



mana

SANDS

ZAMBEZI RIVER

# SELF-DRIVE INFORMATION

We can't wait to welcome you to the wild beauty of Mana Pools.

This guide is designed to help you prepare for your self-drive journey to Mana Sands, ensuring a smooth and safe trip into the heart of one of Africa's most iconic wilderness areas. Driving into Mana Pools is a spectacular experience – wild, scenic and deeply rewarding – but it does require planning and preparation. Please read the following directions and notes carefully

# ROUTE OVERVIEW

- **Departure City:** The directions provided assume departure from Harare\*.  
\*If you're departing from another location, please adjust accordingly or contact us for guidance.
- **Estimated Driving Time:**  $\pm 7.5 - 8.5$  hours, depending on road conditions, stops and your vehicle

- **Vehicle Required:** A high-clearance vehicle is essential. 4x4 May Be Required: depending on weather conditions and road conditions on the ground, particularly after rain
- **Fuel:** Last reliable fuel stop is Makuti – please fill up here
- **Important:** Self-drivers must arrive at Marongora National Parks Office before 3:00 PM to collect their entry permit

## LOCATION & GPS COORDINATES

Mana Sands is located within Mana Pools National Park, along the banks of the Zambezi River in northern Zimbabwe – a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Africa's last great wildernesses.

### MANA SANDS MAIN CAMP

15°49'18.2"S 29°10'07.5"E



### LITTLE MANA SANDS

15°48'51.1"S 29°10'29.2"E



### MANA SANDS



## Tip: Navigate Like a Pro

There's very limited mobile reception on the way into Mana Pools, including inside the park. We highly recommend downloading offline maps before you leave Harare.

Apps like Google Maps (offline mode) or Maps.me work well and will guide you all the way to Mana Sands – even without signal.

## STEP - BY - STEP DIRECTIONS

1. **Leave Harare early, heading northwest on the Lomagundi Road toward Makuti** (± 4.5 hours).
  - Stop to refuel at Makuti – this is your **last fuel station before Mana Pools**.
  - The Makuti Hotel, just before the junction, offers food, drinks, ice and basic supplies.
2. **20 minutes after Makuti**, you'll reach the Marongora National Parks Office, just before the escarpment descent.
  - Sign in and collect your entry permit (no payment required here).
  - Keep your permit safe – you'll need it at multiple points. The office closes at 3:00 PM.
3. **Begin your descent down the Zambezi escarpment** (6.6 km / ±10 mins).
  - Go slowly and watch for trucks. At the bottom, you'll see the Chemutsi Boom Gate on your right.
  - Show your entry permit and sign in with National Parks.
4. **Continue 32.3 km** (± 45 mins) toward the **Nyakasikana Boom Gate**.
  - Be alert for corrugations and wildlife crossings.
  - Cross a concrete bridge over the Ruckomechi River before arriving.
  - This is your last toilet stop and potentially your final cell signal.
  - Sign in again with National Parks and present your permit.
5. **Once signed in, at the T Junction turn LEFT** and travel for 45 km (± 1 hour) to reach the inner Mana Pools area.
  - Do not turn off – stay on the main track.
  - At around 42 km, look out for a **large concrete sign** and **green/yellow directional board**.
  - Turn right here to head to Nyamepi Reception.
6. **At Nyamepi Reception, you must:**
  - Pay all **National Parks fees**, including optional fishing permits
  - Sign in and state you're staying at **Mana Sands**
  - Please **notify Mana Sands management via WhatsApp or call** so we can track your safe arrival
  - You may politely ask National Parks if you can use their WiFi to send your message
  - Toilets and limited free WiFi are available
  - Keep **car windows shut and avoid leaving luggage unattended** – monkeys and baboons are bold!

# FINAL STRETCH TO CAMP

- **Exit Nyamepi** the way you came and return to the main concrete sign.
- **Fork right**, continuing 17.1 km (± 50 mins) on the most well-worn road. (Ignore the sign to Mana Pools Safari Lodge – keep going straight.)
- **At 17.1 km, take the left fork into Mopani woodlands.**  
If you accidentally reach Vundu Camp signage (Private – No Entry), you've missed the turn. (Turn around, go back 3 minutes and take the first right fork – this leads you to the correct route)
- **From the Y-junction**, continue 17.1 km (± 50 mins) to Mana Sands.
  - At a final Y-junction with a Ruckomechi sign, turn right.
  - If the track turns to gravel, you're on the right road.
- **At the T-junction:**
  - **Left** = Mana Sands Main Camp
  - **Right** = Little Mana Sands
- If you reach Mana West Airstrip, you've gone too far. Turn back and keep left – you're just 10 minutes from camp.

## Breakdown or Delay?

**Please stay with your vehicle. Do not walk to seek help.**

We monitor guest arrival times and will send assistance if you're delayed.

## National Parks Rules & Reminders

- No off-road driving
- Do not feed animals
- No littering
- Speed limit: 40 km/h in designated areas
- No driving 30 minutes after sunset or before sunrise
- Entry fees are paid at Nyamepi or ZimParks HQ in Harare

## FINAL CHECKLIST

- ☐ High-clearance vehicle  
(4x4 if rain or poor road conditions)
- ☐ Full tank of fuel at Makuti
- ☐ National Parks entry permit from Marongora
- ☐ Drinking water and snacks
- ☐ WhatsApp Mana Sands after Nyamepi check-in
- ☐ Keep permit and receipts easily accessible
- ☐ Be aware of wildlife at all times

**Travel safely** – your adventure begins the moment you leave the tar!





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FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE SAFARI EXPERIENCE.

CONTACT US: [manasands.com](https://manasands.com) | [info@manasands.com](mailto:info@manasands.com)



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