



Kenya Basics

Official Name	Republic of Kenya (<i>Jamhuri ya Kenya – Swahili</i>)
Total Area	582,650 sq km
Total Population	38 million
Important Cities	Nairobi (Capital) and Mombasa (Coastal Port)
National Symbols	<p>The Kenyan Flag and the National Anthem are the national symbols of unity</p> <p>Symbolism of the National Flag and Coat of Arms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black – the indigenous Kenyan people • Red – the struggle for freedom • Green – agricultural land and natural resources • White Stripes – unity and peace • Shield & Spears – unity and the defense of freedom • Lions – protection <p>Symbolism of the Coat of Arms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Lions holding spears and a shield (with the flags colours) – symbolize protection • Rooster holding an axe – denotes a new and prosperous life • The word Harambee means “pulling together” – a collective effort for common good
Official Languages	English (Official), Swahili (National) and 42 ethnic languages
Religion	Predominantly Christian although Muslim is widespread, particularly in coastal areas
Public Holidays	<p>New Years Day – 1st January</p> <p>Good Friday (variable)</p> <p>Easter Monday (variable)</p> <p>Labour Day – 1st May</p> <p>Madaraka Day – 1st June</p> <p>Moi Day – 10th October</p> <p>Kenyatta Day – 20th October</p> <p>Jamhuri (Independence Day) – 12th December</p> <p>Christmas Day – 25th December</p> <p>Boxing Day – 26th December</p> <p>Eid - Variable</p>
Provinces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nairobi Area 2. Central 3. Eastern 4. North Eastern 5. Nyanza 6. Rift Valley 7. Western

Time	GMT +3
Electricity	240v / 50Hz (UK Style 3 pin plugs are used)
Money	The Kenyan Shilling (KES) is divided into 100 cents. It is not advisable to take Kenyan Shillings out of the country, as they are difficult to exchange elsewhere. Travellers cheques in Sterling or US Dollars are recommended for your trip to Kenya. US Dollars in particular have become commonly used in many of the country's main hotels and safari lodges. Foreign currency can be changed at banks, bureaux de change and hotels. Street exchange merchants should be avoided as they operate illegally. Banks open Monday to Friday from 9am to 3pm and on the first and last Saturday of the month. Banks and bureaux de change at the international airport stay open 24 hours. Credit Cards (American Express, Visa and MasterCard) are accepted in the larger hotels and stores, and some camps and lodges. ATMs are widely available in Nairobi and the major towns.
Entry Requirements	<p>USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland Citizens from these countries require a valid passport and visa to enter Kenya</p> <p><u>South Africa</u> South African Nationals must have a valid passport. No visa is required for a stay of up to 3 months.</p> <p>Visit www.immigration.go.ke for further information regarding visa requirements for all countries</p>
Passport / Visa Note:	Visas can be obtained by most nationalities on arrival for a fee of US\$50, which is valid for a period of three months and must be paid in a convertible currency. This may result in passenger delays and it is preferable to arrange a visa in the country of origin. Onward or return tickets, documents needed for next destination and sufficient funds for length of intended stay (at least US\$500) are required by all passengers. Passports must be valid for at least the period of stay.
Duty Free	Travellers to Kenya over 16 years do not have to pay duty on 227g tobacco or 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars; 1 bottle of alcohol; and 473ml perfume. Prohibited items include fruit, imitation firearms, and children's toys pistols. No plants may be brought into the country without a Plant Import Permit (PIP).
Useful Contacts	<p><u>Tourism</u> Kenyan Tourist Board: +254 (0)20 271 1262 or www.magicalkenya.com</p> <p><u>Kenya Embassies</u> Kenyan Embassy, Washington DC, United States: +1 202 387 6101 Kenyan High Commission, London, United Kingdom (also for Ireland): +44 (0)20 7636 2371 Kenyan High Commission, Ottawa, Canada: +1 613 563 1773 Kenyan High Commission, Canberra, Australia (also for New Zealand): +61 (0)2 6247 4788 Kenyan High Commission, Pretoria, South Africa: +27 (0)12 362 2249/50/51</p> <p><u>Foreign Embassies in Kenya</u> United States Embassy, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 363 6000 British High Commission, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 284 4000 Canadian High Commission, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 366 3000 Australian High Commission, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 444 5034/9 South African High Commission, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 282 7100 Honorary Consul of Ireland, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 556 647 New Zealand Consulate, Nairobi: +254 (0)20 271 2466</p>

<p>Kenyan Airports</p> <p>www.kenyaairports.co.ke</p>	<p><u>Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO)</u> Location: The airport is situated 10 miles (16km) south east of Nairobi Time: GMT +3 Contacts: Tel: +254 (0)20 822 111 Transfer to the city: most travelers take a taxi or arrange to be picked up by their hotel or tour operator.; Mercedes taxis take passengers to the central city hotels for a fixed fare; the KBS bus service 34 leaves fairly regularly for the city centre Car rental: well known international and local operators are represented at the airport Facilities: include a bank and bureau de change, left luggage, telephones and fax, medical aid, a bar and restaurant, duty-free shops selling curios, a post office, tourist information and hotel reservations desk, short and long term parking; there are disabled facilities, but passengers should advise their airline in advance of any special needs Departure Tax: US\$20, but this is usually included in the ticket price</p> <p><u>Moi International Airport (MBA)</u> Location: The airport is situated six miles (10km) north west of Mombasa Time: GMT +3 Contacts: Tel: +254 (0)41 433 211 Transfer to the city: most travellers take a taxi or arrange to be picked up by their hotel or tour operator; public buses do also depart for the city centre regularly Car rental: 3 international car rental agencies are represented at the airport Facilities: include left luggage, disabled facilities, first aid, banks, a bureau de change, bars, a restaurant, duty-free, a post office, curio shops, tourist information, hotel reservations desk and short and long term parking Departure Tax: US\$20, but this is usually included in the ticket price</p> <p><u>Moi International Airport, Eldoret</u> Location: 16 kilometres from Eldoret Town on the Eldoret-Kisumu road Purpose: built with the primary objective of making western Kenya accessible to international commodity and tourism markets, it is mostly used to transport cargo such as cut flower exports Hours: this airport is open from Monday to Sunday from 3.30am to 5.30pm</p> <p><u>Other Domestic Airports in Kenya</u> Wilson, Kisumu, Malindi, Lokichoggio and Wajir Airports</p>
<p>Health</p>	<p>Travellers should get the latest medical advice on inoculations and malaria prevention at least three weeks prior to departure. A malaria risk exists all year round, but more around Mombasa and the lower coastal areas than in Nairobi and on the high central plateau. Immunisation against yellow fever, polio and typhoid are usually recommended. A yellow fever certificate is required by anyone arriving from an infected area. Other risks include diarrhoeal diseases. Protection against insect bites prevents the potential transmission of insect-borne diseases. There is a high incidence of AIDS in Kenya and the necessary precautions should be taken. Water is of variable quality and visitors are advised to drink bottled water if in doubt. Cholera outbreaks can occur and travellers should take care not to drink contaminated water and be cautious of food prepared by unlicensed roadside vendors. There are good medical facilities in Nairobi and Mombasa but health insurance is essential.</p>
<p>Safety</p>	<p>Kenya has experienced turbulent political unrest in the past but remains stable at present. Those planning to travel to Kenya are advised to exercise caution and take advice from local operators before leaving. Visitors should be alert and vigilant in public places and tourist sites in all major cities and tourist destinations. For security reasons, driving is not recommend in certain areas of the country.</p>

Areas of Sensitivity	Photographing official buildings and embassies is not advised. The coastal towns are predominantly Muslim and religious customs and sensitivities relating to dress should be respected, especially away from beaches and resorts. Smoking in public places is illegal, other than in designated areas. Homosexuality is illegal.
Business	English is the principal language for conducting business in Kenya. Business dealings are usually formal and conservative in manner and punctuality is considered important. Appropriate formal attire such as jacket and tie are expected, business cards are usually exchanged and handshakes are standard business greetings. Business hours usually operate between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, with a lunch hour between 1pm and 2pm.
Tipping	Tipping is not customary in Kenya but a 10% service charge may be added to a bill in more upmarket restaurants. On safari, drivers, guides and cooks rely heavily on tips to get by but these are also discretionary. Small change in local currency can be offered to taxi drivers, porters and waiters.
Communications	The international access code for Kenya is +254. The outgoing code is 000 followed by the relevant country code (e.g. 00027 for South Africa), unless dialling Tanzania or Uganda when the outgoing codes are 007 or 006 respectively. City/area codes are in use, e.g. (0)41 for Mombasa and (0)20 for Nairobi. It is more cost effective to call from one of the international phone services, which are available in larger towns or buy a pre-paid calling card for use in the public telephone booths. All major urban areas are covered by the mobile network; the local mobile phone operators use GSM networks that have roaming agreements with most international mobile phone operators. Internet cafes are widely available in most towns and tourist areas.
Climate	Kenya's diverse landscape means the climate varies from region to region. Nairobi is situated at high altitude and has a moderate climate with sunny, warm summers and mild to cool winters. The coastal climate is predominantly hot and humid and the best times to visit the coast are usually between August and April. There are two rainy seasons which affect most of the country. The short rains occur between October and December with the long rains taking place between March and June. Rainfall is seldom continuous over long periods and dry, sunny spells do occur during the rainy seasons.
Kenyan "Lingo"	Information provided by www.magicalkenya.com and adapted by Green Route Swahili is Kenya's national language. Pronounced Kiswahili by the locals, it originated on the East African Coast as a trade language used by both Arabs and coastal tribes. It incorporates elements of the local Bantu dialect and the classical Arabic of the original traders. <u>Frequently Used Terms</u> Jambo or Hujambo – "Hello", "good day", "how are you", "problems?" (multi purpose greeting) Jambo or Sijambo – Response to above greeting meaning "no problems" Habari? – "How are things?" (literally "news?") Nzuri – "Fine", "good" Hodi! – "Hello?" "Anyone In?" Karibu – "Come in", "enter", "welcome" Kwaheri/ni – Goodbye to one/many Asante/ni – Thank you to one/many Bwana – Title meaning "Mr" Mama – Title for adult women Kijana – Youth, teenager (plural vijana) Mtoto – child (plural watoto) Jina lako nani – What is your name?