

TANZANIA INSIDE & SAFARI'S KILIMANJARO PACKING LIST FOR 2026-2027



Everything you should know about gear for climbing the highest mountain in Africa

Although Kilimanjaro is considered the easiest of the "Seven Summits" the highest peaks on each continent the expedition should not be underestimated. Packing your Kilimanjaro kit is crucial for a successful climb. While the Internet offers many travel tips, they often fail to explain why specific gear is essential and others can be left behind. Our packing guide is designed to help even beginners prepare adequately, though experienced climbers might find some recommendations obvious. For additional information on climbing Kilimanjaro, check out our detailed article. Most items listed are essential, while those for added comfort are marked as "optional."

Useful tips for packing your Kilimanjaro clothing and kit

Here are some tips for how to pack for climbing Kilimanjaro:-

You can hire the required gear on the spot when you arrive in Tanzania

If you prefer not to bring all your climbing gear to Tanzania, you can rent it from our rental shop. Renting from us is more cost-effective than buying new equipment, especially for first-time climbers or those without their own gear. Our shop offers top quality brands like The North Face, Marmot, and Red Fox. All equipment is well maintained and regularly, ensuring everything is clean and in excellent condition.

Avoid buying the cheapest gear

You don't need to spend a lot on branded clothes and footwear, but avoid choosing low-quality items, regardless of how cheap they are. Your safety and comfort are paramount. Fortunately, the market today offers many high-quality alternatives at reasonable prices.

Clothing for Kilimanjaro

While trekking Kilimanjaro, you will pass through four distinct climate zones: rainforest, moorland, alpine meadows, and Arctic desert. At lower altitudes in the tropical rainforest, the weather is mostly hot and humid, whereas in the summit zone, you will encounter snowy, windy, and frosty conditions. Additionally, temperatures are typically high during the day but can drop to freezing at night.

You should be properly prepared for all of these conditions. Bellow is the list of gears

- **Jackets**

You will need to have three types of jackets for this trip

Fleece jacket as an insulation layer

Fleece jackets can be worn alone or layered over a trekking shirt and are especially useful at night in camp. They are essential for most days on Kilimanjaro. Polartec-200 fabric is the best choice for Kilimanjaro expeditions. Top brands for fleece jackets include The North Face, Red Fox, Mountain Hardwear, and Patagonia. Hooded fleece jackets offer additional warmth and comfort. It is recommended to bring 2-3 fleece jackets for your trip. The best brands of fleece jackets for expeditions to Kilimanjaro are The North Face, Red Fox, Mountain Hardwear and Patagonia.



Warm jacket / Down jacket

A warm jacket is essential for keeping you warm during chilly evenings in camp and for the summit portion of your trip. It is a crucial part of your kit. Your warm jacket should be neither too heavy nor too light and should provide comfort at -15°C / 5°F. Ensure it has a hood for added warmth. When selecting a warm jacket or down jacket, consider its waterproof capabilities. Rain and snow are common on Mount Kilimanjaro, so choose a jacket with a water resistant outer layer to protect against light precipitation. For heavy rain or snow, you will need a specialized rain jacket for additional protection



Membrane Hard shell rain jacket (Gore-Tex or other)

A hard-shell rain jacket is essential from the first day of your trip, especially on the Lemosho 7-day program starting at 3,500 m/11,500 ft. Always keep it in your backpack for easy access. This jacket is designed to protect you from wind and light rain before you reach the summit camp. On most days, it will serve as your third layer, worn over thermal underwear and a fleece jacket.



- **Trousers**

You will need several types of trousers for this trip.

Warm Trousers or Ski Pants

Warm trousers or ski pants are a crucial item on your packing list. They are necessary for the summit portion of your hike, where the weather is especially cold. These trousers should be water-resistant, lined with fleece for warmth, and have good hard shell insulation for protection against wind and rain. Ideally, they should keep you comfortable in temperatures below -15°C (5°F). If you're not accustomed to cold weather, you'll especially appreciate warm pants in the higher camps of Kilimanjaro.



Trekking pants

Good quality trekking pants are typically sufficient for a Kilimanjaro expedition. Even if you prefer hiking in shorts, you'll need a pair of trousers for the higher elevation areas and for the chilly evenings in camp



Membrane Pants or Rain Pants

Membrane pants are essential for your Kilimanjaro trek, particularly during the rainy season. When paired with trekking pants, they offer excellent protection against wind and rain, enhancing your overall experience



- **Hiking Underwear and Shirts**

For your Kilimanjaro adventure, pack 5–6 pairs of underwear. Additionally, bring 2–3 pairs of thermal underwear (base layers). You'll wear the first pair during regular trekking days and the second on summit night. Wearing thermal underwear while sleeping is also more comfortable. Choose a light synthetic fabric for the first set, as it dries quickly. For summiting, opt for warmer materials, such as wool. Any branded thermal underwear will work well for your Kilimanjaro trek. Regarding shirts, you'll need 3–4 short-sleeved and 2 long-sleeved shirts for the expedition. Avoid cotton, as it doesn't wick moisture well. Instead, select light, breathable fabrics like polyester blended with spandex or nylon



- **Bags & Backpacks for Hiking**

For your Kilimanjaro trip, it's essential to have high-quality bags. You'll need two types: a daypack that you'll carry yourself and a duff le bag that a porter will manage for you.

Daypack

Your daypack will hold your daily essentials, including sunglasses, sunscreen, a rain poncho, a flashlight, a water flask, and snacks. It's also the perfect place to store your gadgets, like a camera and smartphone. Make sure your daypack is as light as possible, reserving heavier options for other treks. Additionally, ensure it fits comfortably on your back. We suggest testing it on a smaller hike before your Kilimanjaro adventure to confirm it's both suitable and comfortable.

When Choosing a Backpack, Consider the Following:

- Your Kilimanjaro backpack should include a rain cover, as rain can start unexpectedly, and you'll need to protect your gear.
- Look for a backpack with side pockets for easy access to trekking poles, a water bottle, and other essential items.
- A good backpack should also have a hip belt to help distribute weight more evenly.
- Lastly, it's ideal if your daypack is compatible with a camel bag or hydration bladder.

Duffle Bag

Porters usually carry duff le bags on their heads, so it's important to choose soft models for their comfort. A porter will cover a distance of approximately 40–60 km with your duff le bag. On longer Kilimanjaro routes, like the Northern Circuit, the distance is greater, which means a heavier load for the porters.

Duffle Bag Guidelines

According to Kilimanjaro National Park regulations, your fully loaded duff le bag should not exceed 15 kg. Choose a bag with a minimum capacity of 90–120 liters to fit your entire Kilimanjaro kit. Ensure it's made from waterproof materials. Additionally, it's advisable to pack your gear in separate large dry bags within the duff le. This offers extra protection and ensures your belongings stay dry, even in heavy rain (as water can sometimes seep through zippers into the duff le bag). You can rent a suitable, water-resistant duff le bag from Mropean Safaris before your expedition.



Dry Bag (Optional)

Given the frequent rain on Kilimanjaro, bringing a dry bag is a smart choice. Placing it inside your duff le bag or backpack will help keep your gear dry and in good condition. If you opt to bring one, ensure it's large enough to hold your sleeping bag and other gear



Water Flask

A water flask is essential for your Kilimanjaro trip. Unlike some low-quality hydration bladders, it won't freeze at night. Since you need to drink at least 3-4 liters of water daily, a flask is a crucial item. It's recommended to bring 1-2 water flasks, each with a one-liter capacity. In addition to a water flask, it's advisable to have a thermos for hot tea or coffee. While guides typically carry a thermos for hikers, bringing your own provides an extra supply, which is always beneficial on Kilimanjaro. More tea or coffee means more energy, which you'll certainly need.

Camel Bag / Hydration Bladder (Optional)

A hydration bladder, also known as a camel bag, is highly recommended for this trek. If your daypack is compatible with a hydration bladder, it can significantly enhance your comfort. However, be sure to choose a high-quality model with an insulated pipe to prevent freezing on the summit night. High-quality hydration bladders typically cost USD 30 or more, but they are a worthwhile investment. A 1.5 or 2-liter capacity is ideal for your trip.





Travel Bag Organizers (Optional)

Travel bag organizers are highly recommended to keep your gear sorted inside a duff le bag. They are also useful for separating dirty or wet clothes from clean ones, making your trip more organized and comfortable.



• **Footwear**

Footwear is one of the most crucial items on your Kilimanjaro packing list. It's important to be especially careful and selective when choosing your hiking boots and/or sneakers. The wrong choice could lead to issues like broken toenails, corns, and blisters. For this trip, you'll need high-quality hiking boots, trekking sneakers (optional), and trekking socks.

Hiking Boots

Selecting the right hiking boots is of utmost importance. With so many options available, it can be challenging to find the perfect pair. Your hiking boots should ideally meet the following criteria:

- **Ankle Support:** Boots should provide strong ankle support to prevent injury, so choose a sturdy model with sufficient support.
- **Weight:** Boots should be of medium weight. Avoid heavy boots as they can impact your comfort and tire your feet quickly.
- **Waterproof:** Ensure your boots are waterproof to keep your feet dry throughout the trek, especially during the rainy season or at higher altitudes. High-quality trekking socks can offer additional protection, so it's advisable to have a good pair.
- **Lacing:** Preferably, the laces should secure to speed hooks for better comfort and protection.

It's critically important to break in your boots before starting your Kilimanjaro trip. Wear them for at least 5-6 days, including on at least two long hikes, to prevent discomfort, sore soles, and calluses. Recommended hiking boot brands include La Sportiva, Zamberlan, The North Face, Asolo, Salomon, and Scarpa. These brands are ideal for Kilimanjaro. You can rent high quality boots from our Kilimanjaro rentals shop for only USD 45 per trip, which is more cost-effective than buying new boots (which can cost USD 200-400). Renting also helps reduce the weight of your luggage. If you don't plan to hike much after Kilimanjaro, renting is a great option.



Sneakers (Optional)

On some routes, the initial days are not very steep, making it possible to use trekking sneakers instead of boots. After reaching camp on subsequent days, you might want to remove your hiking boots and give your feet a rest. Sneakers are perfect for exploring the camp area and moving between your tent and dining tents. Brands like Zamberlan, La Sportiva, The North Face, and Scarpa all offer excellent trekking shoes.



Trekking Socks

Trekking socks are essential for hikes like this. Avoid cotton socks, as they retain moisture and can cause blisters. Instead, opt for woolen socks, which are excellent for Kilimanjaro because they wick moisture quickly and effectively. Bridgedale is a recommended brand.



Thermal Socks (Optional)

Thermal socks are optional but highly recommended, especially for summer climbs. Choose non-cotton options with flat seams. Wool is a great alternative.



Gaiters (Optional)

Gaiters are not mandatory on Kilimanjaro, but they are invaluable during the rainy season to prevent mud, snow, or pebbles from entering your boots. They help keep your trekking pants and boots clean and protect your more expensive gear from the rough terrain.

- **Headgear**

Similar to other trekking gear, Kilimanjaro headgear includes both essential and optional items

Sun Hat

A sun hat is an essential item on your packing list. Ideally, it should include a neck cover to protect your face from sunburn and overheating.



Beanie

Bringing a beanie is crucial for this trip. As you ascend to higher elevations, the temperature drops, so you'll need a warm beanie to keep your head and ears insulated, particularly in the summit area's cold and snowy conditions.

Balaclava (Optional)

A balaclava is an optional but useful item for hikers sensitive to cold. A woolen balaclava will shield your chin, nose, cheeks, and forehead from the wind during summit night, though it's unlikely you'll need it elsewhere.



Neck Warmer (Optional)

Neck warmers are optional but highly useful for many climbers, offering protection for your neck and face in extremely cold conditions and serving as a barrier against dust.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses are critical, with a few important considerations. They must provide excellent UV protection, as UV radiation increases significantly at the summit's elevation of 6,000 meters. Additionally, the snow reflects sunlight, straining your eyes. Even on cloudy days near the summit, sunglasses are necessary to prevent snow blindness, a serious condition that can cause permanent vision damage. Opt for high quality sunglasses with level 3 or 4 UV protection, like the Julbo Explorer or Oakley models. If needed, you can rent summit glasses from our Kilimanjaro shop.



Headlamp

A headlamp is indispensable for your Kilimanjaro trek. It's needed for navigating the camp after sunset and for the summit ascent, which typically begins at midnight to reach Uhuru Peak by sunrise. When selecting a headlamp, consider the following:

- Ensure the light is bright, ideally with an output of 90-100 lumens or more, and a beam distance of at least 40-50 meters.
- Invest in quality batteries with at least 30 hours of active mode runtime, and bring spares.
- Choose a headlamp that is lightweight, preferably under 120 grams, as heavier models can be cumbersome.
- Avoid headlamps with rechargeable batteries since they have shorter battery life and there are no power outlets on Kilimanjaro. Your headlamp will be vital during the summit push, helping you navigate the path in the dark as you aim to reach the peak by sunrise.



- **Trekking Poles**

Trekking poles are strongly recommended for your Kilimanjaro packing list, not just for comfort but also for health reasons. High-altitude trekking is demanding and can put significant stress on your knees and joints. On Kilimanjaro, the average daily hike covers 7-10 km, taking 4-8 hours over rugged and often rocky terrain. Trekking poles provide additional balance and stability by adding two extra points of support. Hikers often find them particularly useful on summit night when fatigue sets in. Without trekking poles, some hikers experience sore legs during and after the trip. Good trekking poles can reduce the strain on your joints by redistributing some of your body weight to your hands and back, thereby relieving pressure on your knees and other joints. When selecting trekking poles for your Kilimanjaro hike, consider the following:

- The ideal weight for trekking poles is around 400 g not too heavy or too light. Durability is also crucial; they should withstand the demands of long hikes.
- Aluminum is the best material for durability. Additionally, check the grip material; high quality poles typically have cork or foam grips. Cork is preferable as it is more comfortable in the hand and gentler on the skin. Ensure the trekking poles are the right height for you. Besides adjustable models, there are specific poles for taller individuals and children. Black Diamond offers some of the best trekking poles for hiking. Investing in good trekking poles will help minimize the impact of long hikes on your knees and joints.



- **Gloves**

For this Kilimanjaro adventure, you'll need two types of gloves: lightweight inner gloves and warmer outer gloves for the summit night. Both are essential for your trek.

Lightweight Gloves

Lightweight gloves are intended to keep your hands warm from the second day of your expedition onward. Most hikers wear them until reaching the summit camp, where they switch to their outer gloves. Inner gloves should be made of high-quality materials, with wool, Polartec, or synthetics being the best options. Avoid cotton gloves, as they are not suitable for Kilimanjaro due to their poor moisture-wicking properties.





Mittens

For summit night, you'll need warm gloves or mittens that are both warm and waterproof, yet still comfortable. Mittens are generally preferable, as the summit ascent can take around eight hours, during which you'll be holding trekking poles. It's crucial to keep your hands warm, especially at the summit, where temperatures can drop to $-15^{\circ}\text{C}/5^{\circ}\text{F}$

• Sleeping Bag

Regardless of the season, a sleeping bag is essential for all camps and routes on Kilimanjaro. Even on the Marangu route, where there are huts, they are not heated, so it's up to you to stay warm at night. Your sleeping bag should be warm, with three temperature ratings:

- **Comfort Level:** The temperature at which you can comfortably sleep in your bag wearing just thermal underwear.
- **Limit Level:** The temperature at which you'll need to wear additional clothing layers to sleep comfortably. Do not use your sleeping bag in conditions below this limit.
- **Extreme Level:** The temperature at which the sleeping bag can serve as an emergency measure to prevent hypothermia until help arrives.

Given the cold nights in the upper camps, your sleeping bag's comfort level should be at least $-10^{\circ}\text{C}/14^{\circ}\text{F}$. If possible, choose a warmer bag—you won't regret it! No one has ever complained about being too warm in their sleeping bag. Ideally, your sleeping bag should also have a hood to cover your head for better insulation at night.

We recommend the Lamina Z Blaze (Comfort Level $5^{\circ}\text{F} / -15^{\circ}\text{C}$) by Mountain Hardwear and The North Face sleeping bags. Since sleeping bags can be bulky, you might consider renting one from our Kilimanjaro rental shop upon arrival. We regularly update our stock to ensure our hikers have access to the best sleeping bags.



Sleeping Bag Liner (Optional)

A sleeping bag liner can provide extra warmth in the final days of your climb. Mummy shaped liners are better than rectangular ones. Fleece or insulated liners are ideal for your Kilimanjaro hike. A good liner can add 3 to 8°C to your sleeping bag's comfort level, which allows you to bring your own sleeping bag even if it doesn't meet the -10°C comfort requirement.



Inflatable Pillow (Optional)

An inflatable pillow is handy for those who like to read in a tent. Alternatively, you can use your backpack or some clothes as an improvised pillow.



- **Personal & Medical Items**

Wet Wipes (Optional)

Wet wipes are useful for maintaining personal hygiene if you choose not to hire a portable shower. Bring two packs—one small pack for your daypack to use on the trail, and a larger pack for evening hygiene. Don't forget sunscreen. Without it, your hands and face can easily get sunburned. While the guides will carry a medical kit for common conditions like nausea, headaches, and stomachaches, you should bring any personal medication you might need. Remember that some medications easily available in your home country might be hard to find in Tanzania.



- **Gadgets (Optional)**

Camera

The views from Mount Kilimanjaro are spectacular! Capturing great photos is one of the main reasons people embark on this adventure. You can bring a smartphone with a power bank or a GoPro camera with spare batteries to capture the most memorable moments of your trip.



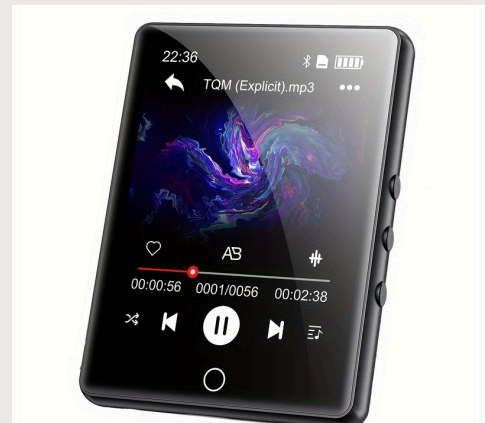
Power Banks

If you bring any gadgets, a power bank is a must since there are no power outlets on Kilimanjaro. It's the only way to keep your devices like smartphones and e-readers charged.



MP3 Player

An MP3 player can make your Kilimanjaro adventure even more enjoyable, especially on summit night. Your favorite music will lift your spirits and enhance your experience at the top of Africa.



E-Book

An e-book reader is a great addition to your packing list if you enjoy reading before going to sleep

- **Gear and Equipment to Hire**

If Kilimanjaro is not your first mountaineering experience at altitudes above 5,000 m, you might already have most of the necessary equipment. However, for many, Kilimanjaro is their first major climb, so renting some items locally is a cost-effective option. Buying all the gear for Kilimanjaro could cost over a thousand dollars, significantly increasing your adventure's budget. Renting everything you need for the hike will cost around USD 250-300. If Kilimanjaro is a once-in-a-lifetime venture and you're unsure about future climbs, renting is a cost-saving solution. If Kilimanjaro is just the first of many hikes on your bucket list and you plan to explore other mountains, buying your own gear is a wise investment. However, remember to choose the right luggage tariff when booking flights, as the entire kit will likely weigh 15-17 kg. Even if you bring your own gear, renting some of the heaviest and most cumbersome items (like a sleeping bag, down jacket, or trekking poles) might be a good idea, especially if you plan to visit Zanzibar or go on a safari afterward. Most local airlines flying to Zanzibar have a 15 kg luggage limit, which may not be enough for all your hiking and travel gear.

- **Frequently Asked Questions**

What is the weather like on Mt Kilimanjaro?

The weather on Mt Kilimanjaro varies by season. Summer is mostly dry and cool, while spring, autumn, and early winter bring rain. Mid to late winter is characterized by sunny, hot, and dry conditions. The most popular times to climb Kilimanjaro are in August-September, during the New Year holidays, and from January to early March. For more details, you can check out our article on Kilimanjaro's weather and the best times to climb.

How long does it take to climb Mount Kilimanjaro?

The duration of a Kilimanjaro climb depends on the chosen route, typically ranging from six to eight days. Longer trips are generally better for acclimatization. Most hikers in average physical condition find that seven days is usually sufficient. You can also add extra days to your itinerary to improve acclimatization.

Are trekking poles really important for a Kilimanjaro trip?

Trekking poles are strongly recommended for all Kilimanjaro climbs. The ascent puts considerable strain on your knees, joints, and feet, and trekking poles help to reduce that strain. They also provide stability and rhythm, which can be particularly helpful on rough terrain.

What should I know about sleeping at high altitudes?

Sleeping at high altitudes can be challenging due to the lower oxygen levels. However, if your acclimatization is going well, you shouldn't have significant issues sleeping. Following the key principles of high-altitude acclimatization can improve your sleep quality:

- Hike slowly, at about half your normal walking pace.
- Choose longer routes. Seven-day treks via Lemosho, Machame, and Rongai routes are suitable for most hikers.
- Don't skip acclimatization hikes. Following the "go high, sleep low" strategy will help with acclimatization.

If you experience headaches or difficult sleeping at night, inform your guide, who can provide appropriate medication.

What should I know about taking malaria pills?

There are no malaria-carrying mosquitoes at the high elevations of Kilimanjaro. However, anti-malaria pills may negatively affect your health and exacerbate the symptoms of high-altitude acclimatization. The risk of malaria infection exists at lower elevations, both before and after your Kilimanjaro trek, as well as in the national parks during safari. We recommend consulting your physician before your trip. Ultimately, the decision to take malaria pills is up to you.

What power adapters are used in Tanzania?

Tanzania uses Types D and G (British) power adapters with a standard voltage of 230 V

If you have any questions or need further clarification about our Kilimanjaro packing list, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can contact us at +255762226648, or send us an email at info@tanzaniainsideandsafari.com or tanzaniainsideandsafari@gmail.com. We're here to ensure you have all the information you need for a successful and enjoyable trek!

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