

THE COMPLETE GUIDE

Kilimanjaro

Packing List.

Everything you need on the mountain, by category and climate zone. From Nelson Mushi, a senior guide with 22 years on Kilimanjaro and over 270 personal summits to Uhuru Peak.

NINE CATEGORIES | WHAT TO RENT | WHAT NOT TO BRING

Before You Pack

Kilimanjaro takes you through five distinct climate zones in a single week, from tropical rainforest at the base to arctic conditions on the summit. Your kit needs to handle all of them.

This list reflects what we recommend to every Go Kilimanjaro Treks climber based on over two decades on the mountain. Build the list, lay everything out at home, then pack twice: once for the climb (in your duffel that porters will carry) and once for your daypack (what you carry yourself each day).

Duffel weight limit: 15 kg (33 lb) per climber. Porters are limited by Tanzania National Park regulation and porter welfare standards. If you bring more, the overflow has to come out of your duffel at the gate.



Your porters carry the duffel to camp each day. Pack to the 15 kg limit, and lay it all out at home first.

1. Required Documents

- **Passport.** Valid 6+ months past entry, with 2 blank pages.
- **Tanzania e-Visa printed.** Or visa on arrival cash USD 50 (USD 100 for US citizens).
- **Vaccination certificate.** Yellow fever required if arriving from an endemic country.
- **Travel insurance proof.** Must cover trekking to 6,000 m and helicopter evacuation.
- **Printed flight itinerary.** Plus a backup digital copy.
- **Two passport photos.** Useful for unexpected permit renewals.

2. Clothing: The Layered System

- **Base layers.** Merino wool or synthetic, top and bottom. Never cotton. 2 sets.
- **Mid-layer fleece.** Heavy fleece for cool moorland evenings and early summit night.
- **Heavy insulation.** Down or synthetic puffy jacket rated to -15 C minimum.
- **Hardshell jacket.** Waterproof and windproof, with hood. Pit zips help.
- **Hardshell pants.** Waterproof, side-zip preferred for putting on over boots.
- **Hiking pants.** 2 pairs, quick-dry. Convertible to shorts is optional.
- **Hiking shirts.** 3 long-sleeve and 1 short-sleeve, synthetic or merino.
- **Underwear.** 5-6 pairs, synthetic or merino. Avoid cotton.

Layers go on and off through five climate zones. The system matters more than any single item.

3. Head, Hands, Feet

- **Wool beanie.** For evenings and summit night.
- **Balaclava or buff.** Covers face on summit night, can cover neck the rest of the time.
- **Sun hat.** Wide-brim or cap with neck protection.
- **Sunglasses.** Category 4 UV protection (high altitude UV is brutal).
- **Liner gloves.** Thin merino or synthetic, worn under outer gloves.
- **Heavy insulated outer gloves.** Rated to -20 C. Frostbite kills summit attempts.
- **Hand warmers.** 4-6 pairs for summit night.
- **Hiking boots.** Insulated, waterproof, already broken in. No new boots.
- **Wool hiking socks.** 4-5 pairs, heavy weight.
- **Sock liners.** 4-5 pairs, thin synthetic to wick moisture.
- **Camp shoes.** Lightweight sandals or trainers for around camp.
- **Gaiters.** Keep scree and snow out of boots on summit night.

4. Sleeping System

- **Sleeping bag.** Rated to -10 C minimum. Rentable in Moshi if you do not own one.
- **Sleeping pad.** Inflatable, R-value 3+. Tent floor gets cold.
- **Liner.** Silk or synthetic. Adds 5 C of warmth and keeps the bag clean.
- **Compression sack.** Reduces sleeping bag volume in the duffel.

5. Daypack (30-40 L)

- **Daypack.** 30-40 L with hip belt, sternum strap, and rain cover.
- **Hydration bladder.** 3 L capacity with insulated hose for cold days.
- **Wide-mouth bottles.** 2 x Nalgene 1 L. Wide-mouth bottles do not freeze shut.
- **Camera.** Plus 2-3 spare batteries (cold drains them fast).
- **Headlamp.** Plus spare batteries. Used every summit night.
- **Trekking poles.** Reduce knee load on descent significantly.
- **Personal first aid kit.** Blister care, ibuprofen, personal medications.
- **Snacks.** Energy bars, gels, nuts, dried fruit. Bring what you like.
- **Toilet paper.** In a ziploc, plus hand sanitiser.
- **Pee bottle (optional).** Wide-mouth Nalgene. Cold-night option.

6. Summit Night Extras

- **Extra hand warmers.** 6+ pairs, opened just before leaving camp.
- **Heated insoles (optional).** Worth it for cold-foot climbers.
- **Insulated bottle covers.** Or wrap bottles in wool socks.
- **Energy gels.** 4-6 portions for the 6-8 hour push.
- **Sunscreen and lip balm.** Apply before leaving. The dawn at altitude is intense.

Summit night starts around 11 PM and reaches Uhuru at sunrise. Plan extremity protection first.

7. Toiletries and Personal

- **Toothbrush and toothpaste.** Travel size.
- **Biodegradable wet wipes.** No showers on the mountain.
- **Sunscreen SPF50.** Mineral preferred, reef-safe at coast if extending.
- **Lip balm SPF30.** Critical at altitude.
- **Quick-dry travel towel.** For face washing at camp.
- **Personal medications.** Sealed and labelled. Discuss Diamox with your doctor.
- **Earplugs and eye mask.** Tents are not soundproof.
- **Insect repellent.** For lower forest zones and Moshi.

8. Duffel and Storage

- **Duffel bag.** 90-100 L, soft-sided, with carry handles.
- **Dry bags.** 3-4 various sizes, to organise inside the duffel.
- **Heavy ziploc bags.** 5-6 to compartmentalise small items.
- **Padlock.** Optional, for the duffel zip.

Duffel max weight 15 kg. Pack with this in mind.

9. Renting in Moshi

- **Sleeping bag rental.** USD 30-40 for the climb. Cleaned between climbers.
- **Down jacket rental.** USD 25-35 for the climb.
- **Hardshell pants rental.** USD 15-20 for the climb.
- **Trekking pole rental.** USD 10-15 for the climb.
- **Gaiters rental.** USD 10 for the climb.
- **Full rental kit.** Approximately USD 100-150 for the full climb.

Coordinate rentals at the pre-trek briefing the day before heading to the gate.

What NOT to Bring

Item	Why Not
Cotton clothing	Becomes dangerous at altitude when wet. No insulation when soaked.
Brand new boots	Blisters end summit attempts. Break boots in 6+ weeks before.
Drones	Customs impounds drones without 4 separate permits.
Plastic bags	Banned in Tanzania since 2019. Confiscated at airport.
Alcohol	No benefit at altitude. Severely dehydrates. Skip until descent.
Bluetooth speakers	No, just no. Respect the mountain and other climbers.
Heavy luxuries	Every kilogram a porter carries is a kilogram of effort.

Ready to Climb?

Nelson personally responds to every booking enquiry within 24 hours. Send your dates, preferred route, and any questions about gear or fitness, and you will hear back from a senior guide with two decades on the mountain.

Web
gokilimanjarotreks.com

Email
info@gokilimanjarotreks.com

WhatsApp
+255 677 917 500

Nelson Mushi | Senior Guide | Go Kilimanjaro Treks | Moshi, Tanzania