



AHHA VOLUNTEER GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

~ ABOUT AHHA ~

Introduction	4
History of AHHA	5

~ BEFORE YOU ARRIVE ~

Visa information	7-8
Vaccines, Health and Safety	9
What to bring	10-11
Budget & Currency	12

~LIFE AT CENTERS ~

Your role	14
Daily Schedule	15
Accommodation	16
Internet and Water	17
Food	18
Transportation	19
Dress Code & Culture, Prayer	20
Rules	23



ABOUT AHHA

INTRODUCTION • HISTORY OF AHHA



INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO AHHA EDUCATION CAMBODIA

In this volunteer guidebook you will find all the general information you need to prepare for your stay at AHHA Education Cambodia. For location-specific details such as facilities, transport and daily life at your center, please refer to the separate Province Facilities Guide of your specific location.

AHHA Education Cambodia is a diverse community of many nationalities, cultures and backgrounds. We strongly encourage volunteers to arrive with an open mind, ready to learn, grow and embrace the unexpected. This is a youth-led community, and working alongside young Cambodians is one of the most rewarding aspects of the experience.

If you have specific professional skills, please let us know; we love finding ways to put them to good use within the project. At the end of your stay, we kindly ask you to help us grow by making a short video, sharing photos, writing a blog post or leaving a review on our website or volunteer platforms.

For any questions before or during your stay, please contact our volunteer supervisor.



"We are looking for volunteers who are..."



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HISTORY OF AHHA

OUR MISSION

To reach out to unprivileged youth and give them a better future through education.

Cambodia, a kingdom known to the world for its Angkor Temples, is also remembered by many for its bleak history of the Khmer Rouge. This was one of the worst genocides ever recorded. From 1975–1979, approximately 3 million people were killed by the Khmer Rouge, and they specifically targeted educated Cambodians. The war brought Cambodia to ruin and left a vacuum of capable people who were sorely needed to rebuild the country. The destructive effects of the war did not end in 1979. In 1997, Dr. Madenjit Singh (founder of AHHA Education Cambodia) came to Cambodia for a short holiday trip but his plane turned out to be the last one leaving out of Phnom Penh when a civil war broke out in Cambodia.



Not wanting to simply leave the country, he soon began to witness and understand the devastating circumstances the war had brought upon innocent Cambodians. Something moved within him to do what he could to help. He brought his 2 sons to Cambodia and started educating 24 youths from the villages. What started out as a personal initiative has now grown to become the biggest non-formal education provider in Cambodia. AHHA Education Cambodia is an organization which believes that education is the single most powerful agent for positive change and the advancement of a community and society. AHHA Education Cambodia tries to reach out to unprivileged youth to give them a better future.





BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

VISA INFORMATION • VACCINES HEALTH &
SAFETY • WHAT TO BRING • BUDGET &
CURRENCY



VISA INFORMATION

STAY FOR UP TO 1 MONTH

Apply for a Tourist Visa (T-class) upon arrival at the airport or online before the departure for 30\$. This is a single-entry visa only.

STAY UP TO 2 MONTHS

Apply for a Tourist Visa (T-class) upon arrival or online before the departure for 30\$. This visa can be extended once through the Cambodian Visa Service Agency in Phnom Penh airport for 30\$ also. This is a single-entry visa only.

👉 [Visa extension agency — Google Maps](#)

3 MONTHS OR MORE

You must have a Business visa (E-class) for 35\$. You can request your visa in advance through the Cambodian Embassy in your home country or apply online. This offers more certainty and avoids complications upon arrival. An embassy visa is typically valid for three months from the date of issue, giving you a clear and reliable starting point.

We advise relying solely on an online visa for longer stays. Online visas are often only valid for one month, which means you will need to arrange an extension in Cambodia shortly after arriving. This extension process involves a service fee and requires additional steps that can be avoided by arranging your visa upfront through the embassy. You can extend your visa for 3, 6 or 12 months only. For the extension you will need two passport-sized photos, payment in USD and an invitation letter from AHHA Education. This invitation letter is our contract.

We recommend using the following agency in Phnom Penh for your extension:

👉 [Visa extension agency — Google Maps](#)



VISA INFORMATION



Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months and have at least two empty pages at the time of application.



Keep a photocopy of your passport on you at all times. There is a fine for overstaying your visa. Individual border crossing points may have different entry requirements and not all land borders accept an online visa.



VACCINES, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Before travelling, make sure you are up to date on all your routine and travel vaccinations. Check with your local health department or travel doctor well in advance of your departure.

Vaccines recommended by the Pasteur Institute but not mandatory :

- Vaccines up to date in your country of residence
- Hepatitis A
- Long stay : hepatitis B, rabies, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis

Once in Cambodia, a few simple habits will keep you healthy. Only eat food that is fully cooked and served hot, never drink tap water and always choose sealed bottled water. Use insect repellent, wear long sleeves in the evenings and sleep under a mosquito net. Wash your hands regularly and be cautious around animals, Cambodia has high rates of rabies and post-bite treatment is only available in Phnom Penh, Battambang and Kampong Cham.

Pharmacies are available near all centers for basic needs. For anything more serious, travel to Phnom Penh, as local clinics in the provinces are not always reliable.

Please take note that AHHA Education Cambodia - GDI will not be held responsible for any injuries, lost items, or medical care, personal care, while travelling and working in and out of the organization grounds in Cambodia.

Bring a personal first aid kit, you can ask some advice to your own doctor. Arrange travel insurance that covers overseas medical emergencies before departure.



WHAT TO BRING

OFFICE

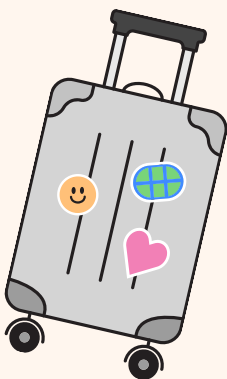
ESSENTIALS

- Bath towel
- Modest and smart casual clothing (see dress code)
- Insect bite repellent
- Hand sanitizer
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sunscreen
- Hat or cap
- Sunglasses
- Raincoat
- Toiletries bag
- Flip-flops
- Personal first aid kit
- Soap and personal hygiene products
- Earplugs and eye mask
- Powerbank
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Spoon, fork and knife
- Refillable water bottle
- Computer



USEFUL EXTRAS

- Books or games for your free time
- Bed sheets, pillows, blanket (for private room)



WHAT TO BRING

SCHOOLS

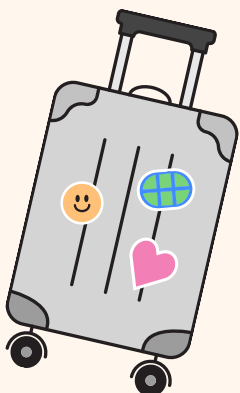
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- Powerbank
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Spoon, fork and knife
- Refillable water bottle
- Toilet paper



USEFUL EXTRAS

- Books or games for your free time
- Markers and basic teaching materials
- Additional mattress
- Additional blanket
- Mosquito net



BUDGET & CURRENCY

CURRENCY & ACCESS TO FINANCES

Cambodia uses both the US dollar and the Cambodian riel, as the country is gradually moving away from the US dollar. Both currencies are commonly accepted.

Please check US dollar notes carefully, as damaged, torn, wrinkled, or marked bills are often refused. The exchange rate is approximately:

$$\text{\$1 USD} = \text{៛4000 RIELS}$$

Although it may vary slightly depending on exchange services. It is recommended to carry small denominations (under \$5) or riel, as many shops, markets, and tuk-tuk drivers cannot provide change.

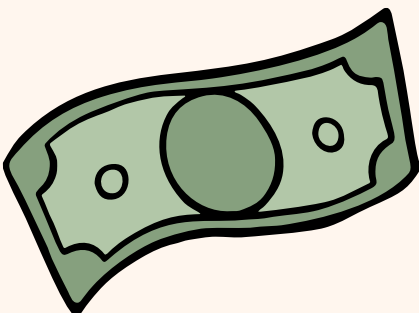
ATMs and banks are widely available in Phnom Penh, and increasingly in provincial towns. Make sure your bank card is activated for international use. ATM withdrawals usually incur a fee of around \$5 per transaction and dispense mainly \$50 or \$100 bills.

For stays of six months or longer, it is possible to open an ABA Bank account free of charge (without a credit card). Payments can then be made via QR code, which is widely accepted in Cambodia, as credit cards are not commonly used everywhere.

BUDGET

For a modest lifestyle including occasional meals in the city, public transportation, and visits to tourist sites around Phnom Penh, around \$150 USD per month is sufficient for personal expenses. Living costs in provincial areas are generally lower, so you may need less.

For volunteers who plan to travel to other provinces or join tours, a budget of approximately \$250 USD per month is recommended.





LIFE AT CENTERS

YOUR ROLE • DAILY SCHEDULE AT SCHOOL •
ACCOMMODATION • WATER AND FOOD • INTERNET
& TRANSPORTATION • CULTURE, PRAYER & DRESS
CODE • RULES



YOUR ROLE

Volunteers are required to be flexible with work timings. There is the possibility that you may work at different times or longer hours on different days of the week, but on average, we require 6 hours per day from Monday to Friday.

SCHOOLS

International volunteers teach during the afternoon and evening. However, it is possible that some centers operate also during the morning for certain classes. Students vary in ages from 6 to 29 years old, and they may be learning English for the first time to more complex subjects such as business management.

You are also encouraged to work together with the Province Manager on developing a project which can lead to community development.

OFFICE

We usually need support in recruitment, networking, social media management, design, grant writing, fund raising and whatever short term projects come up in the moment. Your personal initiative is also encouraged.

DAYS OFF

You will not have to work during weekends and Cambodian holidays. However because there are many festivities, not all are considered public holidays for school. It is recommended before planning a weekend to inform the Province Manager of your plans.



DAILY SCHEDULE AT SCHOOL

06:30	Wake up
07:00	Morning prayer (± 15 min)
07:30	Breakfast
08:00	Morning classes
10:30	Break / rest / preparation
14:00	Afternoon classes
17:30	Short break
20:00	Dinner
20:30	Evening prayer + daily briefing

**This is an example*



ACCOMMODATION

SCHOOLS

Free accommodation for volunteers is provided at all of our centers. You may opt to choose to make your own arrangements for accommodation at your own expense. If you decide to sleep within our facilities, you will sleep in a dormitory with other volunteers and teachers (and sometimes students). So keep in mind that you will sleep the same way the locals do: on the floor with only a thin mattress. This is fine to sleep on, but if you have any back problems, we recommend bringing a sleeping mattress and pillow.

Blankets and pillows are available in all of our centers, and mosquito nets in most of them. Most of the time there is also a fan available. Please talk to your Province Manager if you need something as you may be able to purchase it from a local market.

OFFICE

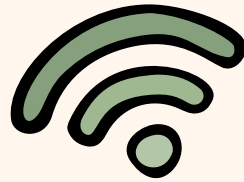
Three accommodation options are available depending on current availability:

- Dormitory bed with a bathroom and cold water only, provided free of charge by the NGO.
- If you prefer to have your private space, we can offer a private room with a private bathroom and hot water: around \$150 per month, plus \$30-\$60 for electricity and \$3 for water, depending on your usage.

Things to buy ONLY for the rooms : bed sheets, pillows, blanket, bin, toilet paper.

Please take note to always keep your belongings safely to avoid any loss and inconveniences





INTERNET

The Kampot office and all provincial centers have Wi-Fi but we still recommend to also have data on your phone in case you are outside the school compound. You can buy a Cambodian SIM-card with internet in Phnom Penh airport or any designated shop.

Sometimes, it is also possible to go to Internet cafes in the village. We recommend buying a SIM-card from Smart, Metfone or Cell card. For reference, a SIM-card will cost \$2 USD, and you can get on average between 40-60 GB a month for \$6 USD a month. Don't forget to check your balance and top it off if needed before going to the provincial center.

WATER OFFICE



Each private room has its own bathroom with hot water. The dormitory has a shared bathroom with cold water only. Free drinking water is available in the office for all volunteers.

SCHOOLS

Bathrooms and toilets are available on site. Bathrooms are gender-separated spaces used for showering and washing clothes by hand. Only cold water is available, which is common and refreshing in Cambodia's hot and humid climate. In many provincial centers, showers are taken using a bucket filled with water, although some locations have running water. Toilets are typically Cambodian-style squat toilets. Bathrooms are simple, usually with concrete walls and floors, a large water basin for bathing, and manual flushing using a bucket. Toilet paper is generally not used. Volunteers may bring their own toilet paper and dispose of it discreetly if they prefer.

FOOD

The staple food in Cambodia consists of rice, protein (fish, chicken, pork or tofu), vegetables, and soup. At AHHA Education Cambodia-GDI, volunteers are provided with basic meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day. Boarding students and volunteers take turns cooking according to a schedule. Breakfast is usually at 7:00 AM, lunch at 12:00 PM, and dinner at 6:00 PM. Lunch and dinner are normally shared with students and volunteers to promote unity and community at the school. Meals are prepared within a limited budget. As a non-profit organization, this is the basic food we can provide. If you wish to have additional food, nearby markets offer fruits and other items you can purchase.

Vegetarian volunteers should discuss meal arrangements with the Province Manager. Vegetables can sometimes be set aside for separate cooking, or an alternative dish may be prepared if time allows (this applies only in provincial centers). On weekends and holidays, volunteers may cook their own food during their free time. However, cooking costs such as gas must be covered by the volunteers. Any food restrictions or preferences should be discussed with the Province Manager.



BREAKFAST



LUNCH AND DINNER

**These are examples*



TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation is often limited around AHHA Education Cambodia provincial centers. Volunteers usually combine public transport to the nearest city with tuk-tuks (apps : Grab or PassApp) or motorbikes to reach the school.

Motorbikes or scooters can also be rented at a low cost, especially if you hold an international driving license.

Vireak Buntham is a reliable bus company for travel across the country. Buses can also be booked via platforms such as 12Go, RedBus, or Camboticket. Private transport by minibus or car is also available.

To go to the schools

- Kampot school : From Techo International Airport, take a Grab or taxi to Phnom Penh, then a bus to Kampot. You can also take a direct private transfer (more expensive). Bus Phnom Penh → Kampot: 3–4 hours, around \$8.
- Koh Dach school : Arrive in Phnom Penh, then take a ferry to Koh Dach. Please inform the school which ferry you will take.
- Takeo school : Mini buses run from Phnom Penh (hard to find online, easier to book locally once there). Train Phnom Penh → Takeo: about 2 hours, around \$7.
- Ratanakiri school : Buses Phnom Penh → Ratanakiri: 7h15 to 9h30. Price: \$10–\$16. Sleeper buses available (arrive in the morning)
- Mondulkiri school : Buses Phnom Penh → Mondulkiri: 5–7 hours. Price: \$12–\$16.

To get to the schools, taking only a bus to town is not enough. You also need to take a tuk-tuk from the town to the school. For Mondulkiri School, the tuk-tuk ride takes about 40 minutes and costs around \$15. It is also possible to take a minivan in that direction for about \$5.



DRESS CODE

To ensure comfort and respect for cultural norms, all community members (students, staff, and volunteers) must follow the dress code while on school grounds, during both working hours and free time. These guidelines are not intended to limit personal style, but to maintain a respectful and comfortable environment.

We ask everyone to wear modest clothing that does not expose sensitive areas, including during free time. Clothing should be appropriate for a school setting : **pants, longs shorts, tee-shirts with longs or shorts sleeves.**

These rules apply only on school grounds. Personal style outside of school is fully respected. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.



CULTURE & PRAYER

AHHA Education Cambodia is a multicultural and multi-faithful community: we promote religious tolerance and understanding for all religions among our teachers, volunteers and students. Prayer sessions are a time of spiritual nourishment in which everyone involved in the

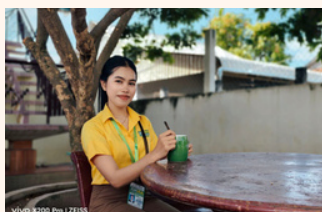
organization is in solidarity through prayers. During the prayer session, prayers, songs and chants are recited from various religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, Baha'i Faith and Islam. Everyone's religion is respected and everyone is free to practice their own religion. All volunteers are obliged to attend prayer sessions both in the morning and evening.



GALLERY



GALLERY



RULES

AHHA Education Cambodia has rules that must be followed by everyone in the organization.

- Strictly prohibited: drugs, alcohol, smoking and sex.
- When teaching, volunteers must always dress respectfully to respect others and Cambodian culture (see dress code above).
- Volunteers are strongly discouraged from engaging in romantic relationships within the school environment or nearby community.
- Travel and Absence : Volunteers must inform their supervisor if they plan to travel outside the city, visit another province, or stay away from the center for a weekend or longer. This is mainly for safety and security reasons.
- Curfew : There is a curfew for students, volunteers, and teachers. Volunteers staying at the center must return by 9:00 PM from Monday to Sunday. If volunteers spend the weekend in the city, they must return to the center by Sunday at 9:00 PM.
- Conduct with Students: International volunteers must not ask students to perform personal tasks (such as chores) and must not accept money from them.
- Teamwork : Volunteers should support the work of the Province Managers and Cambodian volunteers. Any project or initiative should be discussed with the managers before being implemented. Volunteers are encouraged to share ideas and collaborate with the team.
- Personal Belongings : Volunteers are responsible for keeping their belongings safe.

Volunteers are reminded to always keep their belongings safely and are encouraged to not walk alone at night after 7.00 pm to avoid any unwanted incidents.

