

FAQ: Travel – Weather/Climate, Calendar, Time

Created by adoptive parents Dec. 2004

DISCLAIMER: The following is provided for general information. Please check the websites below for more detailed descriptions.

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I. Weather/Climate

Addis Ababa is located on a plateau in central Ethiopia, about 8000 feet (2440 meters) above sea level. Many travelers experience mild altitude sickness during short visits. The climate is generally mild, with an average temperature of a constant 59 degrees year-round. There are two rainy seasons, from February to April and June to September.

During the rainy seasons, there can be short, torrential showers which can drench a walker before an umbrella can be taken out and opened. Year-round, the nights cool off quickly after dusk, so light jackets or sweaters are good to have available. The near-direct rays of the sun may cause sunburn on unwary travelers, who may wish to carry sunblock or a sun hat if they will be out in the sun much. There aren't many bugs -- flies are only at certain times of the year, mosquitos hardly ever (due to altitude), cockroaches may be seen.

The following table comes from:

http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Weather/weather_Ethiopia.html

Addis Ababa—Central Ethiopia

Month	Avg. high	Avg. Low	Avg. #days of rain	% Humidity
January	75	43	2	59

February	76	47	5	61
March	77	49	8	61
April	77	50	10	64
May	77	50	10	65
June	74	49	20	69
July	69	50	28	67
August	69	50	27	64
September	72	49	21	60
October	75	45	3	64
November	73	43	2	57
December	73	41	2	57

Selected Weather and climate websites:

http://goafrika.about.com/cs/ethiopiaweather/index.htm?iam=momma_100SKD&terms=%22Ethiopia+weather%22

<http://weather.yahoo.com/forecast/ETXX0001.html>

http://www.weather.com/outlook/travel/local/ETXX0001?from=search_city

<http://www.wunderground.com/global/stations/63450.html>

II. Ethiopian Calendar

Ethiopia follows the Julian calendar (13 months) rather than the Gregorian calendar used in most other parts of the world. The years are also different. (You will notice this on your Amharic Ethiopian paperwork, on which the year may be about 7 years prior to the year on the English translation.) The following comparative table comes from the Ethiopian Embassy website, <http://www.ethiopianembassy.org/index.shtml>

Julian Month	Gregorian Equivalent Dates
Meskerem	11th September - 10th October (begins 12th September, during leap years)
Tikimt	11th October - 9th November
Hidar	10th November - 9th December
Tahsas	10th December - 8th January
Tir	9th January - 7th February
Yakatit	8th February - 9th March
Maggabit	10th March - 8th April
Miyazya	9th April - 8th May
Ginbot	9th May - 7th June
Sene	8th June - 7th July
Hamle	8th July - 6th August
Nehasa	7th August - 5th September
Pagume	6th September - 10th September (ends 11th September, during leap years)

For more information on the Ethiopian calendar as well as holidays, you may want to visit <http://www.ethiotreasures.plus.com/pages/calendar.htm>

The following link provides an online converter to/from the Julian calendar and information about the Julian calendar.

<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/docs/JulianDate.html>

III. Time considerations

Ethiopia lies along the Equator, so time remains constant, with about 12 hours of daylight and 12 hours of darkness year-round. To check the difference in time between your location and Addis, visit <http://www.worldtime.com/> or <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/>

Local daily time is calculated from about daybreak, at Western 6:00 a.m.

NOTE: Airline arrival and departure times are based on Western, not local, time.

Ethiopia Western

1:00 6:00 a.m.

6:00 noon

12:00 6:00 p.m.

When making an appointment in Ethiopia be sure to ask, Ethiopian or Western time? Most Ethiopians will assume that if the conversation is in English you mean Western time but it doesn't hurt to confirm. If you are expecting a driver to come at 9 am you may find he doesn't show up until 3 p.m. Be sure the two of you are agreed on which time you are using.