

TEACHERS2TEACHERS GLOBAL

TRAVEL AND SAFETY GUIDE

For Nepal

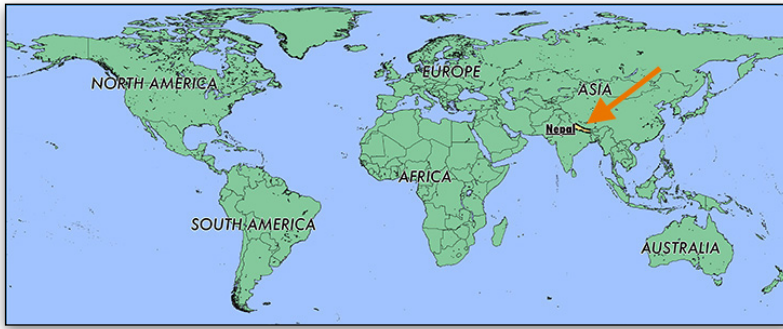


Thank you so much for choosing to travel with Teachers2Teachers Global! We are thrilled that you are joining us and hope this document answers some of the specific questions you might have about your trip.

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COUNTRY PROFILE FOR NEPAL



The name Nepal was first recorded during the Vedic Age, around 1500 BCE. The country's roots are deeply connected to Hinduism and Tibetan culture in the north. Because of this, there are many Hindu and Buddhist temples.

Nepal was never colonized. It was an absolute monarchy until 1951 when the country became a parliamentary democracy with a cabinet system and political parties. This system lasted until 1960 when political parties were once again banned. They were reinstated in 1990 when Nepal established a multiparty democracy within the monarchy.

A decade-long war between the government and the Maoists broke out in 1996. In 2006, the Maoists and the government signed a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), ending the violence. The CPA led to an interim constitution in 2007. In 2008, Nepal abolished the monarchy and declared itself a federal democratic republic, electing its first president.

Most recently, Nepal held local elections between May and September of 2017, and state and federal elections took place in November and December 2017.

Another important event in Nepal's history was the 2015 earthquake, which had a devastating impact. Many people were pushed into poverty, and all types of infrastructure were destroyed, including homes, businesses and government buildings.

General Information

Official Name: Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

Area: 147,181 square kilometers (56,826 square miles, slightly larger than New York state)

Population: 29.6 million

Capital: Kathmandu

Time Zone: Nepal is 5 hours and 45 minutes ahead of Universal Time Coordinated (formerly Greenwich Mean Time). For example, if you're on the East coast of the US during Daylight Saving Time and your clock says it's 9:30 AM, Kathmandu time is +9:45 ahead, or 7:15 PM.

Geography: Nepal is landlocked in South Asia, bordered by China, India, and Bangladesh. Most of Nepal is in the Himalayas, and the country is home to eight of the ten tallest mountains in the world, including Mount Everest. Part of Nepal is also in the fertile Indo-Gangetic Plain.

Administrative Divisions: The historic system of 14 administrative divisions was reorganized in 2015 to form seven numbered provinces. These are subdivided into 77 smaller districts.



Government: The head of state is president Bidya Devi Bhandari (2015-present), and the vice president is Nanda Bahadur Pun. The head of government is prime minister Khadga Prasad Oli (2018-present). The deputy prime minister role is currently vacant.

Languages: There were 123 languages reported as a mother tongue in Nepal's 2011 census. The official language is Nepali, and 44.6% speak this language. Other languages in Nepal are Maithili (spoken by 11.7% of the population), Bhojpuri (6%), Tharu (5.8%), Tamang (5.1%), Newar (3.2%), Magar (3%), Bajjika (3%), Urdu (2.6%), Avadhi (1.9%), Limbu (1.3%), Gurung (1.2%). Despite this list, there is still 10.4% of the population that speaks other languages. Many Nepalese people speak English as a second language, especially those in Kathmandu. English is also the primary business language in Nepal, so many government employees and people in commerce speak English.

Religions: 81.3% identify as Hindu, 9% are Buddhist, 4.4% are Muslim, 3.1% are Kirant, 1.4% are Christian, 0.5% observe another religion, and 0.2% are unspecified.

Flag: Nepal has the distinction of being the only country in the world with a flag that is not square or rectangular.

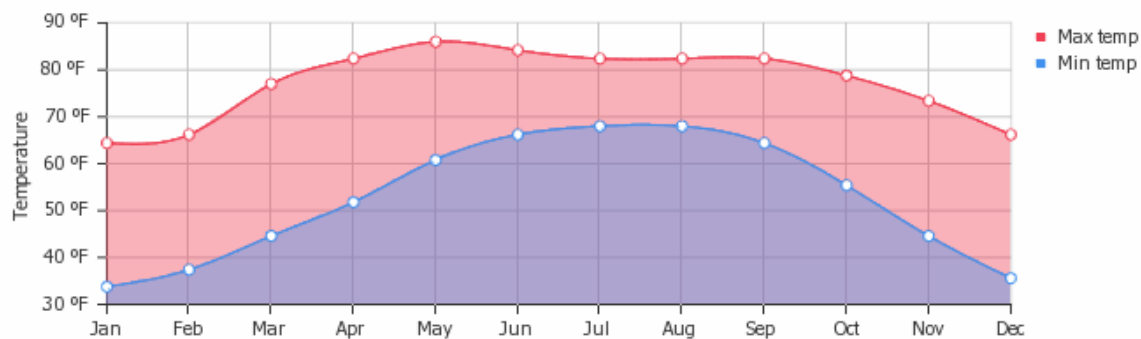
The flag's background is a crimson red color, with a blue border around two overlapping right triangles. The smaller of the two triangles holds a white moon, while the larger triangle has a white 12-pointed sun. The red in the flag represents the rhododendron, which is the national flower of Nepal, and is a sign of victory and bravery. The blue border represents peace and harmony. The two right triangles are two single pennants, originally a



symbol for the Himalayan Mountains, while the two white elements represent the families of the king and the prime minister. Today, however, they represent Hinduism and Buddhism. The moon symbolizes the serenity of the people of Nepal as well as the shade and cool weather in the Himalayas. The sun is a reminder of the heat and higher temperatures of southern Nepal.

Climate

The climate varies depending on the area, but in general the northern part of Nepal has cool summers with severe winters, while the south has subtropical summers with mild winters. There are four distinct seasons: spring, monsoon season (summer), autumn, and winter. Spring, from March to May, is warm and rainy. Monsoon season is from June to August. It is quite wet and temperatures get into the mid 80s (Fahrenheit). Autumn, from September to November, is cool and cloudless. Many people enjoy hiking during this season. The winter, from December to February, is cold and dry, except for the snow-covered mountains and hills. Temperatures can reach below freezing, but also get into the upper 60s (Fahrenheit).



Average Monthly High and Low Temperatures (°F) of Kathmandu, Nepal

EMBASSY INFORMATION

Embassy of Nepal in the United States

2131 Leroy Place, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Telephone: +1 (202) 667-4550
Website: us.nepalembassy.gov.np



Embassy of the United States in Nepal

Maharajgunj, Kathmandu

Telephone: 977-1-423-4000

Back-up phone: 977-01-400-7200

Website: np.usembassy.gov/



PASSPORT AND ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

You should already have a passport, valid for at least six months after your trip to Nepal. Make sure your passport is signed. If you do not have a passport, you must obtain one immediately. It takes about six weeks to get a new passport or to get a passport renewed. Make sure that you have adequate (at least two) unused pages in your passport, allowing for any necessary stamps upon arrival and departure. For more information on obtaining a US passport, go to [the official website of US Department of State](https://travel.state.gov) for specific instructions.

Nepal requires **a tourist visa** to enter the country. These are available at the Kathmandu airport upon arrival, at which point you must fill out an application form. Make sure you have the following items:

- two passport-sized photos
- the address and contact information of where you'll be staying
- cash in US dollars
- a pen

Single entry visas cost US \$25/40/100 for 15/30/90 days in the country. You can pay in any major currency at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan Airport, but it is best to bring cash payment in US dollars. Small bills are recommended.

STAYING HEALTHY

The following options for travel health insurance are trusted by T2TGlobal staff. We are happy to look at any other plans you might be considering.

- [BCBS GeoBlue Travel Medical Insurance](#)
- [HTH Travel Medical Insurance](#)

T2TGlobal follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) immunization guidelines for international travel. The following information is from the [CDC webpage regarding travel to Nepal](#). The CDC has a useful app called TravWell that is worth loading on your phone.

Your doctor or healthcare provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history, areas of the country you will be visiting, and planned activities. Although there are no required vaccines for entry into Nepal, **be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date**. Routine vaccines, as they are often called, such as for influenza, chickenpox (or varicella), polio, measles/mumps/rubella (MMR), and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) are given at all stages of life, even if you do not travel. Although childhood diseases, such as measles, rarely occur in the US, they are still common in many parts of the world. A traveler who is not vaccinated would be at risk for infection.

To have the most benefit, see a healthcare provider at least **four to six weeks before** departure to allow time for vaccines to take effect. Even if you have fewer than four weeks before you leave, you should still see a healthcare provider for information about how to protect yourself from illness and injury while traveling.

T2TGlobal follows CDC recommendations that the following vaccinations be obtained before traveling to Nepal: **Hepatitis A** and **typhoid**. The CDC recommends these because you can get hepatitis A or typhoid through contaminated food or water in Nepal anywhere you are eating or staying. Typhoid is especially recommended if you are staying with friends or relatives, visiting smaller cities or rural areas, or if you are an adventurous eater.

- A vaccination for Japanese Encephalitis is recommended if your trip will last more than a month, depending on where you are going and the time of year. See [more in-depth information](#) on Japanese encephalitis in Nepal.
- In cooler, higher elevations where Kathmandu and Pokhara are located, there is no malaria risk. There is a risk for malaria in areas in Nepal lower than 2,000 meters, however, so if you are traveling there, you should talk to your doctor about anti-malaria prevention.
- Rabies can be found in dogs, bats, and other mammals in Nepal, so make sure you avoid contact with all animals.

Some travelers may need additional vaccines and medicines, based on where you are going, how long you are staying, and what you will be doing. It is best to ask your doctor about what you'll need.

The CDC also recommends that you see [a healthcare provider who specializes in Travel Medicine](#). T2TGlobal suggests [Passport Health](#), which has clinics nationwide, for specialized assistance.

Items to Bring With You to Help You Stay Healthy

Make sure you have enough of the prescription medicines you take every day to last during your trip. Keep them in their original prescription bottles and always in your carry-on luggage. Be sure to follow security guidelines if the medicines are liquids.

- **Face mask:** A bandana or buff to wear over your nose and mouth while walking outside in the city will be useful while you're adjusting to the dusty air
- **Medicine for diarrhea:** Usually over-the-counter medications like Immodium or Pepto-Bismol will do the job, but you may also want to talk to your medical provider about bringing an antibiotic for traveler's diarrhea in the event that you get sick. [DiaResQ](#) is a new non-prescription medicine that is quick and effective for diarrhea. Please review the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) factsheet on Travelers' Diarrhea](#).
- **Colds:** In case you catch a cold, bring along some of your favorite cold medicine
- **Motion sickness:** If you are prone to motion sickness, pack some Dramamine
- **Allergies and asthma:** Bring along plentiful supplies of your medication.
- **Other medicines:** Probiotic pills, items to treat cuts, bandages and antiseptic ointment
- **Sunscreen with SPF 30+, hat, and polarized sunglasses** for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays
- Antibacterial **hand wipes** or alcohol-based **hand sanitizer** containing at least 60% alcohol
- Insect repellent **with DEET**

Note: Check the Air Travel section of the [Transportation Security Administration website](#) for the latest information about airport screening procedures and prohibited items.

Be Careful About Food and Water

Diseases from food and water are **the leading cause of illness in travelers**. Follow these tips for safe eating and drinking:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before eating; if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand gel (with at least 60% alcohol)
- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated drinks in cans or bottles; avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes
- Do not eat food purchased from street vendors
- Make sure food is fully cooked
- Avoid dairy products, unless you know they have been pasteurized

SAFETY

It will be important for you to enroll in **the STEP program for international travelers**. This free resource will register you with the nearest in-country US embassy or consulate and notify you if any safety concerns arise. The US State Department website has **a comprehensive set of resources** to prepare you for your trip abroad. Some of the main points are listed here.

- Please be aware of your surroundings while you are traveling. Never wander off alone. Always have a buddy and try to let someone else know where you are going during free time.
- Petty crime and theft, particularly in cities, are a fact of modern life all over the world. Tourists are often seen as easy targets, so it makes sense to take these simple precautions:
- Do not carry all your cash in one pocket or bag; use an under-the-garment money belt that goes around your waist or your neck
- Keep your credit cards separate
- Use a small pack carried on the front of your body, this is less of a target than if worn on the back
- Leave valuables like your passport and extra cash in your hotel's safe or safety deposit box, if possible
- Keep a separate record of the number on your passport and your credit card emergency number should you need to report them stolen or lost
- Do not wear flashy or valuable jewelry or accessories; if it looks valuable, it might make you a target
- Avoid walking into an area where a crowd of people has gathered
- Keep track of your luggage, backpack, purse, passport, airline tickets, etc., and do not leave your luggage unattended at any time; check and double check your hotel room and your seat in the car, bus, ferry, or airplane for items left behind

Security at Airports

- Never leave your baggage unattended
- Always use your own bags and pack them yourself
- Do not accept bags from anybody at the airport from any reason

Who to Contact in an Emergency

US Department of State Emergency Phone Numbers

- **From the US and Canada: 1-888-407-4747**
- **From Overseas: +1 202-501-4444**

If at any point your family or friends urgently need to reach you, they can call the T2TGlobal office at 919-808-4503 or send an email to chadd@t2tglobal.org.

FOOD AND DRINK

Nepalese food relies heavily on local produce, such as vegetables, lentils, and pickled ingredients. The food of Nepal is also influenced by India, Tibet, and China, but relies less on fats and more on vegetables and lean meats. These countries have similar cuisines in their use of rice, curries, and yogurt. *Dal-bhat* is a common dish in Nepal which consists of rice and lentil soup. There are different variations of the dish, but the most common also includes curried vegetables, called *tarkari*. Many Nepalese eat this dish twice a day. Also common are *momo* (handmade dumplings), and *thukpa*, a hot noodle soup with meat and vegetables. Chai is a common drink in Nepal, which is tea brewed with milk, sugar and spices.

CURRENCY AND MONEY

Nepalese Rupee: The currency in Nepal is the Nepalese rupee.

- 1 Nepalese rupee equals 0.0088 USD
- 1 USD equals 114.2 Nepalese rupees



Credit/Debit Cards: Major credit cards are accepted at some stores in Kathmandu Valley and Pokhara. Elsewhere, cash is preferable. There are limited number of terminals where visitors can use wide array of international debit and credit cards. The following cards can be used at ATMs in Nepal, mainly in Kathmandu and Pokhara:

- Visa
- MasterCard
- American Express

Currency Exchange: It is possible to change money at the airport, hotels and banks in Nepal. You can exchange money at the airport or hotel in Nepal, then replenish your supply through ATM withdrawals during the trip. Nepalese bank notes are for 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1000 rupees.

TRANSPORTATION

White taxis are available at the airport. They comfortably seat three people and have space for luggage in the trunk or on the roof. These should cost maximum of 500-600 rupees to/from the airport. Your hotel may also offer transportation to/from the airport.

For four or more people, there are small taxi vans, which should cost only slightly more. 700-800 rupees would be a fair price. If the vans say they are charging per person, say your final price is 800 rupees for everyone.

For a typical journey around Kathmandu, a taxi should cost at most 200-300 rupees. Keep in mind that tipping is not the norm, but if someone helps carry your bags and asks for a tip, about 100 rupees would be acceptable.

Buses are common, but tend to be overcrowded and are constantly stopping to let passengers off and on. Tourist buses, however, are safer and tend to be quicker, since they only take as many passengers as they can hold. It is recommended to book these in advance if possible.

There are also express buses, which only stop at designated and scheduled points around Nepal. There are two different types of express buses: day and night. Day buses, which depart in the morning, and night buses depart in the afternoon and early evening. You can also reserve seats on express buses if possible.

No matter which form of transportation you choose, be prepared for a bumpy ride. Few streets are paved, and most are full of potholes, loose stones and other obstacles. Traffic may come to a standstill, in which case your best option is to relax and enjoy the scenery.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internet

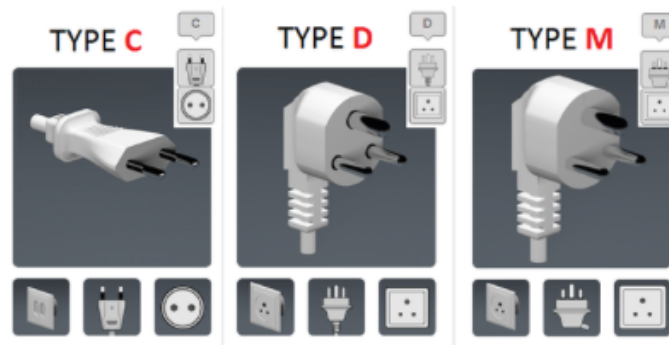
There are internet cafes and wifi access widespread in Kathmandu, but internet in Nepal tends to be slow. Also, electricity shortages often occur. When the power goes out, so does the wifi. Many hotels and restaurants have backup generators, however.

Cell/Mobile Phones

Contact your cell phone carrier before the trip to ask what international plans they offer. Coverage can be spotty in Nepal. Choose a plan based on your own needs. Remember you can use wifi-operated apps like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp to send messages internationally, but only while you have access to wifi.

ELECTRICITY

Electrical outlets in Nepal usually supply electricity at 230 volts. This is higher than the 120 volts common in the US, so you will need to bring a voltage adapter (electrical converter). You will also need a plug adapter, as the outlets are shaped differently than those in the US. The plug types in Nepal are C, D, and M (see below).



Combined voltage and plug adapters are available, so you do not necessarily need to get two separate devices. See the [What Plug website](#) for further information.

BAGGAGE AND PACKING ADVICE

As you will be arranging your own flights, specific luggage requirements for air travel will be different for everyone. Check with your airline well before departure to ascertain what bags you must check (sizes and weights) and what you're allowed to carry on board. You will be responsible for any baggage fees.

As a T2TGlobal participant, **you must be able to carry all of your belongings**, as the team will rarely have access to porters. Your name and address must be on the outside of your baggage. We also recommend that you place your name and address on the inside of the bag. If you need additional information or are confused, please contact the T2TGlobal office at 919-808-4503 or explore@t2tglobal.org. We will be able to help you!

Packing Tips

While in Nepal, it will be important to dress conservatively out of respect for the local culture, especially when you are teaching. Loose cotton clothing is recommended. You should not wear shorts, leggings, or tank tops, as this is seen as disrespectful. Bare shoulders especially are not allowed in temples.

While we are working in the schools, it will be very important to dress both comfortably and professionally. Below are dress expectations for women and men.

Women: long, loose pants, or skirts of knee length or below. For tops, loose, $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve shirts or blouses are best, but short sleeve t-shirts are also okay if they are not too short or tight.

Men: knee-length shorts are acceptable for hiking, but otherwise wear long pants, and shirts with covered shoulders (t-shirt length sleeves or longer).

Shoes: Sandals, sneakers, or hiking shoes are all acceptable.

Keep in mind the weather during the time of year you will be in Nepal. During monsoon season, wear waterproof shoes or sandals which will dry quickly, in case you are caught in a downpour. You should bring a raincoat or umbrella during this season.

- Think multipurpose, semi-conservative, light layers
- Don't pack anything that you cannot replace; leave valuables at home
- You must be able to carry your own luggage

What to Pack

1. Any necessary medications, including over-the-counter medications for colds, allergies, asthma, stomach, diarrhea, motion sickness, etc. (in their original packaging if possible)
2. A face mask to filter airborne particulates while outside in Kathmandu
3. Plastic water bottle
4. Sunglasses, hat, and sunscreen
5. Insect repellent containing DEET
6. Umbrella or light rain jacket or poncho
7. 3-4 pairs comfortable shoes including broken-in walking shoes, sturdy sandals, and shower shoes
8. Easy-care undergarments and sleepwear
9. Travel alarm clock (or use your phone)
10. Phone charger
11. Small day pack or back pack (could be your carry-on)

12. Money/passport holder to be worn under clothes around your neck or waist
13. Hand sanitizer, wet wipes, kleenex
14. Toiletries
15. Clothes for school time and clothes for tourism time (including hiking if you're doing that)
16. And last, but not least, a sense of humor!



your

What Not to Pack

1. Too many clothes
2. Valuables

Documents to Bring

1. Your passport
2. A photocopy or digital image of the first page of your passport
3. Three passport photos, in case your passport is lost or stolen
4. ATM, debit cards, credit cards, and cash that you may need, and your driver's license
5. Prescriptions in original containers
6. A list of items that you have packed (in case you need to make a claim)

Copies to Leave at Home With a Relative or Friend

1. A photocopy of the first page of your passport
2. The numbers of the credit cards that you bring and phone numbers to call to report lost/stolen cards
3. Your itinerary and emergency contact information (the T2TGlobal office phone number is 919-808-4503)

And finally.....



TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR ALL TRAVELERS

- I. THOU SHALT NOT EXPECT TO FIND THINGS AS THOU HAS THEM AT HOME, FOR THOU HAS LEFT THOU HOME TO FIND THINGS DIFFERENT.
- II. THOU SHALT NOT TAKE ANYTHING TOO SERIOUSLY...FOR A CAREFREE MIND IS THE BEGINNING OF A GOOD TRAVEL EXPERIENCE.
- III. THOU SHALT NOT LET THE OTHER GROUP MEMBERS GET ON THY NERVES. FOR THOU ARE PAYING GOOD MONEY TO HAVE A FULFILLING EXPERIENCE.
- IV. REMEMBER THY PASSPORT AND MAKE SURE THAT THOU KNOWEST WHERE IT IS AT ALL TIMES FOR A PERSON WITHOUT A PASSPORT IS A PERSON WITHOUT A COUNTRY.
- V. BLESSED IS THE PERSON WHO CAN MAKE CHANGE IN ANY LANGUAGE. AND LO, THOU SHALL NOT BE CHEATED.
- VI. BLESSED IS THE PERSON WHO CAN SAY THANK YOU IN ANY LANGUAGE. AND IT SHALL BE WORTH MORE THAN MANY TIPS.
- VII. THOU SHALT NOT WORRY FOR WHEN THOU WORRIETH, THERE IS NO PLEASURE.
- VIII. THOU SHALT, WHEN IN ROME, DO SOMEWHAT AS THE ROMANS DO. IF IN DIFFICULTY THOU SHALT USE COMMON SENSE AND FRIENDLINESS.
- IX. THOU SHALT NOT JUDGE THE PEOPLE OF A COUNTRY BY ONE PERSON WITH WHOM THOU HAS HAD TROUBLE.
- X. REMEMBER THOU ART A GUEST. TREATETH THY HOST WITH RESPECT AND THOU SHALL BE TREATED AS AN HONORED GUEST.