Pre-Departure Travel Advice: Harare
Hello & Welcome to the EDGE of AFRICA Team!

You are now one step closer to becoming a part of our ever expanding group of very enthusiastic and passionate supporters! Thank you for choosing to be a part of one of our initiatives. We only exist and do the great work we do because of generous volunteers like you!

At EDGE of AFRICA, we want to ensure that your stay is extremely beneficial to both you and your chosen initiative! This is why we have compiled a document to assist you with your planning.

Enjoy the read and if you have any more questions, or in case of an emergency, you can contact us on:

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We’re also very into all the Social Media stuff. Join us!  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EDGEofAFRICA](http://www.facebook.com/EDGEofAFRICA)  
Twitter: [www.twitter.com/EDGEofAFRICA](http://www.twitter.com/EDGEofAFRICA)  
YouTube: [http://www.youtube.com/edgeofafrica](http://www.youtube.com/edgeofafrica)

We look forward to working with you!

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EDGE of AFRICA Departure Check list

To make sure you are well prepared and ready for your EDGE of AFRICA Experience, we need to make sure that you have ticked all the boxes so please read the checklist below carefully and make sure you have completed each step by the time you leave your home country to join us.

Have you:
- Filled out your booking form completely and honestly?
- Completed a medical declaration form?
- Obtained police clearance if necessary?
- Filled out your Pre-Departure form correctly with your arrival and departure information and sent it to info@edgeofafrica.com?
- Paid your placement in full 14 days before your arrival?
- Clearly read the BRANCH and INITIATIVE information packs supplied to you when you applied?
- Asked an EDGE Rep any questions to eliminate any concerns you may have regarding your placement?
- Checked for project updates, accommodation photos and chatted to other volunteers if necessary on our Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/EDGEofAFRICA?
- Read and understood the information in this Pre Departure Travel Advice Pack?

Passport/Visa Requirements/Immigration

Visitors from most commonwealth countries, most Western European countries, Japan and the USA can purchase single entry visas at the port of entry (Airport or border post). The price of these visas range from $30 - $75 USD and will be issued for the duration of your visit. Be sure to confirm in advance that you can purchase a visa upon entry, otherwise you will need to apply in advance to the Zimbabwe Embassy in your home country. Here are a few contact details that will be useful for you to check the latest visa requirements for entering into Zimbabwe:

Australia: 02 6286 2281, http://zimembassycanberra.org.au
Canada: 613-421 2824, www.zimbabweembassy.ca
USA: 202-332-7100, www.zimbabwe-embassy.us

You can apply for visa extensions and re-entry visas at the Department of Home Affairs in Zimbabwe. A project coordinator can assist you with this when you are in the county.

You may be required to show the volunteer letter we have supplied you with if asked at immigration. You may also be required to go to Home Affairs once you are at the placement to get a volunteer visa stamp. This can only be determined once you are in the country. We suggest carrying the letter with you and showing it if necessary.
asked. **MAKE SURE YOU CHECK THE VISA STAMP YOU HAVE IN YOUR PASSPORT WHEN YOU COME THROUGH IMMIGRATION! IT IS VITAL THAT THE IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS HAVE WRITTEN THE CORRECT DATES ON YOUR VISA AND THAT THERE ARE NO HAND WRITTEN CORRECTIONS ON IT. IF THERE ARE, SPEAK TO AN AUTHORITY IMMEDIATELY TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION. IF IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR VISA HAS BEEN TAMPERED WITH, OR YOU HAVE OUTSTAYED YOUR VISA, THERE ARE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES!**

**Insurance**

We require that you have full medical and travel insurance before you come out. If you need more information on this, contact your travel agent, STA or e-mail us on info@edgeofafrica.com and we will help you wherever possible. Here are some reliable insurance suppliers:

Flight Centre: [www.flightcentre.com](http://www.flightcentre.com)

STA Travel: [www.statravel.com](http://www.statravel.com)

Go Insurance: [http://www.gotravelinsurance.co.uk/](http://www.gotravelinsurance.co.uk/)

**Getting to Harare: Flights & Bus**

The easiest route to Harare is to fly via the OR Thambo airport in Johannesburg, which is a destination that most major airlines fly to. We recommend allowing at least 2.5 hours transit time if you are flying in from an international flight to catch the connecting flight to Harare.

In Johannesburg airport be aware that you will be approached by ‘helpers’. Some will be legitimate airport staff (generally in orange or yellow tunics with ID badges) and others will be chancers. There is an information desk available at the airport and they will help you with whatever you need. Don’t engage with any helpers especially at ATM’s or to assist you with your bags. If you are lost or have a question, go straight to the Info desk.

If you need to overnight in Johannesburg, we recommend Sunrock Guest House. They provide a friendly and free transfer from the airport and a good healthy meal every evening for a reasonable rate. Their buffet breakfasts are included in the accommodation price. The rooms are clean and comfortable. Website: [http://www.sunrock.co.za/](http://www.sunrock.co.za/). You can
email them on sunrock@telkomsa.net or call +27 11 3943772. Alternatively let us know you want to stay there and we will book you in.

To get to our Harare Branch, you will have to transfer from Johannesburg on British Airways, Kulula or South African Airways.

Airlines that fly into Harare:

South African Airlines: [www.flysaa.com](http://www.flysaa.com)

British Airways: [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)

Kulula: [www.kulula.com](http://www.kulula.com)

It is usually cheaper to book these directly on the airline website as opposed to going through expedia.com but don’t forget that EDGE of AFRICA offers a travel service and can assist with helping you book your flight and purchase travel insurance. Please contact info@edgeofafrica.com for more information on this service.

We recommend avoiding local buses as they are unreliable and the arrival times are awkward. However, if you would prefer this mode of travel, please contact us for more information.

** Don’t forget we have arrival and departure days on our programs so please try to stick to these. If you can’t then please let us know ASAP as we may ask you to find alternative transport to the program.
Meet the Team

Dayne Davey: Managing Director and Founder of EDGE of AFRICA
- Developing and Managing the EDGE Branches
- Developing and maintaining our work Ethos and spreading our passion
- Implementing standards across the board and working alongside various stake holders and international partners

Marinette Davey: Volunteer Administrator
- Dealing with enquiries and bookings
- Pre-departure support

Wellington: Harare House and Maintenance Manager
- Catering
- House maintenance
- House Management

Do’s & Don’ts
Zimbabwe is a very friendly country- which is something we are very proud about. So, DO smile! And DO greet people. Being (responsibly) friendly to officials and locals is respectful to the local people. If you are at a restaurant, DO tip 10% minimum and if you feel your taxi driver has been helpful, then an extra US$2-5 is an acceptable tip. DO try to experience the country for everything it has to offer. DO immerse yourself in the African way DO make sure that if anything changes in your arrival plans to Knysna, you let us know asap. DO keep a copy of your passport / identification with you at all times.

DON’T give money to children or adults begging on the street, if you want to help them, get them something to eat. DON’T walk around the cities alone at night no matter what the group size. Also, DON’T take photos in the city or of any people, shops or scenes without permission. DON’T leave your bag or drink unattended if you’re out in a pub or club. Basically just be aware that you are in a new country and, just like your own country, we have people who are opportunistic and who love to take advantage of tourists. DON’T engage in any political conversation, and DON’T argue or disagree with police or officials, stay humble at all times.
When it comes to shopping at local markets or buying local crafts, we have a theory that you can knock down the seller and get a real bargain, but that US$5 that you knocked off his price may just feed his family for a week. So make sure you don’t get ripped off but be fair in what you pay the locals for their crafts.

Health and medical information

Always make sure you carry your medication in its original packaging and an original prescription for prescribed medication. It is also a good idea to carry a signed and dated letter from your doctor outlining any medical conditions you have, medication (with generic names) that you are on, and if you require needles or syringes, the reasons why.

- **Vaccinations:** The World Health Organization (www.who.int/en/) recommends that all travellers are covered for diphtheria, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella and polio, hepatitis B regardless of the country you travel to. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) recommends the following vaccines for Zimbabwe: Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, rabies and typhoid and boosters for tetanus, diphtheria and measles. Travellers are only required to have a vaccine for Yellow Fever if coming from an infective region (Kenya & Tanzania). Medical Volunteers should have the BCG vaccine against TB or Mantoux test to confirm immunity.

- **Malaria:** According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, all areas of Zimbabwe are at risk for malaria therefore it is recommended that you consult with a travel clinic to see which malaria medication is the best option for you. It is very rare that you will be exposed to Malaria in Harare or Wedza; however we do recommend that you consult your physician.

- **HIV:** Zimbabwe has a high rate of HIV. The virus is spread through infected blood and blood products, by sexual intercourse with an infected partner and from an infected mother to her baby during child birth and breast feeding. We strongly suggest you take this into account before considering taking part in any activities which may put you at any risk whatsoever.

- **Dehydration:** Africa is Hot! You will be working outdoors and you may be doing physical work. Bring a water bottle or buy one when you arrive and make sure you stay hydrated in the heat! Bring plenty of sun block because the Africa sun is hotter than you think and bring a decent wide-brimmed hat.

- **Health Care in Zimbabwe:** The private health care in Zimbabwe is of international standard- but can be very expensive. In Harare there are a couple of good private hospitals, usually with relatively well stocked chemists attached. Prescriptions are generally required for most medication and we have access to a good doctor who is on call 24/7. We do not recommend any government hospitals for volunteer treatment, and full medical coverage is an absolute necessity.
Packing List

Please note that not all of the below will always be appropriate or relevant, however due to varying weather conditions and activities you may need many of the following.

**Paperwork:**
- A certified photocopy of your passport, to be carried at all times
- Printed flight and travel itinerary (remember access to printers and computers is limited)

**Essential sleeping & living equipment:**
- A small rucksack is useful for daytime
- Sleeping bag & liner for any camping we may do (warm for winter, sheet for summer)
- One bath towel, one swimming towel
- Alarm Clock!

**Other:**
- Camera
- Flashlight (recommended)
- Binoculars (not essential)
- Water bottle (can buy this in Zimbabwe)
- Sun-block (high SPF recommended) Beware the sun! Bring plenty of sun block, or buy some in Zimbabwe, of at least 15SPF but 30SPF is recommended. You should use approximately a shot glass of sun block for your body and a good teaspoon full for your face. This sounds a lot but is worth it, having acute sunburn can ruin your stay and increase your risk of skin cancer.

**Personal First Aid Kit:**
We carry a fully equipped first aid kit on all excursions but for your personal use we recommend you have one of your own containing:

- Anti-biotics (prescription only)
- Anti-diarrhoeal drugs
- Paracetomol or Aspirin
- Anti-inflammatory drugs
- Anti-histamines (for hay-fever or allergic reactions)
- Anti-bacterial ointment for cuts and abrasions
- Bandages, gauze, plasters etc
- Scissors, safety pins, tweezers
- Insect repellent containing-DEET
- Oral re-hydration salts
Work Clothing:
Enough to last you a week while the previous set of weeks’ worth of clothing is in the wash.

- On conservation initiatives, you will get very dirty. Field clothes need to be hard wearing, neutral coloured items (khaki, browns and greens) - trousers, shorts and tee shirts. We recommend long sleeved shirts to add extra protection from the sun. Hard wearing trousers which you can change every 2-3 days. You cannot wear open shoes. Shorts are alright but your legs can get scratched. You are also required to wear your work T-Shirt at all times.

- On community initiatives, modest clothing is required. No short skirts or skimpy shorts and strappy tops. Hiking boots/shoes are required for field work and sandals/slops are useful for off days and community work.

For all volunteers we recommend:
- Waterproof shoes/boots (essential)
- Rain proof jacket and trousers- We recommend you come prepared to work in the rain
- Cool and warm t-shirts – short and long sleeved
- A wide brimmed hat is also a necessity
- A couple of warm fleece tops will be beneficial for the cooler nights and days and layers always work better in Africa as it often warms up later in the day
- One or two smart-casual outfits for nights out in town

If you have space left in your bag and are feeling generous, these are some of the things on our wish list:
- Children’s clothes and shoes are always needed for our Community Projects
- We can never have enough school books and magazines
- Toiletries are always very popular with our communities
- Sports equipment is always needed
- DVD’s and games for the volunteer house are also much appreciated (we have some board games but if you have anything unique to your country...bring it along!)

Money
Zimbabwe now deals in US Dollars. It is recommended that you bring most of your currency in cash, but please be careful with it and don’t store it all in one place. There is a safe at the volunteer house. Mastercard seems to work more than Visa card, but this varies. There is also not often much change, so bring as many US$ 1’s, 5’s and 10’s as possible. ATMs don’t always work either, there are a few that accept foreign cards, mainly Barclays but your project coordinator will be able to take you to those that do. For details on conversion rates consult Currency Exchange.
Some things in Zimbabwe are cheap and some things are not. It really depends on what you are used to back home but this should help. Shopping at the market is very cheap and great value, shopping in the big supermarkets varies. Generally if you buy local, it is much cheaper. Below is an idea of what you can expect to pay:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loaf of Bread</td>
<td>$1 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litre of Milk</td>
<td>$1.60 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle of Beer</td>
<td>$2 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle of Wine</td>
<td>$10 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner for two</td>
<td>$50 USD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litre of Petrol</td>
<td>$1.50 USD /litre (0.26 Gallons)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For updated conversions see [Currency Exchange](#)  
For metric conversions see [Metric Conversions](#)

Your project fee covers all the basics you will need, food, accommodation, transport, etc. Plus, there is plenty you can do without spending money, like excursions, hikes, or just relaxing around the pool and playing tennis. We recommend about $100 USD per week if you plan on going out one night a week for a meal and buying a couple of curios.

Don’t forget to let your bank know that you will be travelling to Zimbabwe if you plan on using bank cards— they may block your card if they are not aware of this.

**Plugs and Electricity**

The Zimbabwean electricity supply is 220/230 volts AC 50 HZ. Most plugs are 15 amp 3-prong with square pins. Consider bringing a suitable adapter with you, although they can be purchased locally. US-made appliances may need a transformer.

**Phones and Communication**

There are phones available on all EDGE of AFRICA placements including in the accommodation. We do, however recommend that you bring your own Mobile/Cellular phone to enable constant communication and for emergencies. EDGE of AFRICA will help you get a local SIM card which you will have to register using your passport number (we will help you do this when you get here).

International calling cards are also available and recommended from most local shops to make your calls home much cheaper.
You will be able to access the internet by purchasing a dongle (USB stick that provides an internet connection) which you can use on your laptop. Data can easily be added onto the stick, but is relatively expensive. You will never be more than 20 minutes from a local town with all amenities and internet cafes available.

We don’t recommend that you send anything by snail mail, due to the inefficient postal system that exists in Zimbabwe.

FAQs

ABOUT ZIMBABWE

Is Africa a country?

Africa is huge! It will take you approximately six weeks to drive from one end of Africa to the other and you will cross all the zones of latitude.

Africa is a continent, made up of 54 countries. (Like Europe being a continent made up of different countries.) For example, Egypt is a country within Africa, which is a completely different place to Zimbabwe, and so are Kenya and the Congo. Each country has its own government, currency, race, culture, etc.

Is Zimbabwe safe?

Zimbabwe’s political situation has been in the news for over 10 years now. Although between 2000 and 2012, there were various uprisings around political opinions, since the shared government and the introduction of the US$, the country has become peaceful once again. The Zimbabwean people are god-fearing and friendly and have incredibly welcoming attitude to foreigners. As long as you listen to your coordinator and the EDGE recommendations, you will not have any problems.

What should I expect from Zimbabwe as a country?

Zimbabwe is relatively diverse in habitat but the savannah landscape dominates: long grass, flat-topped msasa trees and balancing rocks. You will see very rural situations with a lot of subsistence farming as well as the highly populated typical African city. The eastern Highlands are more mountainous and forested, and Victoria Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world draws international tourists daily.

Don’t expect anything first world! There are some very well stocked supermarkets, but generally the roads are not in a great state, it is not always easy to buy luxuries (or they are relatively expensive) and there are power-cuts daily (the volunteer house is well equipped for these!)

All of this is what makes the country so unique; it is a country that you will fall in-love with. The people will impress you and the landscape will leave you breathless!
How far is Harare from Victoria Falls?

Victoria Falls is approximately 750 km (466 miles) from Harare. The Falls, which are one of the Seven Wonders of the Natural World, are located on the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe and are part of the Zambezi River.

How far is Harare Airport to the volunteer house?

Harare airport is approximately a 45 minutes drive to the volunteer house.

What is the time difference?

GMT + 2

Time in Zimbabwe right now

Can you drink the tap water?

Drinking water in Zimbabwe is quite safe when drinking filtered borehole water – the volunteer house only uses borehole water.

Will I see lions in Harare?

Well maybe on the wildlife resort pamphlets in our tourism office. Luckily for you, lions do not roam the streets of Harare - neither do any other dangerous animals. (Maybe just a stray dog or two.) You may be lucky enough to see baboons, vervet monkeys, bush buck and many birds. You will have an opportunity to see lions on some of the excursions we run over weekends, though.

WHAT ABOUT THE PLACEMENT?

Will I get an EDGE of AFRICA certificate or accreditation or something at the end of my placement?

Yes! You will receive a certificate recognising your involvement and contributions.

How many other volunteers will I be working with?

This varies and you will be working as part of a group and also individually at times. However numbers will be approximately 6 per placement. There will also be a project coordinator available at all times. For past, present or future volunteer visit our Facebook page.
What will I need to wear on my project and what clothes should I bring?

EDGE of AFRICA will provide you with a work t-shirt, but you will need to bring conservative casual clothing in neutral colours please. Shoes, trousers, shorts and t-shirts. You will find the comprehensive packing list in the ‘Packing list section above’.

How can I do laundry on my placement?

EDGE of AFRICA will provide facilities to do your laundry once per week, however please bring enough clothes to last you two weeks.

Can I bring my laptop?

Yes sure.

Can I have items posted from home?

We recommend that you don’t post any items to Zimbabwe- the postal system is not reliable. If you would like to post donations, you can always send them to our South Africa Branch: Suite 88, Private Bag X31, Knysna, South Africa, 6570

WILL I BE SAFE?

I have heard stories about Zimbabwe being dangerous, will I be safe?

Some areas in Harare have a high crime rate, but the areas around our volunteer accomidations are quite safe. However, this is a third world country, and a high percentage of the citizens are unemployed and under-privileged. Take care of your belongings at all time. We can look after any valuables you have during your stay such as passports, travel documents etc. Carry limited amounts of cash around with you at any time. EDGE of AFRICA takes no responsibility for the loss of personal items or money during any point of your stay.

Placement Safety

Every precaution has been taken to assure your safety during your stay. However sometimes due to the remote locality of some of the projects, emergency facilities may only be available through medical air rescue service. Zimbabwe fortunately has a high medical service standard. It is imperative that you have comprehensive travel insurance that includes hospital visits, transport to hospital and repatriation to your home country in case of emergency.
FREE TIME FUN?

What can I do on the weekends?

Weekend time is set aside to hunt for food and collect rainwater for the following week. Not quite (but it would have been exciting!). EDGE of AFRICA arranges a number of trips in the Harare area on days off. These include afternoon trips to the Doon Estate craft market and Chapungu Sculpture Park or a Harare City tour and day trips to hike the granite hills of Domboshawa or to explore Harare’s largest market, Mbare Musika, then relax next to Cleveland Dam.

HOW DO I TRAVEL FROM A to B?

Do I need an international driver’s license for Zimbabwe?

Your airport pick-ups, transfers and project transport will be included as per arrangement, so you will not necessarily need your own transport during your project. Foreign driving licenses are valid in Zimbabwe for up to 90 days, but must be printed in English. However if you do not have such a license, you will need to get an International Driving Permit if you plan on driving yourself anywhere in Zimbabwe.

Can you book a rental car in Zimbabwe or should you arrange car hire in your own country before departure?

Your airport pick-ups, transfers and project transport will be included as per arrangement, so you will not necessarily need your own transport during your project. However if you would like to hire a car for before or after your project you can book car rental prior to coming to Zimbabwe, as car rental companies might be fully booked when you get here. However, there are a number of well-known car rental companies to choose from at international airports and in locations across the country, so on-the-spot bookings should generally not be a problem.

Who will pick me up at the airport?

An EDGE of AFRICA representative will collect you from Harare Airport, or from a pre-arranged site if you are travelling by bus or have been staying in alternative accommodation prior to the arrival day.

DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

Does anyone speak English in Zimbabwe?

Shona and Ndebele are the official languages, however most people speak English fluently.
SOS!

If family or friends need me, how can I be reached in emergencies?

EDGE of AFRICA Head office: + 27 44 382 0122

MUMS, DADS, BROS, SISTERS, HUSBANDS, WIVES, CATS and DOGS, THIS IS FOR YOU!

I am worried about what my daughter might be doing and where she will be, how can i know she will be ok?

Rest assured anyone who volunteers with EDGE of AFRICA is in good hands. Follow updates on our website and Facebook pages and if need any information email or call us. An EDGE of AFRICA representative is available 24hours a day / 7 days a week and although we can’t watch over our volunteers every minute of the day we always make sure that they are as safe as possible and have what they need.

….Thank you for taking time to read our Pre Departure Pack! We hope you enjoy your time in Harare with us and we look forward to welcoming you! If you feel we have left anything out that would be useful in this information pack, please let us know: jo@edgeofafrica.com