



# PACK AND PREP GUIDE

Best Practices In Preparing Your Stuff And Yourself For  
Costa Rica

## WHAT'S THE FORECAST



### Weather

- January-May is dry season, temperatures range from 63-89°F
- Coolest month is February; warmest month is May
- June-December is the rainy season, temperatures range from 65-89°F
- During rainy season, sudden, intense rain is normal and certain areas become very muddy

## CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS



### Respectful Dress in Communities

- Respecting the communities and cultures that we are visiting is essential
- Plan to dress more conservatively than in the U.S.
- Short shorts and revealing tops are a no-go in the communities where we will be doing service

## SERVICE WITH STYLE



### Look Good and Do Good

- Wear older clothing/shoes to avoid ruining new clothes
- Appropriate attire includes T-shirts and tank tops with no visible undergarments and shorts with a 3" or more inseam
- Lightweight, quick dry pants protect your skin from bugs, concrete, and sunburn

## PACK LIGHT



### Bring Only What You Need

- Pack enough clothes for 5-6 days, we'll do laundry
- Bring 1 carry-on backpack and 1 larger backpack/roller suitcase/duffel bag
- Consider re-wear items!
- Leave your nice clothes, hair dryers, etc. at home
- Prepare mentally and emotionally. See resources below!

REFER TO THE PACKING CHECKLIST TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE  
EVERYTHING YOU'LL NEED!

## Recommended Packing Check-List

*This packing list is designed for a 7-10 day trip to Costa Rica. It's been created from years of feedback from GW students like you!  
Each item is on the list for a reason and we ask that you follow it as closely as possible.*

ITEM	GOT IT!
<b>YOUR BACKPACK (Carry-On)</b>	
<b>Valid Passport</b>	
<b>Copies of Passport Photo Page (3)</b>	Bring one copy with you, give one to your leaders and leave one copy with your parents.
<b>Spending Money</b>	\$150-\$250 recommended, Include money for luggage fees-there and back. Bring two (2) forms of money: cash and either a debit or credit card (no American Express).
<b>Global Works Contact Card</b>	You will receive this with your final mailing. This card contains Global Works home office phone numbers. Please keep this in your wallet or carry-on bag during travel days. You can find a copy of this on your trip Login page. Our 24-hour emergency phone number is 720-279-0527.
<b>Water Bottle</b>	*Should hold 1 quart/liter. No bike bottles or camelbaks, please.
<b>Prescriptions/ Vitamins</b>	Include a note for your GW leader in your carry-on detailing dosage and timing of any medications or vitamins.
<b>Set of Clothes/Toiletries</b>	In case baggage is delayed en route to your destination, make sure that you pack a change of clothes, toothbrush and toiletries (make sure they are in a quart-size zip-lock bag to go through airport security).
<b>YOUR BIG BACKPACK/DUFFEL/ROLLER BAG (Checked-Bag or Larger Carry-On)</b> <b>*Note: Label Clothes with your Name</b>	
<b>CLOTHES</b>	
<b>Raincoat</b>	Hooded, lightweight, WATERPROOF. For hiking and working. Look for products that offer breathe-ability, such as through-vents, etc.
<b>Fleece or Sweatshirt</b>	We recommend light fleece. All you hoodie-wearers...please keep this item to ONE (1)!
<b>Long-Sleeve Shirts (2)</b>	One lighter, one warmer. Designate one as a work shirt that may be damaged.
<b>Work/Adventuring T-Shirts (3-4)</b>	We recommend "quick-dry" T's. Please include your stylish Global Works t-shirt in this number! You will receive it one month prior to your departure and will wear it on the travel days.
<b>Everyday Shirts (2-3)</b>	These are for evening activities, dinners, and city days. One (1!) of these nice shirts is for our goodbye party and final dinner with our homestay families.
<b>Shorts (3 Pair)</b>	Quick-drying and lightweight. At least one pair designated as work shorts.
<b>Long Pants (2-3 Pair)</b>	Designate two quick-dry, lightweight pair for hiking and work projects and one warm pair for evenings (i.e. jeans or sweatpants).

<b>Lightweight Pajamas</b>		
<b>Underwear</b>		
<b>Socks (4 Pair)</b>	They should be synthetic material for hiking and working.	
<b>Sun Hat or Baseball Cap</b>		
<b>Bathing Suit</b>		
<b>Comfortable Sneakers or Light-Weight Hiking Shoes</b>	To wear for short hikes, excursions, and community service projects. They will get dirty!	
<b>Waterproof Sandals</b>	Teva or Chacos (or their knockoffs) are best. For programs doing a rafting trip, you will need water shoes that have a strap (no flip-flops, please!). If you choose to bring flip-flops, they must be IN ADDITION to other, more sturdy water shoes.	
<b>TOILETRIES</b>		
<b>Toiletries</b>	Bring in travel size, and store in zip-lock bags or other liquid proof compartment. Toiletries can be replaced as needed.	
<b>Spare Eyeglasses for Contact Wearers</b>	A strap for your glasses is also recommended for rafting and other adventure activities.	
<b>Bath Towel (1)</b>	A quick-dry towel (from an outdoor store) is awesome for travelling—it packs small and dries fast!	
<b>Travel Medical Kit</b>	Your Global Works leader will have a medical kit with the essentials, but please bring an assortment of basic supplies and any medications that you may take regularly. This should include Band-Aids, Tylenol, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, soap, moleskin for blisters and Pepto Bismol caplets. Depending on your needs, you may also wish to include anti-acids, Lactaid, Benadryl and/or Bactrim (consult a doctor).	
<b>Bug Repellant &amp; After-Bite</b>		
<b>Sun Block &amp; Lip Protection</b>	SPF 45 or higher (water proof and sweat proof)	
<b>GEAR/MISC.</b>		
<b>Headlamp or Flashlight</b>	We strongly recommend a headlamp over a flashlight, if possible.	
<b>Leather or Canvas Work Gloves</b>	Label with your name.	
<b>Sunglasses</b>		
<b>Homestay gift</b>	If your group is doing a homestay, we recommend bringing a small "host" gift for your family. You will find out the make-up of your host family a couple days into the trip, so plan on one "host" gift for the entire family. We recommend that you bring something that represents your hometown or something that you like to do. For example, a book or calendar of photos, a card game, Frisbee, team t-shirts, or arts and crafts supplies. Consider your first night in the homestay and how the gift may help you "break the ice" with your host family.	

**CREATURE COMFORTS***Note: These Are Optional Items...Customize Your Comforts To Your Own Needs!*

<b>Protein Bars</b>	Power bars, Luna bars, Cliff bars, Odwalla bars, etc. Recommended especially for vegetarians and picky eaters!	
<b>Sandals/ Flip-Flops</b>	Light, comfortable footwear for showering or just wearing around.	
<b>Umbrella</b>	Small compact umbrella - mostly used for walking to group gatherings during the homestay	
<b>Pocket Spanish- English Dictionary</b>		
<b>Rashguard</b>	A lightweight cover-up for the water during surf lessons - the company provides a lycra shirt, but sometimes students prefer to bring their own	

**BRAVING THE ADVENTURE AHEAD***Note: Reflect On Personal Interests And Coping Mechanisms. What Small Items Can You Bring To Pass The Time When The Going Gets Tough?*

<b>Camera &amp; Charger</b>		
<b>Yoga Mat/Essential Oils/Meditation Materials</b>		
<b>Travel Games/Cards</b>	There will be down time so it's fun to have something to do or play.	
<b>Musical Instrument</b>	Any harmonica or ukulele players out there?!	
<b>Arts-N-Craft Supplies</b>	Adult coloring books, friendship bracelet supplies, etc.	
<b>Small Notebook &amp; Pen</b>		
<b>Reading Materials</b>		
<b>Photos</b>	Bring a few photos of your family, pet and where you're from to share with your Homestay family	

**Feel free to contact Global Works with any packing questions!**[www.globalworkstravel.com](http://www.globalworkstravel.com)[info@globalworkstravel.com](mailto:info@globalworkstravel.com)

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## Low-Cost Packing Tips

Packing for a GW trip shouldn't break the bank! In fact, we have quite a few tips and tricks for keeping packing costs to a minimum!

1. Service work clothes often get ruined and stained from our projects. Pack older clothes/shoes that you won't mind getting dirty in!
2. Check out a thrift store or a discount shop in your area! Need to buy something from the list, but you don't want to pay top dollar? Discount and second-hand stores are perfect for finding a pair of pants or leggings to do service in!

The best patterns and brightest colors earn extra *style points!*

3. Borrow an item. Often, family members or friends in your community might have an item on the list that you can borrow (headlamp, etc.). Keep in mind that if you borrow something, you'll want to take extra special care of it!
4. Many programs require items like water shoes that are similar to Chacos or Tevas, however you don't have to buy Chacos or Tevas, in fact, most GW participants pick up a low-cost pair at Walmart or a similar store and either end up loving them or donating them to the service community at the end of the trip.
5. Find a sponsor, let local stores and community members know what you're doing. You may be able to find someone to help sponsor an item that you need to buy or get a discount at a store.
6. Don't forget to hit up discount sporting good stores (Dicks, Modells, etc.) and see what they have on clearance. Most times there are sales and you can find high quality items for a decent price.

## **Mentally and Emotionally Preparing for Your Global Works Trip**

Getting ready for a group trip abroad requires more than simply packing your bags. In order to get the most out of your experience, prepare yourself mentally and emotionally by following these tips!

### **1. Know Before You Go!**

The more you learn about the country that you're traveling to, the richer your experience! Check out the [Country Resource Page](#) (below). We've compiled a list of books, movies, music, and other media to get you ready! Buffing up on US and trip country current events is important for homestay and other in-country interactions.

### **2. Write a List.**

Write a list about why you are traveling. It's a good way to explore your hopes and overcome fears that naturally arise from a new experience. Pack the list and if you're feeling homesick, getting anxious or worried, or facing a challenge, refer to it and remind yourself of why you're there in the first place!

### **3. Practice Patience!**

As with any type of international travel, change is part of the plan. Take some time to reflect: when things don't go according to plan, how do you react positively? What do you bring to the table? Maybe you take a deep breath, maybe you walk away to take a break from the situation, maybe you seek out someone to talk to? Practice your personal tactics so you are prepared for unpredictable situations.

### **4. Respecting Differences!**

Your GW group will be diverse, giving you the opportunity to learn new things and make new connections. Before your trip, push yourself to find common ground with people in your school or community who you might not have connected with in the past. Practice respect and leadership by using your voice to make a positive impact.

### **5. Disconnect to Reconnect: Consider your relationship with your phone!**

Although your smart phone can serve as an important tool, it's possible that it has become a source for overuse in your life. This is a reality that each Global Works participant will have to face as phones are not permitted on trips. It's important to seriously consider your phone use to prepare for some level of withdrawal, which could manifest as feelings of anxiety, stress, or even loneliness. Refer back to the [Braving the Adventure Ahead](#) section of your Packing Check-List for some tips on how to cope.

Suggestions to titrate down your phone use as your trip approaches are: to host a phone-free dinner party, to leave it at home when you go out to exercise, or to track your usage and set goals to decrease use per day.

### **6. "I can do it"**

Your mind is a powerful tool. Find your own mantra to help gain self-confidence when feeling uneasy. Equip yourself for when the going gets tough.

### **7. Make a Self-Care Plan**

Practice checking in with yourself and re-centering. Refer back to the [Creature Comforts](#) section of your Packing Check-List. Take some time to reflect, be creative, and take your individual self-care routine seriously. We want to set you up for success!

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# Costa Rica Resources

## Books

*Monkeys Are Made of Chocolate* - Jack Ewing

*Two Weeks in Costa Rica* - Matthew Houde and Jennifer Turnbull

## Movies

Endless Summer II (For those going to Tamarindo)

A Bold Peace

## Websites

[The Tico Times](#) (Current Events & News)

[13 foods you have to try in Costa Rica](#)

[23 essential Spanish expressions to learn before visiting Costa Rica](#)

[Pura Vida: Essential Costa Rica](#)

## Global Works Partners

[El Puente Coffee](#) (Cedral)

[Nacientes Palmichal](#)

[Children's Eternal Rainforest](#) (Bosque Eterno de los Niños)

## Travel/ Service

- *How Can I Help? Stories and reflections on service.* Ram Dass and Paul Gorman, 1985. Thoughts and practical implications on the complicated nature of helping others.
  - *Walk Out Walk On: A Learning Journey Into Communities Daring to Live the Future Now,* Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze, 2011. Finding local solutions to big problems within communities, rather than imposing solutions on communities.
  - Philanthropiece Foundation ([philanthropiece.org](http://philanthropiece.org))
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**\*COSTA RICA VACCINATIONS AND TRAVEL HEALTH INFO\***  
**Global Works Travel**

Although the Costa Rican government does not require any immunizations for travel in Costa Rica, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) do recommend several immunizations. As with *any* medical recommendation, we strongly suggest that you consult your physician and/or a travel medicine clinic to make the final decision about immunizations.

**For the most detailed, up to date information, please visit the CDC Website:**

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/costa-rica.htm>