

Fieldwork Checklist

The following is a list of items that may be useful for fieldwork. I would be grateful for any comments or improvements of the list. Please let me know if you don't want me to mention you by name in the Acknowledgements section.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment Specifics

Item	Comments	Extras
Laptop Computer	Get a light computer. You may have to take it everywhere with you, both because you need to work on it, and because it is safer with you. Things to keep in mind when selecting a computer: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) how much memory does it have? (2) can you burn CDs/DVDs (for backup)? (3) will it be compatible with the software you are planning to use? (4) will your funding agency pay for it? Some funding agencies explicitly state that they will not pay for a laptop.³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ extra battery / large battery ➤ power cable ➤ cables to connect other equipment ➤ power adapter ➤ plug that will fit the outlet in the country you are going ➤ carrying case (especially sturdy, extra padding, etc.) ➤ international warranty (is there a service center near where you are going?)
Digital Video Camera	Again, this should be as light as possible. However, there will probably be tradeoffs between how light it is and what quality the recordings will be. Make sure that it records to the format you want, or if not, that you have the capabilities of converting the data in the field. Things to keep in mind: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) how much memory does it have? (2) how long can it run on its battery at the setting you need? (3) what kinds of batteries does it take? Can you get them in the field, or can you bring rechargeable ones? (4) how do you connect it to your computer? (5) will you be recording at night? (6) are you satisfied with the quality of the audio? Try to get one with a microphone input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ memory card/stick ➤ power cable? Charging station? ➤ batteries? ➤ connection to computer? ➤ warranty ➤ carrying case

Item	Comments	Extras
Digital Still Camera	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) how much memory does it have? (2) at what resolution can you shoot pictures? Will they be publishable?⁸ (3) how long can it run on its battery at the setting you need? (4) what kinds of batteries does it take? Can you get them in the field, or can you bring re-chargeable ones? (5) how do you connect it to your computer? (6) how close can you get to something to take pictures? (if you are planning to take pictures of local flora and fauna, this may be relevant.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ memory card/stick ➤ cables to connect to computer ➤ warranty ➤ carrying case ➤ batteries
Voice Recorder	<p>You may want to get one that records at 44 KHz. Lower settings may work if you are only concerned with vocabulary, syntax, etc. You only need 22 KHz for phonetic analysis⁴, but archives require 44KHz. Funding agencies will most likely require that you be able to record at 44KHz. You may want to consider a mini disk recorder.¹</p> <p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) how much memory does it have? (2) how long can it run on its battery at the setting you need? (3) what kinds of batteries does it take? Can you get them in the field, or can you bring re-chargeable ones? (4) how do you connect it to your computer? (5) What format does it record in? Can you record in a non-proprietary format?⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ memory card/stick ➤ warranty ➤ carrying case ➤ cables to connect to computer ➤ batteries
Tape Recorder^{1,3}	<p>For backup.</p> <p>Also, you can usually find tape equipment anywhere in the world, and this is a good format to leave at the field site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤

Item	Comments	Extras
Microphones	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) your sound will only be as good as your microphone (2) do you need different types of microphones for different types of data collection, e.g. head-mounted, clip-on, etc.? (3) does your microphone need batteries? If you can plug it in to an electronic outlet, do you have the cable you need? (4) does it need to be grounded? (5) are the plugs of your microphones the same ones your recorder takes?⁵ (6) you may be able to plug your microphone into your recorder, but that does not mean that the sound quality you get is acceptable. Check this before going into the field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ batteries ➤ cables
Surge Protector	You may need this to protect your equipment if the area you are going to has frequent power surges.	➤
Printer³	Heavy and may take up a lot of space, but can be extremely useful. You can make printouts for informants or yourself to check. Also, you can leave copies at the field site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ connecting cable ➤ cartridges ➤ paper
Solar Panel¹	<p>Is there a reliable energy source where you are going? Will you have regular access to it? If not, you may consider a solar panel.</p> <p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) weight. Will you have to carry it everywhere? (2) Voltage and Amperage: is it sufficient for everything you need to charge, especially your computer? (3) can the solar panel be connected to everything you need to charge? (4) how sturdy is it? Do you expect that it will get kicked around a lot? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ battery to store ‘extra energy’. You may also need this if the solar panel does not output enough amperage ➤ connecting cables
Thumbdrive⁶	This is great for backup and easy to carry.	➤
Battery Recharger	There are some that take AA as well as AAA, which are usually the ones you need. Make sure to double-check your equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ rechargeable batteries ➤ adapter and plug for the country you are going to

General Equipment Notes

Summary of things to check for all your equipment.

Item	Comments
Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How much does the item weigh, including all extras (cables, storage media, battery or batteries, protective cases, etc.)?
Storage Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Do you have the proper storage media for your equipment (memory card, memory stick, etc.)? ➤ How much data fits on the storage medium? Do you need to get one with more space? Do you need more than one? ➤ Do you want to be able to plug the storage medium directly into your computer, or is it OK if you have to connect the equipment to the computer? ➤ Can you get storage media locally?
Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can all your equipment be connected with any other equipment as planned? ➤ Do you have the proper cables? ➤ Does your equipment have the proper ports? Maybe you need an adapter of some sort? ➤ Depending on which method of transfer you use, how lossy is the transfer? How fast is the transfer?
Battery Endurance / Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How long can your equipment run on a normal setting / high setting without changing the battery? (This may depend on the temperature.) Can you get a battery with more endurance? ➤ Does the equipment have to be plugged in to perform certain functions? ➤ Do you have the proper plugs for the electric outlets? Do you have an adapter? ➤ Do you need rechargeable batteries (e.g. for a digital still camera)? Can your battery recharger be connected to your adapter? ➤ Take two sets of rechargeable batteries for everything.⁸ ➤ Can you get batteries locally? ➤ For the converter/adapter, make sure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all your equipment that needs to be plugged in can be connected to your converter/adapter¹ • your adapter has plugs for any outlet you might encounter (some countries have more than one type of outlet)
Climate / Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If you are going to a place with an extreme climate, you may want to check the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can you equipment be exposed to extreme (low and high) temperatures? • what about extreme fluctuations in temperature? • do you have any way to protect your equipment from extreme temperatures (e.g. keeping all batteries in inside pockets close to your body) • what about extreme humidity or dryness/static? ➤ how much being kicked around can your equipment put up with? ➤ do you have a way to protect your equipment from dust/sand?

TRAVEL

Item	Comments	Extras
Tickets to your destination	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) what will be the price of the tickets at the time of year you are planning to travel? (2) can you get directly where you need to go, or will you need to buy additional tickets once you get into the country? (3) will you be able to get there by plane, or will you need to take other types of transportation? Train, car, boat, horse, camel, ... (4) long trips: if you are staying over 8 months, a return ticket may not be available and there may be a surcharge for an open return ticket.⁵ (5) In some cases a return ticket may be required for the visa.⁷ 	
Daily Transportation	How will you get around once you get to your destination?	
Insurance	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) does your insurance cover you while you travel? (2) is medical evacuation covered? Up to what amount? (3) is your equipment and other luggage insured? (4) keep a number of copies of your insurance information (contact number, insurances, etc.) with you² 	

PERSONAL ITEMS

Item	Comments	Extras
Tent	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) weather (2) size 	
Sleeping Bag	<p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) weather 	

Item	Comments	Extras
Water Purification	<p>Depending where you go, you may need a water filter. ³Other options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - water purification tablets (don't taste very good, and may take several hours to work, but more portable) - consider metallic iodine.⁸ - electrical units that plugs into a wall socket <p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) what do you want to filter out? Giardia? Cryptosporidium? other bacteria? viruses? particles? (2) do you want one that comes with a pump? (3) do you need/want hoses? (4) how long will it take to filter your water? (5) how much water can you filter with one cartridge? (6) do you need a replacement filter/cartridge, or can your filter be cleaned in the field? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ extra filters
Mosquito Net	<p>Check whether you need one. Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) can you get one that is specially treated? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ mosquito spray¹ ➤ mosquito coil¹ <p>(can you get these locally?)</p>
Mosquito Cream / Spray²	<p>You may want to bring something reliable with you. Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) sprays may be confiscated at the airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤
First Aid Supplies	<p>Check what specials you may need locally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ band aides ➤ bandages ➤ surgical gloves ➤ disinfectant ➤ antibiotic cream ➤ prescription medication such as antibiotics, diarrhea medication, etc ➤ any prescription medication you need regularly ➤ ³include copy of any eyewear prescription
Medical Bracelet²	<p>If you have any medical allergies, wear a medical bracelet or dog tag. Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) can you get it translated into the local language? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤

Item	Comments	Extras
Inoculations	Check with your doctor what you will need in the region you are going to. Make sure that inoculations you got in the past are up do date. You may want to start this at least 6 months before you leave, since some inoculations cannot be taken together at the same time, and for some inoculations you may need a series of shots.	➤
Things to do¹	You may not be able to work all the time. Take something to do during the time you can't work: knitting, fishing kit, books, music. You may not be able to get it locally.	➤

OTHERS

Item	Comments	Extras
CDs/DVDs	Things to keep in mind: (1) can you get them where you are going? (2) do you want cases (weigh more, but may provide more protection)	➤ cases
Flashlight¹	To read in bed at night and go to the bathroom, etc. Things to keep in mind: (1) head-mounted it very convenient (but in any case try to get something that will leave your hands free) (2) power: batteries, or powered by movement	➤ batteries?
Desiccation bags¹	To dry out you electronic equipment. Especially if you are going to a humid place, e.g. rain forest.	
Consultant Payments	Things to keep in mind: (1) can you find out what would be a reasonable daily/hourly fee in the country you are going to? (2) will you also need to pay a translator? (3) if cash payments are not culturally acceptable, what are acceptable gifts?	
Rent	Where are you going to live? Find out how much you can be expected to pay per day/month.	
Food	Again, check with a person who knows the area.	

Item	Comments	Extras
Luggage	<p>What kind of luggage will you take? It will probably depend on how 'portable' you need to be. Consider backpacks, duffel bags, suitcases (?). Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) water proofing (2) discouraging tampering/theft 	
Money	<p>Give some thought to how you are going to carry/get money.</p> <p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) can you convert travelers checks where you are going?⁴ (2) which currency/currencies will be the most convenient? US\$? Euro? Something else? (3) you may not be able to use you credit/debit/bank card where you are going. There may be no ATMS, they may not accept your card, or the fee may be prohibitive. Check before you go. (4) is there any way you can open a bank account locally? Can you transfer/wire money from your home account to your 'abroad account'? How much will your bank charge? How much will the local bank charge? (5) you may want to invest in a money belt 	
Mailing / Internet Access	<p>How are you planning to do back-ups? Will you be able to mail back hard copies? Are you going to email backups?</p> <p>Things to keep in mind:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) how fast is the internet connection where you are going? Will you be able to email large attachments? (2) how much does it cost to use the internet connection? (3) how much will it cost you to mail out regular back-ups by snail mail? 	
Incidentals	<p>I have found the following items useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ duct tape ➤ twine/string ➤ sewing kit (thread, sewing needles, small scissors, piece of fabric for patches) ➤ scotch tape ➤ re-sealable plastic bags in various sizes ➤ little plastic bottles with screw-on lid (for shampoo, soap, disinfectant, etc.) 	

Item	Comments	Extras
Gifts	<p>What is an appropriate gift will depend on a number of different factors. Here are some suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ fabric¹ ➤ clothes¹ ➤ food¹ ➤ flashlights¹ ➤ toys for children¹ ➤ hair ornaments¹ ➤ pictures (of the area/people)¹ ➤ small keepsakes from your home country/town 	

PAPERWORK

Item	Comments
Passport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In most cases, you will need a passport that is valid for at least another year.
Visa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Where do you apply for your visa? ➤ Do you need to apply in person, or can your travel agency take care of it? ➤ How much will it cost? ➤ How long will it take? ➤ What kind of visa do you need (student, tourist, professional; 1 month, 3 months, 1 year; single entry or multiple entry)? ➤ Can you renew/extend your visa locally? How much will it cost and how long does it take? ➤ Which forms do you need to fill out? Where can you get them? ➤ Do you need specially formatted pictures (size, angle, background color, etc.)?
Letters / Proofs	<p>You may need the following for your grant application and/or your visa application, or to work efficiently in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ letter of introduction ➤ letter of recommendation ➤ proof of employment ➤ proof of enrollment (school/university)
All papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ leave copies of everything with a person you trust at home ➤ take one set of copies with you

Acknowledgements:

I am very grateful to Laura Robinson for her advice about fieldwork equipment.

I would also like to thank the following people for valuable feedback:

- ¹ Valerie Guerin
- ² Mie Hiramoto
- ³ Keira Ballantyne
- ⁴ Kaori Ueki
- ⁵ Laura Robinson
- ⁶ Piet Lincoln

⁷ Anonymous
8 Dr. Joe Grimes

[version 7, 6/28/07]

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