

Drexel Study Abroad Packing List—Bioko

Your fellow students from the Winter 2015-2016 trip have compiled this packing list for your convenience. While this list may seem daunting at first, you'll be glad you had it; we wish we did. Every student from this trip used at least two-thirds of everything on this list. Enjoy.

When flying to EG, you are allowed 2 checked bags (50 pounds each) and a single carry-on. While you can pack quite a few things across these three bags, you will save yourself A TON of stress by packing **MINIMALLY and INTELLIGENTLY**.

Tips for packing:

- You will likely have to buy a lot of things on this list. To save space and weight, take everything out of its packaging. Put in Ziploc bags if necessary
- Find opportunities to 'shoot two birds with one stone' or using one item for multiple purposes
- Starting your buying early and during holidays (Christmas/Black Friday) can save you a lot of money
- Re-wear clothes. This is the field. You may not have the luxury of bathing or washing clothes every day, especially on Moka, so get used to re-wearing dirty clothes
- Coordinate with your fellow classmates to figure out how to spread out the packing list
- Rolling clothes will save a lot of space

There is a fair chance that when you arrive in Malabo your checked bags may not make it and could take a couple days to arrive. This happened to one of our students and past students. Therefore, in your carry-on, pack the following essentials:

- 1 set of field clothes (wear your boots/hiking shoes on the plane)
- Malaria meds
- Essential toiletries (max 3oz/100ml for liquids)
- Electronics (DON'T FORGET LAPTOP)
- Cash

REMEMBER: It's only a 3-month trip; pack what you need, not your life.

ESSENTIAL (MUST BRING THESE)

For the field

Quick dry/moisture wicking is ESSENTIAL for ALL field clothes. NO COTTON. NO COTTON. NO COTTON. COTTON DOES NOT DRY. You are working in one of the wettest places on the planet. It is extremely hot, humid (>90%) with frequent downpours, especially during the rainy season. Your clothes will get drenched either from rain, sweat or walking through rivers. While nothing *ever* dries completely in the rainforest, quick dry clothing will save you from a month of agony.

For Moaba and Moraka beaches:

-2 to 3 *quick dry* long pants for hiking; any type of lightweight, quick dry pants will do. NO JEANS, TOO HEAVY.

Convertible pants are a favorite among past students and *highly* recommended. Having the ability to convert between shorts and long pants is both convenient and save a ton of packing. Columbia convertibles are amazing. Quick-dry cargo pants also work. Polyester NOT RECOMMENDED as it will pick up ALL the seeds when you walk through certain plants on your hikes.

-1-2 pairs of *quick dry* shorts; not needed if using convertible pants.

-3-5 pairs of *quick dry* underwear; NO COTTON. Polyester/Spandex/Nylon material works best. A variety of brands sell compression shorts made of these.

-1 *waterproof and breathable* rain jacket; NOT WATER-RESISTANT. Gore-Tex or Omni-Tech materials work best.

-3-5 *quick dry* shirts; short sleeve OK, long sleeve recommended. Again, polyester/Spandex/nylon material best. NO COTTON. Champion Vapor works well. Tank tops great too.

-6-10 pairs of durable *quick dry* socks; a bit harder to find quick dry socks unfortunately. Thin socks dry faster but provide less support, thick socks dry slower but provide more support. Up to you. Long, lightweight, nylon/smart wool socks recommended. Some people bring soccer socks. DO NOT BUY CHEAP SOCKS THAT FALL APART EASILY. It is important to have multiple pairs of socks so that you have back-up pairs when one gets wet and dirty.

-1 pair of *waterproof* hiking boots OR high rain boots. Preference here. Hiking boots provide more support and comfort but are a hassle to take on and off. Vice versa for rain boots. If getting hiking boots, get waterproof ones. Wet feet will end you and soaked boots don't dry. Most students brought boots.

-1 pair of water shoes; MUST BE COMFORTABLE. One student got blisters and cuts from his water shoes. Water shoes are invaluable when walking around the beach camps, walking in water and Moka. You will also need them when bathing. Crocs, or any shoe with a closed toe and heel, work really well. DON'T GET SPEEDOS; they will destroy your feet.

-1 pair of walking around/lounging shoes; the beach and Moka grounds are all dirt so you'll need some kind of easy on/off shoe to get around and keep your feet clean. Most students just use their water shoes. Crocs, flip flops and sandals work well.

-1 day pack. Your day pack will be used to carry everything you need to bring with you on hikes/go into the field. Your school backpacks are OK. Functional backpacks with a lot of straps/buckles/loops/places to hang things from are best. Every student on this trip had something hanging from their backpacks (e.g. water bottles, boots, sleeping bags). Hanging things saves a lot of space.

-1 sleeping bag; you will be sleeping in tents when on the beaches. The ground is hard and uneven in some places. Sleeping bags will provide life-saving cushioning. IN ADDITION, Moka is cold during the mornings and evenings (around 60F/high 50s). Sleeping bags will provide life-saving warmth.

-1 thick sleeping pad; the more compact and transportable the better. Inflatable pads the best. The camp grounds are filled with large tree roots and rocks that may, unfortunately, be under your tent. A sleeping pad will help cushion and level you. *The bottom line, sleep will be your only respite from a long day in the field, make it good.*

-1 headlamp w/ white AND RED light (2 lamps recommended); the camps at night are pitch black and without electricity. There are no lights. You will NEED headlamps/flashlights to get around camp. When going on turtle census, you will need the red light function on your headlamp as turtles are sensitive to white light. *No exceptions here.* Make sure the lamp produces strong, focused red light. One student could barely see anything with his red light because it wasn't focused enough. Bring extra batteries. Petzl sells quality headlamps.

-1-2 quick dry towels. You will need this to dry yourself after baths or rain. Microfiber towels are best. Some students brought normal bath towels but they are heavy and dry slow (OK for Malabo). It's nice to have 2 so you can switch on and off when not using the other.

-1 water bottle; self-explanatory. Most people bring Nalgene bottles.

-Basic first aid supplies; **Band-aids, Neosporin, hand sanitizer (very helpful after a post-bowel cleanse), ALCOHOL WIPES, NAIL CLIPPERS, TWEEZERS**, Lysol wipes, gauze, etc. The camps have first aid kits but very helpful to have your own ready to go in your day pack. We had a few students get cuts and having these supplies was great. It is VERY easy for the smallest wounds to get infected and spiral into a bigger problem in EG. Lysol wipes are nice for public restrooms and the Moka outhouse.

-Feminine hygiene products (tampons, pads, etc)- It is probably better for you to buy tampons with plastic or **no applicators** because the cardboard ones can get moldy with the humidity and wetness of the camps. Plastic waste from tampons gets burned. Bring enough for 3 months.

-10-20 iodine tablets; these are for water purification. The hike to Moraka is long and you will likely stop for a water break. You will use water from a nearby stream and will need to purify it. It usually takes 2 tablets to purify a standard bottle of water. The water at the camps and Moka is adequately filtered (no one has gotten sick) but feel free to use tablets if you want.

-1 bottle of soap, shampoo and toothpaste; any toiletries you bring will have to last you for the whole month in the field. There are no places to buy them when in camp. Dr. Bronner's recommended. TOILET PAPER NOT NEEDED.

-1 bottle/tube sunscreen; the sun is extremely strong on the beaches, you will get burned without sunscreen.

-2-3 field notebooks; you will need to take field notes for your individual project and other field activities. Rite in The Rain notebooks are great as they are waterproof (pencils and all-weather pens work when wet, ball-point do not).

-1 journal notebook; you will be required to keep a daily journal in the field. Any notebook will do.

-1 waterproof watch; it's good to know the time.

-Dry bags; these are invaluable in keeping your things...well...dry. Bring a variety of sizes. Ziplocs work great but may break easily.

-Plug adapters; EG uses type E/C plugs (two round prongs)

-Power converters; EG uses 220V. Most devices should have built-in converters but PLEASE CHECK them. You do not want to fry your electronics.

-Spanish-english dictionary; a travel one works fine but the SpanishDict app is great because it works offline. It will be essential to communicating with your fellow UNGE students if your Spanish isn't so good.

-Writing utensils; DON'T WASTE MONEY ON EXPENSIVE, ALL-WEATHER PENS. NO GEL PENS. Anything else works fine.

For Moka:

EVERYTHING above

-1 jacket; again, Moka gets chilly during the morning and at night. You will need a jacket or at least a long sleeve shirt. A normal Columbia/North Face fleece jacket is great. Sweaters work too.

Optional but recommended:

-Carabiners; 999999 uses for these. Hanging water bottles, shoes, flashlights etc.

-Duct tape; shouldn't need too much but very handy for water proofing, covering blisters, marking water bottles and other things that need patching up

-Over-the-counter medication; Tylenol/Advil/Pepto Bismol can be useful. Some people get sick from the change in diet or from simply being in a new place.

-Bathing suit; good for if you want to take a dip at the beaches. You could just go in your underpants too.

-Flashlight; when your headlamp fails, it's great to have another light source. Most students brought both a flashlight and lamp.

-FOOD; the greatest thing we regretted not bringing enough of on this trip was food. When you're in the field, there are little to no opportunities to go out and buy food, let alone food from home. You can get some snacks in Moka but nothing substantial. All your field meals will consist of a combination of rice, tomato sauce, beans, spam and sardines.

Nothing more, nothing less. This will get old, fast. BRING AS MANY SNACKS AS CAN, YOU WILL CRAVE THEM. Meaty, fruity, sugary, salty are all fantastic. BEWARE, your food may melt. The biggest craving we had was chocolate and Sriracha/Tabasco; anything to spice up the field meals or to break the monotony of them. There is soy sauce and mayo.

-Any materials you will need for your individual project, books and other scientific articles.

-Entertainment; you will have a lot of down time so any movies, music or games you can bring will help break the monotony. This goes for Malabo as well.

-Whistle; useful if you get separated from the group on a hike or another emergency situation; this happened to a few of the students.

-Knife; having some kind of cutting tool can be useful

-Blister aid; moleskin, gauze, duct tape etc. a few students got serious blisters from bad shoes and these saved their feet

-1 inflatable pillow; very nice to have one, several students brought them

-vitamin supplements; your diet will be **very** basic, so you may want to bring nutrition supplements

-drink mix; drinking water for every meal can get very boring. Drink mix can break the monotony. Drink mix with electrolytes is especially helpful for re-hydration during hikes. Nuun drink tabs are great.

-Trash bags; useful for holding a lot of things like laundry

-Sunglasses/hat/bandanas

-Sweat pants for Moka, field pants work fine as well

-Binoculars; especially useful for bird watching

-Extra batteries; depends on amount of electronics you bring but shouldn't need many (~10)

-Drawstring bag; lightweight, convenient if you don't want to carry around your day pack

-Speakers; can't tell you how many times we asked 'WHO HAS SPEAKERS!?'

For Malabo

Just dress normally. In terms of food, there is a decent supermarket where you can get most types of food (just different brands) so no need to go overboard here. You can find some US brands but they are expensive.

-1 pair of sneakers/comfortable walking shoes

-1-2 sets of dress clothes; you may be invited to outings at the University, US embassy or residences of oil company employees. Don't need anything too overboard (men, dress shirt/polo, nice pants and shoes are fine)

-Entertainment; the student house has a projector and screen so bringing movies/TV shows on your computer is great. The house also has some board games if you're into that.

-As for street clothes, ladies and gents, please be conscientious that you are representing the Drexel Program, so don't be sloppy and do not be inappropriate. This is a great program that we want people to take us seriously so dress appropriately in clothing that your parents or grandparents would approve of.

For UNGE

The University has a dress code. Men must wear long pants, close-toed shoes and appropriate shirts. Women must wear close-toed shoes, non-revealing shirts and pants/skirts that go well below the knees.