fabrics.

*Tip: I like to take a change of cloths and a swimsuit in my airplane carry-on: In the event your bags get lost, with the swim suit, you can console your misery on the beach or at the side of a pool, at your destination, while you wait for your bags to catch up with you. On long trip with multiple flight you might be able to find a shower and change cloths at an intermediary airports.*

*Tip: Organize your clothes into groups and pack them in separate plastic bags. This makes it easier to find things, easier to unpack and repack your backs, and keeps your cloths dry and clean in wet or dusty conditions.*

— **2 pairs of shorts for cycling.** Lycra-type bicycle shorts are designed to be worn without underwear. If you are riding long days it is best to wash them out at the end of every day. On the day you wash and dry one pair you can wear the other. An alternative strategy is to wear touring bike shorts, which are looser and designed to be worn with bicycle underwear. You will still want to wash the underwear after full days, but you can often go a couple days between washing the shorts. The advantage the latter strategy is they are more modest and bicycle underwear dries much faster than Lycra bike shorts chamois.

— **1 short pants.** Select for multipurpose; slip over Lycra bike shorts, swim in them, wear on a walk and/or sleep-wear. They can be part of convertible long pants.

— **1 long pants or skirt.** Select for easy of washing and drying, and quad-duty; cycle in if need be, slip on and off easily over bike shorts, suitable for an evenings in the city and village and presentable enough for a courtesy call on a dignitary – part of your “pannier-formal” outfit. Lightweight, quick drying, convertible pants are increasingly popular. Blue jeans/denim fails on most of the important criteria so tend to make lousy traveling pants.

— **2-3 short-sleeve shirts; T-shirts, collard shirts or jerseys.** These should be comfortable for cycling, nice enough to stroll through a town or village and comfy enough for a night shirt. You can keep the weight down by just taking fewer and rinsing out that day's shirt when you wash-up in the evening.

— **1 long-sleeve shirt.** Select for quad-duty; If there is going to be in a lot of; intense sun, cool weather, or bugs, consider substituting light weight long sleeve shirts. You can pick up suitable, slightly oversize, long sleeve shirts at thrift stores. They are inexpensive and versatile; reduce sun exposure to the skin (light colors are best), are a good barrier to bugs (light colors are best), add a little warmth in cool weather, nice enough to be part of the “pannier formal” ensemble, and are expendable. If the climate is cold you will want to switch the numbers for short-sleeve and long-sleeve.

- **2-3 sets of underwear.** *Cycling shorts are design to be worn without underwear so you may not use as many as you expect if you spend most of the day on your bicycle. Items used for the cycling can be rinsed out when you wash-up in the evening.*
- **2-3 sets of socks.** *Socks are one of the slowest items of apparel to dry. Almost everything dries fast than cotton.*
- **1 pair of shoes.** *If you are only bringing one pair of shoes it should be a versatile, comfortable, multipurpose style good for cycling, walking, dancing, etc. Cycling sandals are an option in some situation, but because of broken urban sidewalks, rough village paths and insects, snakes and other creepy-crawlers, **closed-toes shoes are advisable** in many parts of the world. If you use shoes with cleats, bring extra cleats on long tours.*
- **1 pair of shower sandals.** *Rubber thongs, zorries, flip-flops, poda-poda, Teva's or something for when you don't want to wear shoes and don't want to go barefoot, like in some showers.*
- **Nightwear.** *Often this can be adapted for items in other categories; shirts, short pants, underwear.*
- **Bathing suit.** *Athletic shorts and a T-shirt can often substitute.*
- **Swim goggles.** *Swim goggles can also be pressed into service in sand storms and other extreme weather events.*
- **Neck tie (men).** *They pack small and are an easy way to make an impression, if you need to.*
- **Sun/rain hat.** *For off-the-bike excursions, a helmet serves the purpose while on the bike.*

*Tip: Drying is the process of water evaporating. The less water there is in your cloths to evaporate the shorter the drying time. To reduce the amount of water in your freshly washed cloths, wring them well, THEN roll them in a dry towel and dance on them, then hang them with as much ventilation and heat as possible. Gravity will continue to pull moisture to the bottom, especially in synthetic fabrics, so check every hour and re-wring the bottom edge until no more drips drop. Once it cools down outside, overnight, cloths will often dry better inside, especially with a fan.*

If you don't have the luxury of finding ideal bicycling conditions, the following constitute a pretty compact three-season (spring, summer, and fall) foul weather kit. **Check the climate charts for your destination to determine your needs.** Some "hot climates" can get quite cold overnight and into the morning. especially in the "cold season" and at higher elevations. Selecting items that **layer** well can help you adjust as conditions change during the day, or from day-to-day.

- **Wind/rain jacket.** *A breathable, Gore-Tex-type shell is usually advantageous. It should be roomy enough to fit over an insulating layer when more warmth is needed. Bright colors and reflective elements are preferable for bicycling.*
- **Wind/rain pants.** *Select for dual purpose; protection in nasty weather and that can be slipped-on over bike shorts for modesty around people at longer stops. Reflective elements are preferable for bicycling.*
- **Warm Legs; leg warmers or tight.** *Leg warmers are lightweight, compact, versatile and economical way to get one more season (spring and fall) out of your warm weather riding gear. Combined with wind pants they will take you even further. If you'll need to keep your legs covered all day cycling pants, tights, long underwear or fleece pants are a consideration. Fabrics that are light, compact well, warm when wet and dry quickly are advantageous.*
- **Warm Arms; arm warmers.** *Arm warmers are a lightweight, compact, versatile and economical way to get one more season (spring and fall) out of your warm weather riding gear. Combined with a wind jack they will take you even further.*
- **Warm Body; insulating sweater, jacket, vest.** *An insulated layer for warmth, when needed. Down filling is light and warm in **dry** cold conditions. Fabrics like fleece are light, stay warm when wet and dry relatively quickly.*
- **Warm Head; headband (ear warm) or ski cap.** *Comfortable eyes are huge in cold weather. When nights and mornings are below 10°C (50°F) an "ear-warmer" adds a lot of comfort. When nights and mornings are below 5°C (40°F) a "watch-cap" is called for.*
- **Warm Hands; full finger gloves or mittens.** *When nights and mornings are below 10°C (50°F) or wet, nylon or Gore-Tex shells over-mitten are a lightweight way to add a lot of comfort. When nights and mornings are below 5°C (40°F) add gloves or socks under the over-mittens.*
- **Warm Feet; thick socks, shoe covers/booties, spats, gaiters, helmet cover.** *When nights and mornings are below 10°C (50°F) or wet, it is time to provide extra protection to the feet.*

## WELLNESS KIT

This is important stuff. While major illness is a rare problem, “small things” like scrapes, cuts, intestinal bugs and the sun have caused more than their share of inconvenience. Most skin is not designed to take large amounts of unfiltered sun. Be prepared to prevent sun and heat related illness. Clean even minor cuts immediately -- bacteria loves humid conditions. Drinking enough water so that you don't dehydrate and protecting yourself from the sun will get you a long way. If you want spray-on topical items, spritzer bottles are recommended over aerosol cans.

- **\* Prescription glasses or contact lens and accessories, cleaning solution, etc.** *Don't forget the retainer, repair kit, case, cleaner and preparation. Some people opt for individually packaged, daily-wear contacts.*
- **Extra prescription glasses.** *A backup pair for regular glasses wearers – just in case. Contact lens users should bring back-up prescription glass in dust environments.*
- **\* Prescription medicine / inhaler.** *Also bring a duplicate prescription giving generic names.*
- **\* Allergy medicine.** *Antihistamine.*
- **Antibiotics.** *The two most common types of infections are gut and lung. Check with your physician. Note: Usually, antibiotics, NOT strong anti-diarrhea medicines (chemical corks/Imodium) are the first recommend treatment for intestinal upset and runaway bowels. Discuss with you physician remedies for treating the problem – not just the symptoms.*
- **Anti-malaria pills.** *Not always necessary, but extremely important in areas with malaria. Check with your physician or a travel clinic.*
- **Waterless hand sanitizer.** *Over-use of hand-sanitizer is creating super-bugs, so soap and water are best when available.*
- **Bed net.** *Not always necessary. Nighttime biting insects are more of a problem in lowlands and more so only in certain seasons. Upscale hotels are more likely to have nets, fans, air-conditioners, or all of these, which lessens the problem. Self-supplied nets are useful in low-end hotels and village housing in seasons and places with night insects. Self-standing nets are most versatile. By far the best we've used are from Long Road Travel Supplies, 800-359-6040, 510-540-4763, sales@longroad.com or www.longroad.com.*
- **Feminine hygiene supplies (women).** *Pads are more readily available in less developed areas than tampons.*
- **First aid kit.** *Bandages, antiseptic cream / antibiotic ointment, 3 x 3 sterile pads, gauze, adhesive tape, ace bandage, hydrogen peroxide, tweezers, scissors.*
- **\* Medicine / remedies.** *Inventory of treatment for allergies, headache, muscle ache, joint aches sinus and respirator infections, sore throats, indigestion (bismuth, peptol bismal), nausea, constipation, diarrhea, insomnia, motion sickness, insect bites, rash, fungus, infection, etc. If possible get pills in "blister packs," capsule or individually packaged forms. Bulk packed pills tend to vibrate into dust on long bicycle tours.*
- **Vitamins.** *Your needs will depend on where & when you are traveling & what you are willing to eat.*
- **Rehydration / electrolyte treatment.** *Tablets or powder to take with water (i.e. sports drink) to replace fluids and electrolytes. It is possible to get a lot of electrolytes though diet, but you may need to supplement these if you sweat profusely or get diarrhea.*
- **Eye drops.**
- **\* Sunglasses.** *Good UV filtering lenses – avoid side blinders that block peripheral vision while on a bike. There are times when clear lenses are nice so frames with interchangeable lenses can be advantageous.*
- **Sun block (waterproof).** *Pack a lot; get a high "sun protection factor" (i.e. SPF 30 or higher).*
- **Lip balm / chap stick.** *Select a variety with a high "sun protection factor".*
- **Non-petroleum skin lubricant** *(i.e. Y-K Jelly, Aquaphor, Desitin, or whatever your preference is). Reduces chafing and genital discomfort from extend time in the saddle. Butter works too, but it gets rancid.*
- **Water purifying means.** *Bottled water is increasing available in towns around the world, but they leave garbage. Iodine and chlorine tablets are useful in emergencies – if you have a half-hour to wait and use them once a week at the most! For health reason, it is not advisable to drink iodized water more than once a week. Some people suggest that purifying chemical kill enough helpful stuff in your gut to leave you susceptible to other bugs, but because of this property they also work as a treatment for gut rumblings, in an emergency. If you want chemicals check the drug store for tablets. Three better choices are; a filtering pumps, an ultraviolet light purifiers (search: SteriPen) or an oxidant purifiers (search MSR MIOX). Filtering pumps tend to be the most versatile and labor intensive, including requiring the most maintenance. The last two, hi-tech methods, require clear water, which is increasingly available, and use batteries -- which can be rechargeable. The MIOX also need salt and adds a little taste to the water, which is mostly an issue if you start with a high mineral water that already has a taste. The UV pen is the most fragile, but generally can be sufficiently protected. The UV pen is generally the fastest. For more discussion on water treatment see <http://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/water-treatment-backcountry.html> and read and click through the pages.*

- **insect repellent.** *DEET (n,n-diethyl-m-toluanide) is the common chemical, but the science on this is changing. Because of absorption & toxicity of liquid repellents, barrier methods (long sleeve shirts, long pants, shoes and socks, and nets) are recommended. Use rub-on products with concentration of DEET of less than 35%. Aerosols are toxic if inhaled. DEET is not recommended for children. An alternative is picaridin (the oil of lemon eucalyptus.)*
- **contraceptives and prophylactics.** *For those whose lifestyle warrants them.*

## GENERALLY RECOMMENDED ITEMS

These items are best brought because they tend to be used often or are small and hard to improvise.

- **\* Towel and wash cloth.** *Outdoor stores sell “pack towels” that are light, compact, absorbent and dry quickly.*
- **\* Soap, shampoo, toothpaste, shaving cream, lotions, moisturizers, deodorant, etc.** *Selecting environmentally friend products is encouraged. There are very few areas where you need more than ten days supply. Refills of most of these items can be purchased locally. Some international airports have showers so including toiletries and a change of clothes in your carry-on can be useful for long trips with a long layover. Liquids of more than 3oz. are prohibited in carry-on bags.*
- **\* Toothbrush with case, dental floss, comb, brush, shaver/razor, scissors, mirror, cotton swabs, cotton balls, toilet paper.**
- **Laundry detergent.** *Selecting environmentally friend products is encouraged. This is for your nightly hand washing. In less developed countries it's often easy and practical to buy it in small packets on location. Bars of laundry soap won't spill in your packs like liquids and powders.*
- **Bandanna.** *Useful for sweat, dust and a variety of other needs and emergencies.*
- **Maps.** *Help you keep your bearings. Sometimes maps are easier to buy at your destination.*
- **\* Wristwatch or travel alarm.** *But leave your expensive watch AND attention getting jewelry at home.*
- **Pocket knife.** *Scissors & can opener are nice features. Knives are prohibited from being carried onto airplanes.*
- **Eating set:** *A full set would be a knife, fork, spoon, plate or bowl, and (folding) cup). Even if you don't plan to cook any meals, these items will facilitate you cutting up fruit, having a yogurt, making a sandwich or having a picnic. The knife can be the same as your pocket knife. Spoons are more versatile than forks. And, a deep plate or broad bowl with cover everything from soup to sandwiches.*
- **\* Water bottle(s).** *Valuable for fluids on all modes of travel -- carry one on airplanes, buses, boat, trains, etc. Flying you can only carry a small amount of liquid past airport security, the bottled water sold beyond security is obscenely overpriced (and grabbing another plastic bottle is wasteful – see below) and you might dehydrate relying on the tiny cups of water served in-flight, so it is wise to carry a refillable bottle. Refill it before embarking and then again before disembarking the airplane for refreshment until you can situate yourself to get other liquids. It should be your first choice to refill your water bottle from a tap, if and when you can. Think twice about buying bottled water: most bottles are made out petroleum and don't get reused or recycled, it takes considerable resources to ship them and much bottled water is from the same source as tap water anyway.*
- **Flashlight.** *A LED headlamp-style provides a bright light and allows you to cycle or do other work hands free.*
- **Extra batteries.** *Specialty batteries can be hard to find in remote areas – rechargeable batteries are ideal.*
- **Battery charger and plug adapter.** *If you are using more environmentally friendly rechargeable batteries.*
- **Matches / lighter.** *Use to light candles, lamps or a mosquito coil. Restrictions apply for air planes.*
- **Sewing and repair kit.** *Needle, thread, safety pins, bottoms, small scissors.*
- **\* Ear plugs.** *The soundproofing to the hotel's bar/disco may be minimal, and planes, trains, buses, villages, cities and snoring roommates may be louder than you may find enjoyable.*
- **Luggage.** *This will be panniers on self-contained tours. A large, compact packing, duffel bag is also useful for packing panniers and loose items when you need to take a plane, train, bus, boat, etc.*
- **Padlock.** *Useful on luggage, the doors of some bare-bone hotels and lockers at hostels. In some situations plastic wire ties can substitute.*
- **Assorted plastic / ziploc bags.** *Organization groups of items in clear plastic bags, also protect gear from water and dust.*

## OPTIONAL ITEMS

If your bags are getting heavy, these are the first items you might pare back or eliminate.

- **Field guides.** *Not only travel guides, but perhaps also books on birds, mammals, geology, plants, etc.*

— **Language books.** *Bilingual dictionary and/or phrase book.*

— **\* Reading materials / e-book.** *Many people choose authors or subjects related to the area being visited and volumes can be given away.*

— **Journal, diary, notebook, sketch pad, pens, pastels, pencils, sharpies.** *Some way to record the experience. Tip: putting books in separate plastic backs helps keep them clean and dry and from getting as dog-eared.*

— **Postcards of your home town and family pictures.** *These are excellent to share with new friends.*

— **Extra passport pictures.** *Important if you will need additional visas along the way.*

— **Addresses of family and friends.** *Technoids can bring pre-printed gum labels.*

— **Business cards.** *(Even retired & students.) You will likely be asked for your address -- this is an easy solution.*

— **Small gifts.** *Pens, maps, rulers, math & science things, novels, magazines, medical supplies, stamps, postcards, T-shirts, hats, cassettes, puzzles, jump ropes, baseballs, pins, balloons, etc. Ordinary people generally prefer gifts (hometown postcards, school supplies, articles of clothing, your photo) to money, as small "deeds of friendship". Please don't bring bags of small gifts (candy) to distribute gratuitously. It is very detrimental to the culture and individual's dignity. In a family or at a school it is best to give gift to an adult. They will know the most equitable distribution of the item. Generally it is best to ignore begging children. Traditional societies have mechanism for helping those truly in need. Please have a relationship and a reason behind every gift. Guides, porters, photo subjects and others associated with tourism generally prefer money to gifts -- or both -- for tips (whether they are helpful or not).*

— **Plastic cup (folding).** *If you will be taking bucket baths, a cup will help keep the water clean.*

— **Sink stopper.** *Flat, universal style -- many sinks & tubs around the world have lost their stoppers.*

— **Bottle brush.** *Help with the cleaning of water bottles.*

— **Laundry bag.** *Can be a mesh, cloth or plastic bag.*

— **Cord or clothesline, clothespin, hangers.** *When you are traveling light you need to wash clothes frequently.*

— **Super glue, tape, adhesives, duct tape.** *Your favorite items to fight entropy.*

— **Rucksack.** *To get away from the bike for a day-hike -- a smallish lightweight one is usually sufficient.*

— **Umbrella.** *Usually a small folding design -- these can help in rain and sun.*

— **Whistle, pepper spray and signal mirror.** *The situation at your destination will determine how important these are. It is illegal to possess pepper spray in many countries and to carry it onto a commercial airplane.*

— **Mylar blanket.** *Emergency item generally used in association with preventing hypothermia.*

— **\* Camera, (film, digital, single use, panoramic, video.)** *Cameras are unsurpassed in helping people remember and share their experiences. Remember to bring all the accessories. Bring the instruction book if it is new.*

— **Film or data storage card.** *(Storage medium for electronic devices) lots of it -- film and electronic storage tends to be more expensive as you go a field.*

— **Camera accessories.** *Flash, lens, filters, tri- or monopod, lens cleaner, lead-lined bag, batteries, battery charger.*

— **Tape recorder and blank tapes.** *Can be used for journal or recording local music and sounds.*

— **Binoculars.** *Of greatest advantage for bird and wildlife viewing. If this is not your focus they may be expendable.*

— **Calculator / currency converter.** *For figuring currency conversions.*

— **Laptops, notebook computer, tablet, PDA and accessories (i.e. mouse, USB cables, Ethernet cable, AC adapter / battery charger).** *Another way to record your experiences and communicate.*

— **Cell phone / smart phone.** *It is nice not to be connected, but these can be useful in emergencies. Check roaming and international compatibility and additional charges.*

— **MP3-type device / player and ear phones.**

— **Battery charger, power converter, plug adapters.**

— **Compass or GPS device.** *If you are going exploring this may help you find your way out.*

— **Amusements.** *Cross-word or logic puzzles, cards, short-wave radio, harmonica, Mr. Bubbles, walkman, etc.*

— **Instant-coffee or herb tea.** *Any thing(legal) that you are addicted to that might be hard to find in rural markets.*

— **High energy comfort food.** *Because traveling and the foreign milieu aren't your normal routine, it is nice to have a "treat-a-day" of high energy comfort food -- food bars, trail mix or dried fruit (chocolate melts in heat). A treat that will bring you back to life when traveling gets the best of you.*

— **Good luck charm**

## BICYCLE EQUIPMENT

When packing the bike for a plane, I tend to pack all of my bike stuff together with the bike, except the helmet, so if the airline loses that parcel it all goes together, and when I go to "plan B" I won't be reminded that I had ever planned a bike trip. Most airlines now restrict the weight of one bag to 23 kg (50 pounds), and some are even more restrictive, so it is a good idea to check with your airline before you start to pack.

- **Bicycle.** *There are a number of variables for choosing a bike. For a discussion on this see the IBF publication "Selecting & Preparing A Bike For Travel In Remote Areas". As airline baggage charges have become more predatory, folding touring bikes have become an increasing viable consideration. Another is an option – totally voluntary – is to consider bring (buying) a used bike that you can donate to a charity or sell inexpensively, at the end of your trip.*
- **Bicycle box, bag or case.** *There are a number of consideration in this decision; the fragility of the bike, storage possibilities, airline or railroad policies.*
- **Bicycle helmet.** *Many serious bicycle accidents involve only the bicyclist falling or crashing into a fixed object. Accidents are a scourge not only of beginning riders or of young riders. Every bicyclist is wise wear an approved bicycle helmet regardless of his or her age, ability, or whether he or she is riding across the street or across the continent. Compared to the lifetime cost of a head injury or the finality of death, the cost of wearing a bicycle helmet is small. As well as reducing injuries in an accident, it will keep the sun off your head -- sun visors add to the protection provided. Pack your helmet carefully so that it can't get crushed.*
- **Cycling gloves.** *Gloves don't avoid accidents but they can be indispensable for keep stones out of your palms in the case of an accident. They are invaluable for reduces road vibration. In warm weather short finger mesh-back gloves are popular. For colder or more inclement conditions some style of full finger gloves are more appropriate.*
- **Reflective vest or garish outer wear.** *It never hurts to be more visible.*
- **Handlebar padding.** *Essential for wash-board / corrugated roads.*
- **Head light and tail light / reflector.**
- **Bike bell.**
- **Pant clips or rubber bands.** *Reflective pant clips add a little bit. If you are out after dark you can wear them even if you aren't wearing long pants. Note that they are largely blocked by any panniers you are riding with.*
- **Baggage rack(s).** *A rear rack is normal. Consider adding a front rack if you will be carrying more than 14 kg (30 lbs) of gear.*
- **Panniers and rain covers.** *For self-contained tours. To carry a load on your bicycle you will need a rack and panniers (saddlebags). These need to be sturdy and large enough to carry what you need, but not too large to tempt you to bring too much. If you do have extra space, fill it later with souvenirs. The weight should be spread evenly and ideally kept low and close to the bike. If you are "fully loaded", a front rack, rear rack and four modest packs (two front and two rear) are better than two giant bulging ones. If you are traveling with only a moderate amount of things (about 22 lbs / 10 kg) you can usually get by with just a rear rack and a medium size pannier on each side. If the weight gets too heavy in the rear the front wheel becomes un-weighted and hard to handle. You then need to expend additional energy to keep the bike under control, especially going up hill. For heavy loads split the weight between front and rear racks.*
- **Handlebar bag, waist pack or backpack.** *This is where you put the accessories that you want handy (i.e. camera, valuables, snacks, sun lotion, notepad, etc.) Waist packs that can be slung on the handlebars are very versatile. Avoid putting too much weight in a handlebar bag because the affect the way the bike handles. An alternative is a backpack or rucksack but this deserves carefully consider. For many people backpack cause their backs to get uncomfortably hot and ache after a few miles. The heavier the load the faster this happens. Waist packs can be more manageable.*
- **Straps or bungee cords.** *Nylon straps with buckles tend to hold items more firmly than elastic (bungee) straps.*
- **Tire pump.** *Check that the pump nozzle fits the valves on your tubes, or bring the appropriate adapter (Presta or Schrader). Tip: Cut a cross-section of an old inner tube and slip it over nozzle of the pump to keep dust out.*
- **Water bottle cage.** *Should be sturdy -- flimsy one disintegrate on rough roads.*
- **Water bottles or hydration pack.** *Usually at least two large bottles. Your need to carry water depends on your general consumption, the weather, the mileage, and the availability of water. In hot weather, one liter per 10-15 km (6-10 miles) may be necessary. I prefer to carry large quantities of water in a couple of water bottles and a large capacity water sack. It's better to have too much capacity and not fill it, than to run short of water. Some people like to carry water bladders on their backs, but some people find the heat buildup unbearable, and/or the weight back breaking – know before you go. People who use water backpacks tend to drink more water, more regularly, which is good.*
- **Toe clips or clip-in pedals.** *Optional: they increase efficiency, which is good – some use them, and some don't. Clip-in pedals can be a problem on really rough roads.*
- **Rear view mirror.** *Optional: while mirrors are convenient, you should be skilled at turning your head to look and know when it is important do this. Mirrors are vulnerable to damage.*
- **Bike computer or GPS device.**

- **Fenders or mud guards.** *Fenders can be a real bother or great help. If you hit real mud, fenders clog in seconds. On airplanes, trains and buses they get bent out of adjustment – if your tour involves multi-modal travel fenders can be a pain to disassemble, reinstall and keep adjusted. In the dry season they don't serve a huge purpose. In the rainy season, if you ride off of paved roads, they can quickly get clogged with mud and become a source of great aggravation. There are commercially available flat guards that mount on the rear rack and down tube that help some and don't clog as quickly. In wet weather on paved roads they will help keep your smile fresh and are well worth the effort. A DIY substitute, in wet weather, is to attach found plastic to the racks to protect your gear and reduce some of the spray from the wheels getting up to your body.*
- **Lightweight 3'-5' cable & padlock.** *Most property crime is opportunistic -- people aren't carrying large bolt cutters. Generally while touring, bikes are never far from you and kept over-night in hotel rooms, but there may be times when you will want to discourage an opportunistic "grab & go" opportunism. In a group, one sufficiently long cable and lock can be sufficient.*

## PERSONAL BICYCLE TOOL KIT & PARTS

There is an increasing amount of variation in bikes. This is a general list. Make sure you carry the tools that work on your bike.

- **Wedge tool bag.** *These are made to fit under the seat and are very handy for carrying tools you need frequently.*
- **Tire levers.** *Don't try to use screwdrivers as tire levers!*
- **Inner tubes.** *Double check that they are the correct size for your tires. 27" and 700 tire users generally need more spares than mountain bikers.*
- **Patch kit: glue, patches, emery paper.** *Make sure that you have patches and the glue is fresh.*
- **Adjustable / Crecent wrench.** *4"-6" is a good size.*
- **4 mm, 5 mm, 6 mm hex (Allen) wrench set.** *Hex wrench screws and bolts are increasing common on bike. Make sure you have a set that fits the needs of your bike.*
- **Phillips screwdriver and blade / flat head screwdriver.**
- **Pliers.** *Long nose, with wire cutters, are often most useful.*
- **Old toothbrush or gear cleaning bush.** *For cleaning dust and gunk off the chain.*
- **Chain lubrication.** *A non-aerosol squeeze bottle is more environmentally friendly. During a tour the primary concern with regards to lubrication is usually the chain. It should be kept adequately lubricated, but not over-lubricated. This is most important on dusty roads where excessively oiled chains will accumulate gunk. To lightly and evenly oil a chain spread one-drop of oil individually across each link, at the link pin. After completing this for the full length of the chain spin the crank for a couple minutes to distribute the oil evenly, and then dry the outer exposed surface of the link plates if there is excessive oil. An added benefit of this procedure is it reduces consumption of toxic chemicals.*
- **Brake cable.** *Check inside the brake hand levels for fraying and ware.*
- **Gear cable.** *Make sure your gear cable is long enough to reach from the shift lever to the rear derailleur.*
- **Spokes.** *One bike may use several sizes of spokes, checks that they fit your wheel. MTB's have few breaks. Extra spokes are most important for heavy people with heavy loads and older wheels.)*
- **Any other wrenches needed to do basic adjustments to your brakes, seat, derailleur or handlebars.**

*The following items are needed in certain limited situations.*

- **Freewheel or cassette removing tool.** *This is needed if you break spokes on your rear wheel. They are brand specific so there needs to be one along that fit your bikes brand. Check with other members of the group.*
- **Spare tire.** *Most important for 27" and 700 tire users. MTB tires usually need an extended trip to wear out. For the 26-inch wheels (on most MTB's), either 26 x 1.5 or 26 x 1.75 tires are generally adequate, unless you are heading out on an expedition. For narrow 27 inch or 700 wheels try to use 1 3/8 inch / 35C or fatter tires. The beefier the tire is the better (as long as your frame can accommodate them.) Tires should have tread but usually shouldn't and don't need to be knobby.*
- **Rear axle fitting your hubs.** *Generally, most important for heavy people with heavy loads.*
- **Brake pads.** *If your pads are new when you start, only need on extended trips in mountainous areas.*
- **Safety flag.** *If an extra element of visibility will improve your survival rate.*

## VILLAGE HOUSING, ECONOMY HOTEL & HOSTEL EQUIPMENT



Village housing and small rural hotels may be lacking in some of the creature comforts you are accustomed to. You might not be able to pack all of these, but this short list should make your stay more comfortable.

- \_\_\_ **Sheets or sleep sack.** *Some small hotels don't provide linens or they are tattered. Your sheet can also be used as a picnic blanket, hung as a sunscreen and given as a gift at the end of the trip. A sleep sack is different from a sleeping bag in that it has no loft or insulation. They are essentially a single-bed sheets that have been sewn together along the base and side. They were quite popular during the early days of the hostel movement. They are useful for village stays in warm climates, where hotel bedding may not be as crisp and new as you would find at a five-star hotel, for a nap under a tree and various other situation that you might encounter traveling.*
- \_\_\_ **Sleeping bag or blanket.** *Tailor to needs (cold season, highlands areas, etc.) Check climate chart.*
- \_\_\_ **\* Air-pillow or camping pillow.** *Provides extra comfort on planes, trains, buses or hard floors.*
- \_\_\_ **Pillow case.** *One trick for creating a pillow in a pinch is to take a small pillow case or stuff sack and stuff it with cloths until it is sufficient to cushion your head.*
- \_\_\_ **Backpackers air mattress or foam sleeping pad.** *Thermarest is the classic. They are useful on hard floors of village housing or for a nap anyplace at midday.*
- \_\_\_ **Camp chair / foam pad chair.** *An indulgence -- a common type works with self-inflating foam pads.*
- \_\_\_ **Ground cloth.** *Locally purchased straw mats can serve the same function.*

## CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Camping is not practical in all parts of the non-Western world so investigate before planning to rely on it. Another argument for steering towards "village housing and economy hotels" is camping limits some interesting opportunity for social interaction, and takes time to set-up and break. Camping can also be associated with more security problems.

- \_\_\_ **Tent and rain fly, and all tent stakes, poles, cords and ropes.**
- \_\_\_ **Ground sheet/tarp.**
- \_\_\_ **Plastic trowel.**

## COOKING EQUIPMENT

Carrying the cooking equipment can be a shared task. Someone needs to coordinate this. Local restaurants can be so economical that you can reduce your burden and increase your social integration by relying on them. Some countries have more interesting cuisines than others.

- \_\_\_ **Stove.** *"Multi-fuel stoves are most versatile in remote area. The stove must be empty of fuel and open (under no pressure) on airplanes.*
- \_\_\_ **Stove spare parts and repair kit.**
- \_\_\_ **Fuel bottle.** *Containers must be empty on airplanes. Pressurized fuel cans are forbidden from airplanes.*
- \_\_\_ **Cooking pots, pans and lids.** *The size of the group will dictate the specifics*
- \_\_\_ **Cooking utensils; spoons, spatula, large knife, can opener, pot gripper (channel locks).**
- \_\_\_ **Scouring/scrub pad, dish soap.**
- \_\_\_ **Spices.** *Bring an assortment of salt, pepper, garlic, etc., in film cans. Spices are often hard to buy in small quantities; they are light and add to meals.*

## GROUP AND EXTENDED TRAVEL BIKE EQUIPMENT

The group leader is responsible and should coordinate this equipment. Exactly what needs to be packed is dependent upon the length of the trip, the isolation of the route and the judgment of the leader.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ___ <b>Allen wrenches: 3mm, 4mm, 5mm, 6mm.</b>  | ___ <b>Bottom bracket sealed bearing remover.</b>                              |
| ___ <b>Metric wrenches: 8mm-10mm, 9mm-11mm.</b> | ___ <b>Pedal wrench.</b>   |
| ___ <b>Spoke wrenches: DT, Japanese.</b>        | ___ <b>Headset wrench 30mm-32mm.</b>   |
| ___ <b>Cone wrenches: 13mm-14mm, 15mm-16mm.</b> | ___ <b>Chain rivet tool.</b>   |
| ___ <b>Crank bolt wrench; 14mm/15mm/16mm.</b>   | ___ <b>12" adjustable wrench.</b>  |
| ___ <b>Crank puller (universal).</b>            | ___ <b>Pocket vise.</b>  |
| ___ <b>Adjustable cup pin spanner.</b>          | ___ <b>Pliers.</b> <i>Long nose, with wire cutters, are often most useful.</i> |
| ___ <b>Adjustable cup slot spanner.</b>         | ___ <b>Vise grips or channel locks.</b>  |
| ___ <b>Bottom bracket lock ring spanner.</b>    | ___ <b>File.</b>   |
| ___ <b>Freewheel pin spanner.</b>               |  |

- **Tire air gauge.**
- **Spare nuts, bolts, screws & washers for bikes.**
- **Tire boot**
- **Plastic wire ties.**
- **Tape: electricians and duct.**
- **Valve caps.**
- **Epoxy glue.**
- **Grease.**
- **Degreaser.**
- **Shop rag.**

Less frequently needed on short tours

- **Brake pads.**
- **Derailleurs: front and rear.**
- **Rear dropout derailleur bracket.**
- **Chain.**
- **Bearings; headset, crank, hubs and freewheel.**
- **Hose clamps.**

Extremely rarely needed on short tours

- **Freewheel.**
- **Bottom bracket**
- **Pedals: left and right.**
- **Seat**
- **Cross-over cable and cross-over cable hanger.**