



How to Pack for Jordan and Egypt

There is a wise saying that goes, “when packing for international travel, bring half as much luggage as you think you’ll need and twice as much money.” This is indeed excellent advice! Most people take way too many clothes. A good rule of thumb is if you’re not going to wear it more than three times, don’t pack it! Consider bringing clothes that can easily be washed out in the sink and hung to dry.

Fabrics That Wick Moisture: Fabrics such as CoolMax, microfiber, supplex, performance polyester, or other quick-wicking performance materials will dry quickly, not wrinkle, take up less packing space, and be much cooler to wear. While treated cotton is also a good choice, most cheaper 100% cotton clothing is a poor conductor of sweat. This is especially important with socks; pure cotton socks can cause blisters and when washed by hand tend to dry like a rock and are even rougher on your feet! My favorite socks are Smart Wool and Thorlos, but other performance/hiking socks that will wick moisture are also recommended.

Shoes: Probably one of the most important things to consider when traveling anywhere is a good, comfortable walking shoe. We will be doing a considerable amount of walking and shoes should not be just comfortable, but comfortable to walk in all day; sometimes over uneven terrain. Your shoes should be breathable and made for ventilation. Flip-flops are fine for strolling around the hotel and town, but when touring sites, consider something a bit more sturdy. Ventilated shoes or combo sandal/shoes with a closed toe are a great option. Brands like Teva, Keen, Vasque, L.L. Bean, and Merrell make great walking sandals.

Pants & Shorts: I like the pants with the zip-off legs that convert to shorts. These are especially functional in certain areas where modesty may be required, but then later allow you to zip off the legs if the heat gets to be too much! In the touristy parts of Jordan, like Petra, shorts are acceptable. However, Jordan is still a bit more conservative than Egypt so most of the time you will want to wear pants and covered shoulders. In Egypt, shorts and tank tops are acceptable everywhere except in mosques and churches.

Hats & Other Covering: Large brimmed hats that provide not only a head covering but also a certain amount of shade will come in very handy for the hot sun. In addition, women will be more acceptable when touring old churches and mosques if they are wearing some sort of head covering. A scarf or Arabic khafia will also do the trick. A scarf is also handy to cover shoulders and arms when entering holy sites.

Sun Block: While sun blocks can be purchased overseas, you might prefer to bring your own favorite brand. **DO** bring some with a broad spectrum, high SPF. The last thing you want is a painful sunburn that will feel even hotter in the heat of the day. I cannot emphasize it enough - I have all too often seen people regret their decision to brave the sun and end up being miserable for the rest of a trip.

Sunglasses: Desert sun can be blaringly bright and there is nothing better than a good pair of sunglasses, with the highest UV rating you can find. It may be good to bring two pairs in case you lose one pair.

Water Bottle / Holder: Staying hydrated will mean the difference between a comfortable tour and one that might end with trouble. Most people quickly learn to carry a water bottle with them, and bottled water will be easily accessible. However, lugging around a water bottle in your hand can be tiresome. It is much better to bring along a hydration system like a Camelback, a hanging loop intended to slip over the cap of a regular water bottle, or some other holder that will allow you to carry your water bottle on your waist or around your shoulder. Some lumbar packs or backpacks have holders for water bottles, and for women, some travel specific shoulder bags have water bottle pockets. You may also want to consider purchasing rehydration salts to add to your water. Most people experience dehydration on these tours and these salts are little miracle packs! They can also be purchased at the many pharmacies that are located in Jordan and Egypt.

Backpacks & Purses: Most people will travel with some kind of shoulder bag or backpack. There are many travel specific styles out there that have great security features. Just be sure that the one you choose is comfortable to lug around all day. For photography enthusiasts there are many camera bags out there that also function as travel bags and are complete with water bottle holsters! I prefer a waist pack so my hands and shoulders are free.



Suggested Packing List

The following list is by no means all-inclusive. You are free to bring as much as you like, just don't take so much that you can't carry it yourself. If you don't have a suitcase, consider a soft-sided duffle or 24" – 28" suitcase on wheels. While you can order online, check at Target first – they carry Eddie Bauer luggage (high quality) as well as other good brands for good prices.

4 - 6 pr. Pants

- Avoid jeans if possible as they are heavy and hot. We prefer performance pants or cotton blends. Good sources are REI, Columbia, Dicks, L.L. Bean, and Royal Robins. The zip off and/or convertible pants are the best as they let you customize your comfort throughout the day.
- Capris are an option for women
- A few pairs of shorts – we will be touring some places where shorts will be acceptable. This is where the zip off pants are handy!

6 - 8 Tops

- Ladies, you may wear tanks in certain areas, but remember that the sun is more intense here. The key is to layer. Mornings and evenings can be quite cool and you may want to shed layers throughout the day.
- T shirts and cami tops are good for layering.
 - Bring at least one with long sleeves.

Lightweight sweater/fleece or jacket

Underclothes

- Bring one set for each day of the trip or, if you plan to wash out in the sink, about four sets.
- As I wash all my underthings by hand on trips, I bring performance wear items that wick sweat and are quick to dry.

4 – 5 pr. Socks

- Socks, believe it or not, can make or break your trip. The wrong kind (all cotton) can leave you with blisters and ultra sweaty feet.
- Bring enough pairs for the trip or if you are like me, bring about 4 pairs and wash them out in the sink at night.
- I recommend Smart Wool hiking socks or a similar wool blend sock. Coolmax blends are also a good choice – Thorlos, Eddie Bauer, etc. Avoid all cotton socks if possible.

Sleepwear

Shoes

- You will need at least two; one for each foot.
- Hiking or walking shoes with good insoles (a must). Bob always brings several pairs of insoles to switch out.
- Walking sandals are also a nice alternative for lighter days. Chaco, Keen, L.L. Bean make good pairs.
- Get a cheap pair of flip flops to wear around the hotel. I get mine for about \$3 at Old Navy, then I can toss them at the end of a trip if need be.
- You might want a nicer pair of sandals or shoes for evenings out.

Belt

Hat

- A good ventilated hat with a wide brim will prevent an overheated head!
- I've had my Tilley for years and Bob gets his hats at REI or Columbia. Be sure they are packable/crushable.

Sunglasses

1 or 2 nicer outfits

- You will want to bring at least one nicer outfit for evenings out. Ladies, this can be a skirt and top or an easy dress. Guys, some nicer pants and a button up shirt is good. No ties necessary.

Bathing suit - optional (some of our hotels may have pools)

Toiletries

- any personal items you may need
- all meds should be in prescription bottles
- place anything that could leak in a plastic baggie and seal (shampoo, etc.)
- pack in smaller bottles to conserve space
- pack a mini "first-aid" kit for yourself (band-aids, Advil, Pepto-tabs, Sudafed, etc.)
 - Oral rehydration salts (can get these on Amazon)
 - Charcoal tablets
 - Probiotic (take these daily to keep tummy troubles at a minimum)

Sunblock with a high SFP (50 minimum)

- Get the sweatproof/waterproof kind

Bug spray - Some products now combine a high SPF sunblock with a bug repellent

Travel alarm clock

Earplugs (if city noise or a snoring roommate bothers you)

Electrical converter & plug adapter - only if you bring a curling iron, or anything else you would need to plug in.

Laundry supplies (if you wish to hand wash) Every hotel we stay at will offer laundry service

- liquid detergent in a squeeze bottle
- sink stopper
- rubber stretchy clothes line (these kind need no clips)

Tissue packs - the concept of toilet paper seems to be lost in most public places; esp. in Jordan.

Camera and padded case

Money/Passport pouch (Magellan's has the best selection)

- Get the kind you can conceal beneath your clothing; either a waist pack or neck pouch
- Be sure it is RFID protected

Mini Flashlight – can be helpful for power outages and exploring Egyptian tombs!

Watch

Day pack/waist pack, or travel purse

- Consider a lightweight travel vest – they have multiple security pockets and eliminate the need to carry a bag.

One piece of luggage and a carry-on (ID tags on ALL luggage)

Luggage locks (TSA friendly)

*Here are some optional items that I have found useful for hot climates.

- water bottle with a sprayer and battery operated fan attached. (can get at Wal-Mart)
- gel filled neck wrap (soak them in water and they continually cool your neck and head for hours)
- viscose/microfiber towel (to soak up sweat after tomb touring)

Useful Supply & Clothing Info

The following list is of retail and discount stores / catalogues (all of which can be found online) that sell travel clothing and supplies. Most of the websites will have sale or discount sections and some stores offer an outlet version. Some of these websites, like Campmor, Back Country, and Sierra Trading Post, will offer all the below mentioned brands at often drastically reduced prices. Do a bit of browsing and you'll find great deals.

Remember to check local stores first. Places like Wal-Mart, Target, Office Depot, Staples, etc., often have a travel section with surprisingly good quality travel gadgets. You can also find some performance wear clothing at Target.

- **Magellan's** – a favorite of mine and one of the best and most well respected supplier of all your travel needs.
 - <https://www.magellans.com>
- **Travel Smith** – another personal fave; similar to Magellan's.
 - <http://www.travelsmith.com/>
- **Tilley Endurables** – the best travel hats around, but their clothes are a bit pricy.
 - <http://www.tilley.com/>
- **ExOfficio** – one of my favorite brands; they often have discounts and closeout prices
 - <https://www.exofficio.com>
- **Royal Robbins** – excellent quality and often discounted travel wear.
 - <https://www.royalrobbins.com/>
- **Eagle Creek** – great for luggage and packs, and it's not overpriced.
 - <http://www.eaglecreek.com/>
- **Patagonia** – top rated performance wear and gear.
 - <http://www.patagonia.com/>
- **Campmor** – you just cannot beat these prices. Discount brand names of just about everything.
 - <https://www.campmor.com>
- **Sierra Trading Post** – another great discount site.
 - <http://www.sierratradingpost.com/>
- **L.L. Bean** – they have a travel catalogue that sells performance wear, shoes, and great luggage for decent prices.
 - <http://www.llbean.com/>
- **Eddie Bauer** – has great travel clothing along with a nice selection of travel gear. Well made duds for decent prices!
 - <http://www.eddiebauer.com/>
- **REI** – superb high quality performance wear and gear.
 - <https://www.rei.com/>
- **Columbia** – often have discounts on their outdoor performance wear.
 - <http://www.columbia.com/>

- **The North Face** – mostly camping supplies, but you can find deals on luggage and performance clothing.
 - <https://www.thenorthface.com>
- **Sahalie** – offbeat travel, adventure wear and supplies for women.
 - <http://www.sahalie.com/>
- **Title 9 Sports** – all woman's sporting and performance wear that is excellent quality although expensive.
 - <http://www.titlenine.com/>
- **Back Country** – discounted brand names of everything you could need.
 - <http://www.backcountry.com/>
- **Outdoor Research** – organizer pouches and tons of other travel gear.
 - <http://www.outdoorresearch.com/>
- **Duluth Trading Company** – have outdoor travel friendly clothing and supplies.
 - <http://www.duluthtrading.com/>

Remember, the packing list and clothing info is just a guide of suggestions for you to use. Don't feel you have to go out and buy a completely new wardrobe. Most of you probably already have travel friendly clothing. Just remember to:

- keep it modest and simple
- pack with the idea that you may want to leave room for souvenirs
- be sure to have a security / money pouch
- good walking shoes
- sunblock / sunglasses