

SOUTHERN AFRICA

YOUR ESSENTIAL TRAVEL ACTION GUIDE | South Africa • Botswana • Zimbabwe • Zambia • Namibia

FOR U.S. PASSPORT HOLDERS • Travelers using other passports should contact CURAH for nationality-specific guidance.



START HERE | This guide is designed to answer: What do I need to do? Where do I go? What do I send CURAH? Rules, fees and portal availability change. Check official requirements again shortly before travel.

Your five travel-preparation steps

1. Check your passport and every border crossing on your itinerary.
2. Identify which countries require a visa or arrival declaration.
3. Complete required online applications or prepare for approved visa-on-arrival procedures.
4. Arrange a travel-health consultation and review travel insurance.
5. Download documents, confirm your travel plan and share applicable approvals with CURAH.

Find your destination

DESTINATION	YOUR FIRST ACTION
South Africa	Generally visa-free tourism for U.S. visitors; check customs declaration rules and child travel documents.
Botswana	Generally visa-free tourism; verify passport, duration and entry-point rules.
Zimbabwe	Tourist visa typically required; confirm visa-on-arrival or eVisa and KAZA option.
Zambia	Check current U.S. visa exemption status before paying for a visa; assess KAZA when applicable.
Namibia	Tourist visa required for U.S. citizens; online application or eligible visa on arrival.

Important: Visa-free entry does not remove passport, health, onward-ticket or customs obligations.

Travel Requirements Disclaimer: Entry requirements, visa regulations, health requirements, and government fees may change without notice. While CURAH Travel strives to provide current information, travelers are ultimately responsible for meeting all entry requirements for their destination(s). We recommend verifying official government requirements prior to departure. If you have any questions, we're always happy to assist.

1 | Passports and travel documents



Before you apply for anything

1. Find your passport and confirm its expiration date.
2. Check the precise validity and blank-page rules for every country you will enter, including return entries.
3. Inspect the passport for damage and verify that your name matches airline bookings.
4. Renew your passport first if necessary; visas issued against an old passport may not transfer.
5. Save a secure digital copy of your passport identity page and carry a separate backup.

PRACTICAL RULE | Six months of remaining validity and several blank visa pages are sensible planning buffers for multi-country travel, but each destination has its own legal standard. South Africa's passport rule is not identical to every neighboring country's.

U.S. passport renewal: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/have-passport/renew.html>

Traveling with children?

South Africa and neighboring countries may request additional documents for minors, especially when a child travels with one parent, another adult or different surnames. Ask CURAH to review your specific family itinerary well before departure.

What to have ready for entry applications

- Passport identity-page scan and recent photo where requested
- Arrival/departure flights, accommodation addresses and local host details
- Payment card and a working email address
- Evidence of onward travel and sufficient funds if requested
- Vaccination certificates where applicable

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

02 | South Africa



What you need

U.S. citizens generally do not need a tourist visa for visits of up to 90 days. Entry is determined by South African border authorities. Check the current length-of-stay and passport rules before departure.

How to prepare

1. Confirm your passport meets South Africa's current validity and blank-page requirements.
2. Keep your return or onward ticket and first accommodation address available.
3. Review South African Revenue Service (SARS) traveler declaration instructions to see whether you must or may submit a digital customs declaration for your trip.
4. If a declaration is required for your situation, use the official SARS service and retain the confirmation.
5. For children, verify whether birth certificates, consent letters or custody documents are needed.

South Africa Department of Home Affairs: <https://www.dha.gov.za/>

South African Revenue Service (customs): <https://www.sars.gov.za/>

If you will also visit Victoria Falls or safari countries

Review each additional border crossing separately. A South African visa exemption does not authorize entry into Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia or Namibia.

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

03 | Botswana and Namibia

BOTSWANA | Usually no tourist visa for U.S. visitors

1. Confirm your U.S. passport and planned stay qualify for visa-free entry.
2. Review the entry rules for the specific border or airport you will use.
3. Keep accommodation details, onward itinerary and any required child-travel documents accessible.

Botswana government information: <https://www.gov.bw/>

NAMIBIA | Tourist visa required

Namibia introduced a tourist visa requirement for U.S. passport holders. Eligible travelers may use the official e-services system or a designated visa-on-arrival entry point, subject to current rules.

1. Open Namibia's official e-services portal and confirm your visa category and eligibility.
2. Check whether your arrival airport or land border accepts visas on arrival.
3. Prepare passport scan, travel dates, lodging details and any requested supporting documents.
4. If applying online, submit the form, pay the fee shown by the portal and save the approval.
5. Carry your approval or visa-on-arrival documents and proof of onward travel.

Official Namibia visa portal: <https://eservices.mhaiss.gov.na/>

CURAH TIP | If your trip combines Namibia and Botswana, do not assume the same visa rules apply to both. Border-crossing locations matter.

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

04 | Zimbabwe, Zambia and Victoria Falls

ZIMBABWE | Check tourist visa options

1. Confirm the current visa category for U.S. visitors and your number of entries.
2. Check whether your entry point supports visa on arrival or whether advance online application is available.
3. If using an official online option, follow its document and payment prompts and retain the approval.
4. Carry proof of accommodation and onward travel.

Zimbabwe Immigration: <https://www.zimimmigration.gov.zw/>

ZAMBIA | Verify visa exemption before paying

1. Check Zambia Immigration's current visa-exempt nationality list.
2. If a visa is required for your circumstances, select the correct entry category and apply through the official channel.
3. If exempt, still prepare passport, onward travel and accommodation details.

Zambia Immigration: <https://www.zambiaimmigration.gov.zm/>

Zambia e-services: <https://eservices.zambiaimmigration.gov.zm/>

KAZA UNIVISA | Zimbabwe + Zambia

For eligible Victoria Falls itineraries, the KAZA Univisa may permit travel between Zimbabwe and Zambia and certain Botswana day trips. Availability, nationality eligibility, participating ports and current price must be confirmed. Do not assume it is sold at every border.

ASK CURAH | Tell us if you plan to cross between the Zimbabwe and Zambia sides of Victoria Falls, take a Botswana day trip, or return to either country. We can help identify the entry pattern to check.

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

05 | Health and protection



Book a travel-health consultation

Ideally arrange an appointment 6–8 weeks before travel, earlier for complex itineraries. Share every destination, national park and transit country with your provider.

- Review routine vaccinations and any hepatitis A or typhoid recommendations.
- Discuss malaria prevention if visiting Kruger, northern Botswana, parts of Zambia or Zimbabwe, or northern Namibia. Risk is regional and seasonal.
- Ask whether yellow-fever documentation is required because of prior travel or transit, not simply your final destination.
- Confirm prescriptions are permitted and carry them in original labeled packaging.
- Plan mosquito-bite prevention, including repellent and protective clothing.

CDC Travelers' Health: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

Travel insurance and medical evacuation

CURAH recommends comprehensive coverage that addresses emergency medical expenses, evacuation, trip cancellation/interruption, delays and baggage. Safari locations can be remote. Read exclusions, activity restrictions and emergency assistance instructions.

HEALTH NOTE | Requirements and health risks differ by itinerary. This is general preparation guidance, not individualized medical advice. Confirm decisions with a qualified travel-health professional.

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

06 | Know before you pack



Legal at home does not always mean legal abroad

MEDICATIONS

Keep prescriptions in original packaging and verify restrictions on controlled drugs and quantities.

DRONES

Import and operation may require advance permissions from aviation and park authorities.

WILDLIFE SOUVENIRS

Avoid ivory, protected animal products and restricted natural materials.

PLASTICS

Restrictions vary by country and protected area. Bring reusable bags and check local rules.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Avoid photographing border posts, military or security facilities without permission; ask before photographing people.

LGBTQ+ TRAVEL

South Africa provides stronger legal protections than several neighboring destinations. Laws and local attitudes vary; review each destination's current advisory and use discretion where appropriate.

Pack in your hand luggage

- Passport and entry confirmations
- Medication and prescriptions
- Insurance emergency contact details
- Travel itinerary and local guide contacts
- Phone charger and offline document copies

WHEN FINISHED | Save approvals and certificates offline, and send copies to CURAH Travel for your scheduled pre-departure review. CURAH can assist with the process, but each traveler remains responsible for accurate applications, required documents and admission decisions.

07 | Travel smart + final departure checklist



Stay informed and connected

1. Enroll in the U.S. State Department STEP program for each destination.
2. Review current country and regional travel advisories.
3. Download offline maps and keep your local guide's contact number handy.
4. Follow safari guides' wildlife and vehicle safety instructions.
5. Share your itinerary with a trusted person at home.

STEP enrollment: <https://mytravel.state.gov/s/step>

U.S. travel advisories: <https://travel.state.gov/>

60–90 days before departure

- ☐ Check passport and all border crossings
- ☐ Identify visas, visa exemptions and minor-travel documents
- ☐ Arrange travel-health advice and review insurance

30 days before departure

- ☐ Complete any advance visa applications
- ☐ Confirm customs declarations and KAZA eligibility, if relevant
- ☐ Check medicines, restricted items and travel advisories

7–14 days before departure

- ☐ Recheck official entry rules and approvals
- ☐ Download and print important travel documents
- ☐ Send required confirmations to CURAH for review

CURAH IS HERE TO HELP | We can point you to official resources and review your travel preparation together. Travelers remain responsible for their passports, applications, declarations, fees and final entry compliance.

Prepared October 17, 2026 | Editorial draft: verify country-specific rules and live government portals before client distribution.