



**So
you're
coming
to
Cambodia**

**Christian Care For Cambodia
Orientation Manual**

Acknowledgements

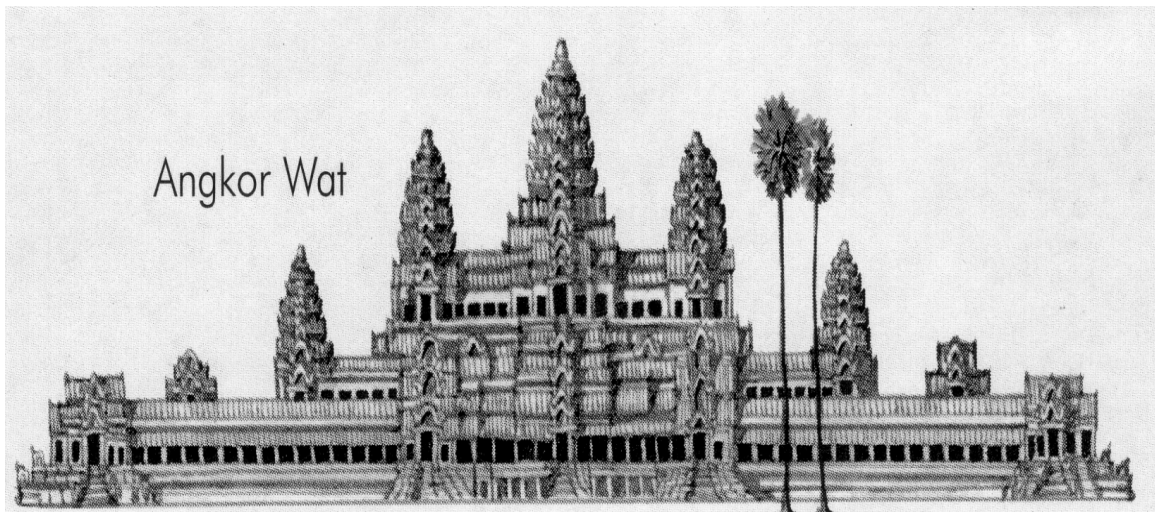
Thanks to the following people who have done most of the work for this book over some years:

Don Cormack - much of the information on the history of Cambodia was taken from his book, "Killing Fields, Living Fields"
Darlene Ratzloff
Jane Lopacka
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David Gurtler
Malcolm Oatway



The information has been reviewed and updated. We hope it helps you settle quickly in Cambodia so you can enjoy all that God has for you here!

CCFC Hospitality and Orientation Committee, July 2008



Introduction

Cambodia is certainly an interesting country. You have the privilege of being called to work in this fascinating part of God's world. We pray that the following pages will help as you leave home and face some of the unknowns ahead.

Our aim is to provide factual information, helpful hints, useful guidance and a bit of color and fun to bring to life what it means to live and work in Cambodia. We hope this manual will help you as you prepare to come and also after you arrive and begin to adjust to life here.

We trust your time of preparation is a time of spiritual growth and that you will know the Lord's peace and presence as you plan for this new chapter of your life.

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What Can I Expect?

You will have the trauma of packing, the pleasure and excitement of travel and the enriching experience of seeing a new part of this great world we live in. Coming to work in Cambodia gives you a specific purpose and focus, greatly adding to the experience of "travel for travel's sake".

You can live in a wonderful country such as Cambodia and learn little or nothing from the experience. On the other hand, your time here can be a catalyst for your development as a person and the development of Cambodia as a nation.

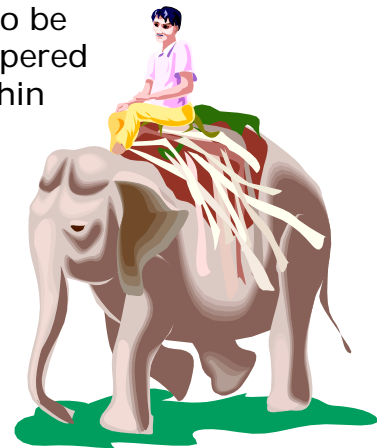


They say that in Cambodia you can always expect the unexpected! You will indeed experience many new things - new smells, new sights, new fruits and vegetables, animals, plants and trees; and you will be here long enough to form new relationships and new friendships which may last for ever. You will no longer be merely a tourist looking in from the outside; you will have the privilege of being on the inside, part of the picture.

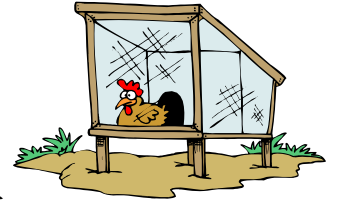
Living within and learning about another culture is a broadening and stretching experience, a privilege that relatively few people have. You will learn a great deal from your Cambodian friends. You will come to understand some of the pain and alienation of being a foreigner - difficulties similar to those that immigrants face in your own country.

You may experience a new sense of vulnerability, inadequacy, homesickness or loneliness; and you will definitely discover what it feels like to be out of your comfort zone at times. However, this will all be tempered by the joy of discovering some of what the Lord wants to do within you and within the nation of Cambodia. It is one of the greatest opportunities you will ever have!

So step out in obedience to the Lord's leading. Come with a teachable spirit and embrace all that lies ahead.

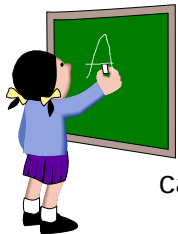


What's Cambodia Like?



Cambodia is an interesting country. It is a poor country, yet has a rich elite. It is predominantly rural; however, significant numbers are migrating to the bustling capital city. It is a developing country still heavily reliant on international aid, but is also attracting some large multi-nationals and entrepreneurs. It has a young democracy working alongside a monarchy, within a system of patronage.

The international press usually writes about Cambodia in relation to the political instability that has dominated the country's history for more than a quarter of a century, with coups, civil war and genocide. Despite the tragedies that most families have lived through, and the resulting disruption of society, government and economic structures of Cambodia, there is hope for a better future. There is widespread corruption and self-centeredness but there are also many Cambodian people who are working to improve themselves and their country.



Many Cambodians have experienced more suffering and hardship than can be imagined. Through the violence and upheaval of the past generation or two, many have been deprived of things that we take for granted, such as an education, health care, daily food and safety.

Remember that you are the visitor to their country, so don't be arrogant or hasty in your actions; learn from the people and work with them. Their culture, assumptions and values will differ from yours in many areas and there is much to learn. A good general plan for newcomers would be: keep your eyes and ears open, be teachable and flexible, laugh at yourself a lot, and give gentle guidance as you begin to make relationships.

Let's Look At Facts

Total Area 181,040 sq km
Land 176,520 sq km
Water 4,520 sq km
Coastline 443km

Capital: Phnom Penh
(population 1.2 million)

Population: 13,124,764
(to be updated from 2008 census)
0-14 years: 39.30 %
15-64 years: 57.60 %
65 years and over: 3.10 %
Population growth: 1.80 %



Government: Liberal democracy under constitutional monarchy

Provinces: 21

Language: Khmer

Other Tongues:

French, Chinese, Vietnamese, rapidly growing use of English

Currency: Riel

Principal Religion: Buddhism (Muslim and animist)

Ethnic Background:

Cambodian (Khmer)-80%

Vietnamese-12%

Chinese - 5%

Tribal groups - 2%

Former Colonial Status:

French protectorate (1863 - 1949)

Associated State within the French Union (1949 - 1955)

Independence Date: 25th September 1955.



National Flag:

A center of red with an ancient temple of Angkor Wat motif, and dark blue bands across the top and bottom.

What About Cambodia's History?



Brief history

Cambodia was once the most powerful nation in the region, with the Khmers arriving from China in prehistoric times. By the 1st century, they had built a mighty Hindu state with the country's power continuing to grow through the 13th century until the empire extended from the Bay of Bengal to the South China Sea. This is the period in which the great temples of Angkor were built.

In the 1500s to the 1800s, foreign powers sought greater influence in the area and the Angkor state declined. The French arrived in the mid-19th century and offered Cambodia protection from her powerful neighbors; this, however, quickly turned into control and France ruled Cambodia until 1954.

During the Vietnam War the country tried to steer a neutral course, but neither side respected its neutrality: the North Vietnamese Ho Chi Minh trail ran through Cambodian territory, while the U.S. bombed and raided the eastern half of Cambodia from 1969 until 1973. In 1970 General Lon Nol took over, but fought a civil war against the Khmer Rouge up until two weeks before the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. The murderous Pol Pot regime took over in April 1975 and it is thought that at least two million Cambodians died during the next four years as a direct result of Khmer Rouge policies.

Vietnam invaded and overthrew the Pol Pot regime in 1979, but the Vietnamese were Cambodia's traditional enemy; thus, when Vietnam reduced its military presence in the late 1980s, guerrilla warfare again broke out, with several groups, including the Khmer Rouge, competing for domination. The United Nations finally brokered a peace settlement, and elections were held in 1993. The Royalist Party, led by Prince Norodom Rannariddh, won the elections but were forced to share power with the communist party led by Hun Sen. This fragile coalition fell apart in 1997 following a successful coup by Hun Sen.



Hun Sen later won the elections in 1998, though with a majority insufficient to call parliament, so another coalition government was created.

In 2002, the first commune elections were held to select chiefs and members of 1,621 commune (municipality) councils.

In the 2003 general election, the Cambodian People's Party of Prime Minister Hun Sen again won a majority but not enough to rule outright. After much negotiating, a coalition government was formed between FUNCINPEC and the CPP about 12 months later.

In 2004, King Sihanouk announced his abdication of the throne for health reasons. The Royal Council of the Throne selected his son Prince Norodom Sihamoni as the new king.

What Are Some Significant Dates?

802 Jayavarman II became king and united the people of the area into one kingdom.

1863 King Norodom signed a Protectorate Treaty with France.

1954 King Norodom Sihanouk gained independence from France - the Kingdom of Cambodia is born.

1970 Prime Minister, Lon Nol, toppled King Sihanouk - the country becomes the Khmer Republic.

1975 The 'killing fields' period began under the Khmer Rouge - Democratic Kampuchea is established.

1979 The Vietnamese invaded and ousted the Pol Pot Regime - the People's Republic of Cambodia is created.

1991 The UN took over the government of the country in order to bring peace and stability.



1993 UN-organized elections resulted in a power sharing government - the country becomes the Kingdom of Cambodia again.

1997 Hun Sen took outright control in a military coup.

1998 New elections produced a further coalition government.

2003 Elections again did not give any party a clear mandate and a coalition was eventually formed (in 2004).



2004 King Norodom Sihanouk, who had been so much involved in the modern history of Cambodia, abdicated; the new King, Norodom Sihamoni is a single man and has lived much of his life in Paris.

2008 National elections will be held in July.

Suggested resources for further research:

- ❖ Chandler, David, *A History of Cambodia*
- ❖ Cormack, Don, *Killing Fields, Living Fields*

What's the Geography of Cambodia?

Cambodia has a rather short coastline that runs along the warm waters of the Gulf of Siam for about 240 kms. The land stretches from this coast in a wide plain, which is traversed in the eastern part by the great Mekong River. The very large Tonle Sap lake dominates the western part of the plain. Significant mountains are found in the south-west and north-east. Cambodia has extensive borders with Thailand to the north and west, Laos to the north-east and Vietnam to the east and south.



The Mekong runs from the Laos border in the north to the Vietnam border in the south.

Tonle ("River") Sap runs from the Mekong in central Phnom Penh north to the lake claimed to be the largest fresh water fish breeding and production area in the world. It is about 20 miles wide and 100 miles long and it provides the main protein in the diets of many Cambodians. Tonle Bassak also runs from the Mekong in central Phnom Penh to the southern border with Vietnam.

The Mekong River annually floods the central plain area. The wet season, and the melting snow in the headwaters in China and Tibet combine to lift the water level in the river as it flows south to its Vietnam delta. The tremendous volume of water spills northwards to fill the Tonle Sap lake, causing flow in the Tonle Sap to reverse for a month or two. The Tonle Sap almost doubles in width during the wet season.



What's the Weather Like?

Rainy Season: The climate is tropical with a rainy monsoon season during the months of June, July, August, September and October.



Dry/Hot Season: March, April and May are extremely hot and dry months when the humidity builds up towards the monsoon season. Temperatures during this time remain around the high 30's C and dust is a problem.



Cool Season: During the winter months, November through February, temperatures are often in the low 20's C overnight. Cooler, but most westerners still consider these months hot.

The weather is a little cooler in the mountains all year round.

What Is Cambodia's Religion?

OFFICIAL: THERAVADA BUDDHISM; PRACTICED: FOLK BUDDHISM

Buddhism is the main religion of Cambodia and it is therefore important to have an understanding of it if we are to understand the Cambodian people.

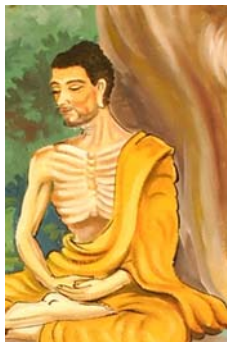
There are two main forms of Buddhism. The Theravada form is practiced in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, parts of India and Sri Lanka while the Mahayana form is practiced in the more northerly countries such as Japan, Korea and parts of China. It is a more modern form of the religion.

Most people in these countries would consider themselves Buddhists, as most people in England would say "Church of England". Many would not understand the main teachings of Buddha but, again as in Britain, the teachings under-gird much of how society works, and the way people think. Part of the success of the growth of Buddhism is attributed to the fact that it sought to blend with the local existing beliefs and practices as much as possible, resulting in a highly syncretistic folk Buddhism.

Siddhartta Gautama

Buddhism was founded by Siddhartta Gautama, who was born into a Royal family in Northern India in 600 BC. His parents wanted him to carry on the family line and rule after his father and so they protected him from the outside world, particularly from suffering. One day when he was out on his own, he saw a sick man, an old man and then a corpse, which greatly disturbed him. Then he met someone who had left his home to search for the "truth". This inspired him and he decided to make his own search. He could not see how life was worth living if it always involved such things as aging, illness, and ultimately death.

So he left home, leaving behind his wife and newborn son. Evidently his wife supported him in his quest. He shaved off his hair, and wore simple robes. He wandered around the countryside living off whatever other people would give him. From two famous teachers of the time, he learned of a pathway called "Samatha", which means tranquility. This was a form of meditation.



He decided to sit on his own under a Bodhi tree and made up his mind that he would not leave until he had understood everything. The Bodhi tree is a big tree with a heart-shaped leaf with a narrow point; the word Bodhi means enlightenment.

Some time later, he believed he penetrated to the truth particularly using the understanding he had built up in previous lives. It is important to remember that reincarnation

was a prevalent teaching at the time and is an important part of Buddhism. He felt that all his ignorance, attachments, other failings and defilements were eradicated.

The result of this was that he believed he could not possibly experience any mental disturbance or become upset about anything or cause himself or anyone else harm. On his death he would not endure the normal cycle of rebirth and death, ad infinitum, but would have his final release. He had reached the state of Nirvana.

The Buddhas

Buddhists do not believe that Gautama was the only Buddha. He is the last known Buddha, but others lived before him and more will come in the future. However the time between Buddhas is very long, indeed thousands of years.



Between Buddhas, there is a Buddha in the making, called a Bodhisatta. He is constantly being reborn, learning and developing the knowledge, wisdom and compassion that will ultimately result in him becoming the "enlightened one", teaching those who are willing and able to listen and understand what he has to say.

Many Buddhists believe we are halfway through Gautama's dispensation, and that 5,000 years from his passing his teachings will not be found in the world. After that there will not be a chance to hear true Buddhism until the next Buddha appears. This is very important in the Cambodian context as many Khmer people thought the Buddhist prophesy of Buddhism being eradicated was coming to pass under the Khmer Rouge, and accepted it as part of their fate.

The Four Noble Truths

Gautama, or Buddha, summarized his teachings in the Four Noble Truths.

1) Life is suffering.

To suffer is to be afflicted by something, and as life is something over which you have no control, it too is an affliction. All areas of life have suffering. Birth, disease and death are all examples of this. Not getting what you want, getting what you don't want, mental hurt, disappointment, unattained ambitions, searching for physical and mental security and not finding it etc. are all forms of suffering.

In addition, Buddhism teaches that everything is impermanent. Secondly that everything is insubstantial and uncontrollable. Thus life itself is worthless, as

although there is pleasure, one is never free from the other side - pain. Life is a loser's game and, in Buddhism, the only escape is through not living.

There is no Almighty being, no soul, no self - only materiality and mentality, which is taken together to mean "Self" in the Eastern sense.

In summary, everything in the world is suffering.

2) The cause of suffering

The cause of suffering is one's attachment to life. It is the craving for experience. As long as this exists, this will condition the five categories to arise. There will be materiality, consciousness, the ability to define, feelings, and the responses to feelings.

The craving itself is the prime condition. This craving is based on the ignorance that what we are craving is worth having and can give us something that it cannot.

3) The cessation of suffering

The cessation of suffering is possible, but can only come by complete removal of craving. The attainment of this is called Nirvana, perhaps the most famous of all Buddhist concepts.

4) The way to the cessation of suffering

This describes the eight essential factors, which can bring about the understanding that eliminates craving. They are:

a) Right Understanding. This includes the understanding of the other noble truths.

b) Right Thinking. This means the right thinking, which must be accompanied by right understanding. Just to be kind is not enough, if it is not helping one to eliminate craving.

c) Right Action. This includes restraint from killing living beings, from adultery, from theft, etc.

d) Right Speech. This includes restraint from lying, slander, backbiting, malicious gossip etc. Moral stories, but which are in conflict with Buddhism, would also be wrong speech.

e) Right Livelihood. This includes restraint from dealing in slaves, poisons, weapons, and alcohol and slaughtering animals to sell as meat.

f) Right Effort. This includes the effort to encourage a wholesome state, which has not yet arisen.

g) Right Concentration. True tranquility, which is free from any kind of impurity.

h) Right Awareness. To be able to get one's priorities right.

These four noble truths are the basis of Buddhism and are very complicated for a western mind to understand. Many practicing Buddhists believe that much of what is seen today as Buddhism is only a corrupt form and not true Buddhism at all. True Buddhism would involve following the original scriptures which few Cambodian people have read. However these basic teachings help us to see how many of the culturally accepted attitudes have come about, such as fatalism, non-caring attitudes to the disabled (it's a punishment for their former life), not losing face and many more.

Other Information About Buddhism

Merit

Merit is a term from Buddha's original teachings meaning something having worth or value. It is central to Buddhism, eventually bringing one to Nirvana. Anything that is worthy, wholesome, non-harmful is merit. The results of more merit include a good rebirth as a human being or in a higher plane, or to be rich and beautiful, or to come into wealth etc.

Merit includes giving, but there are higher degrees. However, for many ordinary people, merit equates to giving and hence giving to beggars and monks features highly in Cambodian society.

Not losing face

This is a very important concept and involves someone showing restraint so that you don't get upset. In true Buddhism, the person's sincerity to you is important, and he wants to save you the agony of that. However, it has become a way of life and consequently it is often difficult to get to the truth as no one wants to "lose face".

Monks

There are many monks in Buddhist society and most young men become monks for a period. There are strict rules, 227 in all! For example:

- a monk is not allowed to use money
- a monk has to work alongside a lay person to help get money or food
- a monk is not permitted to touch a woman, even by accident



The rules are the same in all Theravada Buddhist countries, but there are other traditions which are only local.



Wat

The temple (Wat) is the center of the monk's life. Most towns have a Wat one being built. Many social activities are arranged around the Wat. Many Wats are home to outcasts, the homeless and the handicapped. The Khmer people are very touchy about the treatment of Wats, especially the statues of Buddha inside. Sensitivity should be shown when visiting.

Spirit Houses

Spirit houses are everywhere in Cambodia, usually a small stand like a bird table outside someone's house. They are there to ward off evil spirits.

Spirits houses are NOT part of Buddhism, but are left over from the original religions of the area. In Cambodia this was Hinduism, and the temple of Angkor Wat was originally a Hindu temple. However, the average person in the street sees spirit houses as an important part of his Buddhism and his culture. There is a deep belief in spirits. Even devout Buddhists have spirit houses, as they want to keep peace with their neighbors who might otherwise blame any unforeseen difficulty on the fact that they had none.



God and Heaven

There is no almighty, eternal being or force in Buddhism. However, Buddhists do talk of "beings". There are beings in the heavenly planes and in the lower planes. The beings in the higher planes are very different from us. They rose to those planes as a result of their own deeds. These beings may live a very long time in happy circumstances.

Though we speak in a conventional sense of beings, according to Buddhism there are ultimately no beings, only mental and physical phenomena, arising and passing away.

There is no God, who creates, destroys, or controls life. God is a very difficult concept for Cambodians, though spirits and beings are not. There is no one checking to see that you get repaid for your deeds. Your own deed, through the mental factor of intention to kill or harm, is the cause of the unpleasant result, which is rebirth in a lower plane.

Reincarnation

Reincarnation is central to Buddhism, with a constant cycle of death and rebirth. For the average person in the street, this has led to fatalism, an acceptance that the things that happen are the consequence of a previous incarnation. Reincarnation is closely tied with the concept of Karma. The belief in reincarnation and Karma are the main aspects of original Buddhism

which Cambodians actually know. The main doctrine of Buddhism for Cambodians is "do good, get good; do bad, get bad."

Summary

Buddhism in its purest form is practiced by only a few, but the basic teachings have given rise to much of the local Cambodian culture. An attack on Buddhism (or even on the beliefs and practices associated with Buddhism) is seen as an attack on the culture. New ideas are often difficult for people to comprehend, particularly when they do not even have a concept of God. Historically, resistance to change can be seen in the Cambodian proverb: "don't choose a straight path and don't reject a winding one. Choose the path your ancestors have trod."



Suggested resources for further research

- ❖ Russell Bowers, (ed), *Folk Buddhism in Southeast Asia*, (Cambodia: Training of Timothy, 2003)
- ❖ David Burnett, *The Spirit of Buddhism*, (London: Monarch Books, 2003)
- ❖ www.kambodscha-botschaft.de/buddhism.html

Major Cambodian Festivals

Khmer New Year

- ❖ Cambodia's New Year - Chaul Chhnam Thmei
- ❖ starts 13th April - 'Chet' (the fifth moon) - or 'Pisak' (the sixth moon) of the Cambodia Lunar Calendar year.
- ❖ the farmers are relieved of their farm work after the dry season rice harvest.
- ❖ three days before new year's eve, houses and pagodas are decorated with fresh flowers, plastic or paper flowers, with multiform lamps, candies, colored papers, incense sticks and small paddy or rice mounds (formerly built of sand as a symbol of good harvest) which later will be carried to the pagodas as an offering to the monks.
- ❖ on New Year's Eve a spirit rite is held to pray for happiness and prosperity in the coming year.
- ❖ everything is arranged in advance for each family member so that all may be free from chores to celebrate the festival.
- ❖ family members will travel from all over the country, in order to be united and celebrate the festival together.
- ❖ during the New Years festival, which lasts for three days, Cambodians, especially the aged, visit pagodas where a traditional orchestra called 'Pinpeat' performs, and offerings are made to monks on behalf of the souls of people's ancestors; special food is prepared.
- ❖ lots of fruit is also offered to the spirits or "angels" ... Sometimes it is announced on the TV and radio what the "angel" needs that year e.g. perfume or cigarettes.
- ❖ a "prophet" announces what kinds and quantities of fruit to offer, therefore fruit is generally very expensive in April.
- ❖ food is taken to the pagoda every day if the family is rich, before 12 and 5 o'clock, the monks' meal times.
- ❖ The people pray for dead spirits and actually pray to the monks or else they believe that the food won't reach the spirits. The monks chant before they eat, which is how the food 'gets' to the spirits. Food for grandparents is prepared before going to the pagoda as they are given the same respect as spirits.
- ❖ young people enjoy New Year's festival more than other age groups.
- ❖ they dance the 'Ramvong' (day and night!) (the most popular dance in Cambodia).
- ❖ they also join in other games such as "Choi Chhoung" (knotted scarf throwing). Participants group themselves in twos - one male and one female in each group. Standing in 2 lines, they take turns throwing the knotted scarf to the other line. The person failing to catch the scarf has to sing a song.
- ❖ 'Angkunh' (similar to billiards but played on the ground) is also a favorite, or, the 'Tien Proot', which is a form of 'tug -of-war', or a game of hiding the handkerchief.



Pisak Bochea Day

This is the name of the lunar month of May. Visaka Bochea is a ceremony to remember The Lord Buddha's birth, enlightenment and entrance into Nirvana. The Lord Buddha was born on the day of the full moon, in May. Later he left the Palace to become a monk, with the desire to find the way of salvation from sin and suffering. Again, on the night of a full moon in May the Lord Buddha was believed to receive supernatural power and enlightenment. He is said to have entered Nirvana also on the night of the full moon in May.

- ❖ In the Palace, the King and relatives celebrate Visaka Bochea as a family ceremony, while they listen to the preaching of Dharma in the Morokot temple.
- ❖ Temples in Cambodia are usually decorated with lights during this time, while people celebrate the ceremony at the nearby pagoda, listen to Dharma and other instructions.
- ❖ Accidents and other "bad" experiences indicate sin in someone's life. They are "saved" by the monks' preaching and chanting.

Royal Ploughing Ceremony

On the waning moon in May, the Royal Family was historically responsible to organize this ceremony. Now this is done by the Minister of Agriculture. This festival involves a ploughing ritual, designed to seek blessing on the next year's crops.



- ❖ Firstly, 'King Meak' and 'Mae Hour' arrive at the Preah Merok temple. Other participants line up to enter Preah Merok to worship the idol, Siva. Towards the Northwest a group of 'Bakou' blow a shell-trumpet, making 3 sets of rhyme patterns. The king ploughs 3 rounds while others plough behind Him. The three furrows represent the Buddha, the Buddha's lessons and the monks.
- ❖ Throughout the ploughing ceremony, King Preah 'Mae Hour' takes the un-husked rice and scatters it to the right and left.
- ❖ When the ceremony is completed everyone parades in front of the hall. At the eastern side there is an idol called 'Visnuk' where the cows are unyoked, while a Brahman priest chants and prays for the cows to bring good luck. Holy water is sprinkled on the cows' heads, then the cows are released to eat various types of food, namely, rice, beans, corn, sesame, fresh grass, water and wine.
- ❖ The priest predicts the country's fortunes depending on what the cows eat. If the cow eats:
 - rice = there will be a good harvest
 - water = there'll be enough rain and abundance of food
 - wine = a bad sign predicting evil in the form of theft and robbery
 - grass = animals all over the country will have disease
 - beans, corn and sesame = all good signs
- ❖ Officials in the various provinces perform the same ritual.

Prachum Ben Day

15 days long around October, with the last day being the most important.

- ❖ It is believed at this time that the king of death releases the ghosts of ancestors to return for 14 days to search for food, visiting temples and families. This is the period when the moon is least seen during these weeks - and the ghosts are active, as it is believed they don't like the light. Consequently it is a time of fear.
- ❖ The villagers in-groups make cake from glutinous rice and pork, and various other food., and take it to the temples to the monks.
- ❖ They may go to as many as 7 different temples, all over the country; usually the ones their ancestors worshipped at, since they believe the spirits will return to the places they know.
- ❖ Names of the dead are left with the monks whose chanting connects the food with the spirits. Candies are lit outside houses and food left, inviting the spirits to come. Old people make sticky rice wrapped in leaves and go to the temple before sunrise to leave food for the dead; otherwise they believe they will get bad luck.
- ❖ The first 14 days, or 'Dak Ben' are celebrated in order to remember the good deeds of relatives that passed away. On the final day, 'Prachum Ben', the families pray and devote food to the spirits of their ancestors at their Stupa. Then they offer food to the monks and, finally, they all eat together. At that time they also pray for a good harvest for the next year. This is because after "Prachum Ben Day" they start to plow their rice fields.
- ❖ If during "Prachum Ben Day" the souls of the ancestors are unable to find relatives at seven Pagodas, those spirits will lack food for one year until the next 'Prachum Ben' and, consequently they will curse their relatives. Because of this the people are never careless about going to the pagodas during this ceremony.



Water Festival



In late November, a fun ceremony that commemorates past wars and victories. There are boat races on the river in front of the palace, and they also float little boats made of banana leaves, with candies and food, for the spirits. They give thanks to the dead ancestors for the rain that came, the harvest, for peace and for bringing luck.

[Suggested resources for further research](http://www.visit-mekong.com/cambodia/background/festivals.htm)

www.visit-mekong.com/cambodia/background/festivals.htm

What Is The Khmer Culture Like?

When arriving in a new country there are many things that may appear strange or unacceptable, there are customs and habits that you take for granted that may be inappropriate, and there is the potential for a considerable amount of embarrassment or misunderstanding.

Culture is never stable, it is always changing, and this is true for Cambodia. Although Cambodia was relatively closed to external influences (other than those from China and Vietnam) following Pol Pot until the early 1990's, the subsequent influence of tourists, foreigner workers, radio and television have led to great changes in attitudes. Thus, some of the former attitudes and taboos may not be so strongly held. This is especially true in the towns, though in rural areas and amongst the old, change usually is slow to take hold.

Try to understand the underlying values of Cambodian customs and culture, and don't make unfavorable comparisons with the way things are done in Cambodia as opposed to your home country.

This section seeks to provide some clues as to what Cambodians may take for granted, actions that they may find offensive, and hints on handling different situations that you may come across.

Greeting

The traditional greeting is the 'sompek' with palms in prayer-like fashion.

Respect for age and social status are very important; therefore always greet older people or people of higher status first.

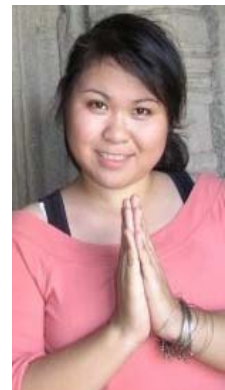
Those with higher social standing expect to be greeted by those junior to them (frequently foreigners are treated with considerable respect). Children should 'sompek' you first.

A mother may greet you via her child. When you come to the door, she will send the child to greet you. Clasp its hands or play with it a bit if you know the child, then send it back to the mother with a little smack on the bottom.

A formal greeting like 'jumreap sue' is unnecessary to house staff; use a less formal greeting such as 'sur s'day'.

Men can shake hands with men, but should not shake hands with Khmer women unless the woman offers her hand first.

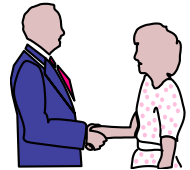
Men should not hug, kiss or touch a Khmer woman while greeting them. They will lose respect for you and it will embarrass them.



Men should not look women directly in the eyes (they may become confused, uncomfortable, nervous, shy, feel disrespected).

Do not shake hands with a Buddhist monk; women should not touch a Buddhist monk.

Women should not shake the hand of a man, unless offered the hand first.



The European style of greeting with a kiss is not appropriate in Cambodia, as kissing in public is considered to be very rude or obscene (even public displays of affection by husband and wife are uncommon).

Speaking

Khmer will ask you very personal questions. These questions will include questions regarding your age, salary, what you pay for rent, why you don't have children, or why only two children. These questions show genuine interest, not idle curiosity and are not considered to be an infringement on personal privacy. You can give evasive answers without offence.

Khmer are not as frank as Westerners. They answer in "round-about ways" and often their behavior is interpreted by an outsider as hypocrisy or even downright dishonesty.



When Khmer give criticism it will often be veiled in tactful language. It will almost inevitably start out with a compliment of some kind before the real matter is approached.

It is important to always give Khmer a way out of social situations so they can save face, thus avoiding embarrassment. The issue of shame, or losing face, is a very strong value in Cambodian society as in most Asian cultures.

Direct confrontation is avoided where possible. Often a mediator will be called upon to intercede. Don't correct anyone in public. Do it privately or preferably through a third party. If you correct a fellow team member do it away from Cambodians who may be embarrassed by it.

Speak softly and gently; let others talk more than you.

Do not point at someone when you are talking about them; indicate who you are referring to, describe their clothes or appearance.



When addressing people who are not your friends, it is important to use their title and not their name; use a title such as uncle, granny, or older sister, depending on their age in relation to yours.

Do not be surprised if you are addressed as Sir, Mr., or Miss by work colleagues.

The Khmer do not usually make eye contact when talking; looking directly into someone's eyes can be taken as a sign of aggression or disrespect.

When you are recounting an embarrassing incident, or misfortune, Cambodians may smile or laugh; this is not meant as an insult, rather these emotions are used to relieve tension.



Children have no right to speak unless spoken to. A guest is polite and doesn't speak unless spoken to.

There should be limited talking at meals; speak only if asked something.

When speaking to someone of higher position or status, Cambodians use the polite form 'soum' (equivalent to please).

If you speak with anger or emotion or express your feelings, you will not be respected; you are behaving like an immature and uneducated child. Do not lose your temper and then ask for forgiveness; it is better to show patience, as such an incident will not easily be forgotten and reflects badly on the individual concerned.

Do not use aggressive movements or gestures while speaking such as hitting the table, throwing something, or making a fist. Modulated feelings are best (neither very happy nor very sad/angry).

Giving criticism or discussing an individual's problems must not be done in public (they will lose face, want revenge, will be unable to accept your idea). If you must give criticism, do so indirectly and in private, talk "around" the issue, and let the person reach his or her own conclusions over time.

Do not criticize elders or people with more status who are not your friends; rather put your complaint more indirectly through friends.

Make friends of enemies by being nice to them. Nod and acknowledge them.

Apologize before doing something that could be construed as offensive. An early apology covers a multitude of sins.

Do not swear, as swearing is considered to be a sign of disrespect or very low social status.

Do not talk about sex in public with men or women.

Expressions of thanks for services rendered by those with lower status (drivers, waiters, employees) is not the practice among Cambodians.

Cambodians may give the answer 'yes' to a question as a simple acknowledgement of the question or as a polite form of getting out of an awkward or embarrassing situation (such as not properly understanding your request). If you are seeking a positive response, it may be necessary to rephrase the question.

Don't ever call a Cambodian "stupid" or use the name of an animal in referring to someone. It is as degrading and insulting here as it is anywhere.

English became the official second language in 1994 and is much more widely used in Phnom Penh now. You will almost always be able to find someone who speaks English and can help you. However, this is Cambodian English, NOT your normal English!

Remember to speak slowly and clearly, and don't use slang. If someone does not understand you, please don't speak more loudly - they are not deaf!

Never forget that the single most universal means of communication is a SMILE.

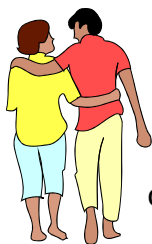


Walking

Tell your home helpers or national staff workers where you are going and when you are coming back. It is important to show respect and keep others from being embarrassed if they don't know where you are.

If passing someone of higher status, you should bend lower (at the waist) than that person.

When you meet someone on the street, ask where he or she are going.



Holding hands with someone of the same sex while walking is a sign of intimacy, with no sexual connotations.

Do not hold hands with or put your arm around someone of the opposite sex when walking.

Do not step across any part of the body of a Cambodian, go around them.

Do not step over drinking glasses, books or feet. Walk around them. Asking someone to move their feet is showing them respect.

Do not walk between people who are talking or, if this is not possible to avoid, stoop to show respect.

Standing

Stand with your arms crossed at the waist.

Arms at the side could be interpreted as signaling that you are strong.

Arms at the hip, behind the back or across the chest can signal that you are rich, powerful, threatening or disrespectful of the other people).

Sitting

When sitting on a chair sit with legs straight down. To cross your legs and point your toes in the direction of someone is very rude. The soles of the feet are the lowest part of the body.



Never put feet on a table, or show the soles of your feet to others. When sitting on the floor, men can sit in the lotus position while eating, though it is more polite to sit with legs tucked behind (not quite kneeling).



Women must sit with legs tucked behind them.

Men should not sit close to women, but should allow some space between them to avoid causing offence.

Sleeping

Cambodians (especially in the countryside) generally go to bed early and wake up before sunrise. If you wake up late you may be considered lazy. Sleeping accommodation is usually determined according to status.

Women should never lie on their backs in public.

Eating

Cambodians are very hospitable and may often invite you for a meal. It is polite to accept.

General invitations to dinner are a kind of greeting, showing your acceptance. An acceptable response to "come for dinner" would be "some other time". You will know it when the invitation is serious because they will make a specific date and time and go to quite a lot of trouble.

It is impolite to decline food or drink if offered, but it is not impolite just to leave it if you cannot eat or drink it.

Don't drain the glass dry when you are given a drink. Leaving just a little indicates that you have had more than enough. Otherwise you may find that someone keeps refilling your glass.

If you visit someone and they are in the process of eating, if they ask you to join them, say "I have already eaten, thanks". Then they will not be put out.



Eating in a rural area is likely to be on a mat on the floor in a circle. If there are no serving spoons, as a guest do not correct or criticize - this is insulting. Use fingers if they do. When you are finished, turn your back on the circle; it is best not to watch others eat after you are finished.

Do not be upset to have only Cambodian men attend your functions; this is due to a different role between Cambodian men and women in the household. If you want the wives to attend as well, make sure that you emphasize this.

Men are allowed to eat a lot but must not eat fast. Women should only eat a little bit.

Take food only when asked or directed to.

Use the communal spoon or you will not be considered part of the group.

High level people with status do not expect to have to take their own food (especially from a buffet). They are often seated in a private or special place and served to show status and respect.

When visitors arrive, you must serve them water or a drink even if it is only a short visit. Give a drink rather than asking what they want. To say what they want is impolite and they will be obligated to choose the cheapest drink.



If guests come during a meal, they must be invited to eat.

Do not eat while walking; if you buy food from a street vendor find a place to sit down.

Do not blow your nose while having a meal. Khmer leave the room to blow their noses.

Working With The Khmer

Maintaining office relationships should take priority over work production.

Proper behavior is more important than work performance.

The Khmer custom is that honor is given to those who show respect and politeness to those of higher status or power.

The Khmer expectation is that the work performance will be evaluated based on allegiance to those in power.

Khmer anticipate being rewarded with money or power or job security if they give respect and allegiance.

Khmer consider it better to agree than disagree, especially if someone has higher status.



Khmer perceive that it is the responsibility of those in power to make the decisions. Cambodians normally expect to be told what to do by their superiors, rather than to enter into discussion or negotiation on objectives and priorities. Western work concepts need to be taught, modeled and reinforced, not just assumed.

In meetings, no one is your equal; everyone else is either above or below you. Khmers need to ascertain the pecking order, so know your place or start at the bottom so you may be brought up and thereby gain "face".

Cambodians do not verbally apologize for being late; rather it may be expressed by a nod of the head or a smile.

Cambodians are unlikely to express anxieties about situations to their employers; rather they tend only to talk to close friends or family members.

Giving and Receiving

When giving money or a letter, it is polite to give with the right hand, with your left hand holding the right forearm, or give them with both hands.

When you give a gift, allow them to open the gift at home.

Do not open a gift in front of the giver because it might not be very much, even though the box and wrapping may be pretty fancy, and they would be very embarrassed. Just give a little thank you speech and take it home.



If a neighbor gives you a plate of food, you must return the plate (a little later, say a week) with more food on it. Do not wash it and hand it straight back.

If your friend is sick and you know about it, you should pay a visit to be polite.

When taking a gift to a sick person it is best to give food or toiletries rather than flowers. Whereas in the West it is considered romantic and special to give someone a single rose, to do that in Cambodia would have the completely opposite effect.

Hospitality

Always welcome warmly.

Always give them water, don't ask if they want it, as they'll say no.

If the time is inconvenient, invite them to whatever you were about to do, and they'll be able to back out graciously.

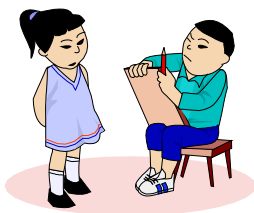
Poor families often have a bench outside the house where they entertain and receive guests. So don't expect to be taken inside.

Leave your shoes at the door when visiting Cambodian homes. It is the custom to take your shoes off before entering the home. Thongs, or shoes used exclusively indoors, are sometimes worn inside, but bare feet are most common. This also applies to entering temples (wats) and some churches, especially in the country.



Cambodians are not used to showing you around their home. However, if they come to visit you they will "sneak" to each nook and cranny to see your home.

If visiting in a home, don't hesitate to ask questions, like asking them how they do particular jobs. They will be happy to tell you if your interest is genuine.



Don't admire relatively small items (pens, plates pictures and the like) with words because the owner may feel obliged to give them to you. Showing appreciation for such things as the house or their children is accepted and valued.

Khmer are not used to our "directness" when we need something. If you ask, "Do you have milk for my coffee?" they will say, "Yes, we do", even if they don't, and run out to buy or borrow it for you. So it is better not to ask just drink the strong black or sweet milky coffee and smile. 😊

Tips For Visiting Rural Areas

Do not hit or stone the dog - it is insulting the owner.

Going to the toilet is "going behind a bush!" Take a hoe, and a special stick for "scraping". It is acceptable for men to go together. Some homes will have the traditional Cambodian toilet, or squat variety. Even in modern Cambodian homes it is common to find a squat toilet. If you have never used a squat toilet before it may take some getting used to. You probably won't spend as long "squatting" as you may do "sitting" at home!

It is advisable to carry some tissues when out, as toilet paper is not always provided.

Public toilets are not a feature of life in Phnom Penh or other towns.

Taking a shower Khmer style means using a bucket full of water. A "dipper" is provided to wet you, and a washer is very useful to soap up with. You will be amazed how you can wash yourself, including your hair, in little more (or less) than one bucket of water when necessary!



Miscellaneous Cultural Tips

Gestures

Some gestures used in Western society have different meanings here.

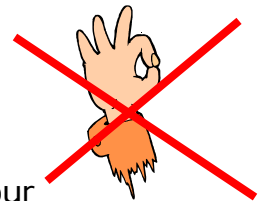
When beckoning to a Cambodian never use an upraised forefinger or hand as these can be interpreted as degrading gestures. Instead, turn your hand downward to motion to them to come.

Don't yell across the room!

The 'thumbs up' is quite appropriate.



Never use the hand symbol for OK.



If you notice any other gestures that are unfamiliar to you, ask your language teacher or a Khmer friend to explain what they mean. Don't copy them without understanding!

Cultural Things Khmer Do That Can Be Frustrating To Westerners

Khmer do not have the same concept of privacy (or the need for it) as many Westerners.

Do not be offended if the Khmer light up cigarettes in your presence, as it is not necessary to ask permission when desiring to smoke.

Foreigners often assume that Cambodians are stupid, lack initiative, or are impolite since they do not jump forward to do things or to offer answers; however, this is associated with reserve and shyness.

Do not expect compliments from Cambodians.

Likes and dislikes are frequently inferred from context rather than obtained from direct questions.

Do not expect an apology for minor offences, such as bumping someone.

Do not be surprised if a Cambodian friend insists on inviting you for a meal or offering you help in doing things; this is a gesture of good will. You can refuse repeatedly if you do not want the service.

Queuing in banks, offices or for transport is not a Cambodian practice. If you wish to speak with someone in an office, go and make yourself known to them. And do not be offended when a Khmer pushes past you.

Cultural 'Respect' Tips

Monks should be treated with respect; the Khmer hold them in high esteem.

The head is the highest part of the body and you should not touch anyone's head not even children.

Cambodians are often open about their experiences under Pol Pot, though the trauma of these times often shows in their recital of anecdotes and sensitivity needs to be exercised.

Cambodian women are expected to be more reserved than men, to be gentle and graceful in both speech and gesture.



Khmer women sit side-saddle on motorbikes - in the past sitting astride resulted in the woman being considered a 'bad woman' (prostitute), though it is not uncommon to see women in Phnom Penh sitting astride. You need to choose which position is safest.

Superstitions

The men often get tattooed, believing it protects from spirits.

Many are afraid of taking showers when they have fever. They think it is not good to be cooled down at such a time.

Some older Khmer believe that if you take a photograph of three people, the one in the middle will die.

Books are revered (the secret of knowledge). NEVER stand on a book.



You should not walk under clothes-lines, as your head is the most important part and it would be going under unimportant garments.

Relationships

Family acquaintance

Cambodians are accustomed to close family ties and family togetherness. They are very proud of their children. So take time to acquaint yourself with the families in your neighborhood. Chat with them during free time; take time to share about your own life and family. Do take time to befriend the children. As is normal for all cultures, children are excellent entry points in establishing interpersonal relationships with parents.

Cambodians usually have a big extended family. Even friends or not-so-close relatives are called brother, sister, aunt, uncle, grandpa, etc.

Khmer may say as they admire your children, "I love them so much I would like to spank them". Don't be offended.

Cambodians often pinch children's cheeks and arms, this is a sign of affection, but if the child is 'white skinned' this may happen so often that it feels more like a punishment! As parents, it is okay to ask them politely not to do that, as your child doesn't like it.



Khmer also pinch and fondle little boys' genitals. This is another time you need to ask kindly that they not do that to your child. If you have a helper in the home, be sure to let them know this is not acceptable in Western culture.



Male/Female Relationships

Khmer avoid spending time alone with someone of the opposite sex in a closed-door conversation. You will be wise to follow this cultural practice. If there are just two of you make sure the doors are open and everything is in good taste.

Respect Of The Young For Their Elders

There is a great deal of respect in Cambodia for the elderly. The number of elderly people here is however less than in other parts of the world as a result of the Pol Pot times. Be sure to greet them with respect; they don't have to be really old, just older than you are. It is good to use the proper names for elders and relations. Find out what names are used. By being correct, you will see a transformation in your relationship with Cambodians because they will feel that you are working hard to really understand them and their culture.



Beggars

You will encounter beggars almost every day. It can be quite distressing to be confronted with beggars, particularly if they are disfigured, very elderly or very young. If you are stopped on the street, it is best to take care and give discreetly as you will suddenly find yourself surrounded by a number of people, all asking for money. This will be discussed further when you arrive in Cambodia. The main thing is that there are no rules. You must make your own personal decisions on this and then follow your heart.



People Asking for Help

Sometimes people will ask you for financial help and may see you as their escape from poverty. Some will ask for your address. Take care. Your personal address could attract a flood of requests for financial or humanitarian assistance and this could be abused.

People often ask for help to learn English. In the beginning it is better to say no. When you get settled and into your work area this can be reassessed.

Relationships With Government Workers

Wages in Cambodia for Government workers are about US\$15 to \$20 per month. It is common for teachers, office workers, university lecturers and such people to work only a few hours a day at their government position and have another job in the afternoon. Many are motorbike taxi drivers. They are always ready to tell you how difficult things are - and this is true. Take care not to be drawn into discussing the current government practices. Some higher-level government workers are more adequately supported with cars and houses supplied by their ministry.

Relationships with Government Officials

You may not have any direct interaction with government officials or agencies to begin with. If any is required for any specific reason, inform your director or office for advice immediately.

Remember that you are a guest in a host country. At no time should you engage in a conversation of a critical nature, nor should you write critically of what you see, hear or think about what's happening. Your hosts are gracious enough to allow you to be with them; you must at least return the favor by displaying exemplary behavior in all areas.



It is important that you exercise caution concerning involvement in any politically sensitive issues. Your involvement in such issues could well jeopardize your work, as well as being detrimental to the good name of CCFC. It is important to remember that, if at any time officials question you as to your purpose for being in Cambodia, it is to be there as a worker helping the Khmer people.

With these things in mind, always try to show a positive and pleasant attitude to all Cambodians, regardless of their social standing. You may encounter official attitudes and regulations which you do not like or understand. It is important you continue to be gracious and uncritical in your remarks and actions, both in Cambodia and when you return home.

What Is The History Of The Cambodian Church?

History of Christianity in Cambodia

1555 Roman Catholicism introduced to Cambodia, but Christianity was viewed with suspicion.

1863 Cambodia became a French protectorate, with Catholic missions being granted greater access, however, Protestant missions were kept out.

1923 The first Protestant missionaries, with the Christian Missionary Alliance, were allowed to share the gospel, but only in the provinces.

1933 New Testament translated into Khmer.

1940 The Old Testament was translated.

1954 The entire Bible was translated.

1975 Khmer Rouge came to power - 90% of the 10,000 Christians at this time lost their lives under Pol Pot. This included nearly all the Church leaders.

1979 Persecution of the Khmer Church continued under the pro-Vietnamese regime.

1993 New constitution adopted enshrining the principle of freedom of religion - Churches known to be in every province, around 5,000 Protestants.

1999 The Minister of Religions and Cults stated that there are 376 registered Churches and 41,000 Khmer Christians.

Most Southeast Asian countries are traditionally Buddhist, with a degree of animism, and Cambodia is no exception.

Although Roman Catholicism was introduced in the 1500s, it was not until 1923 that the first evangelical Protestant Christian missionaries entered Cambodia. They were not well received, experiencing considerable opposition from the Cambodian people, who equated being Khmer with being a Buddhist. Thus to turn from Buddhism to Christianity was an act of betrayal to country and culture - a view still widely held.

During World War II, many missionaries left or were imprisoned by the Japanese. During this time, the Church still doubled in size.



After 1947, freedom of religion was encouraged, and the Gospel spread to most of the country. Cambodian pastors were trained and Christian literature published.

In the 1960's diplomatic relations with the West were strained. Missionaries were forced to leave the country and the Cambodian evangelical Church leaders were ordered to close their churches. It was then necessary for Christians to meet in secret.

With the overthrow of the government in a coup in 1970, and an American backed administration, greater religious freedom was allowed.



1970 to 1975 was also a period of civil war, with increasing areas of the country coming under Khmer Rouge control. With the turmoil and apparent failings of the Buddhist system, there was a greater openness to the gospel. In the five years prior to the Pol Pot Regime, many thousands believed in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

1975 the Khmer Rouge came to power, with their opposition to religion and western influences; Christians were one of the groups targeted for execution, with 90% losing their lives.

The persecution of the Church did not end with the demise of the Khmer Rouge regime. Following the Vietnamese liberation of Cambodia in 1979, there was oppression of religious groups, and the Church was forced to meet in secret throughout the 1980s.

The peace agreement, elections and new constitution brokered by the United Nations made it easier for Christians to meet together.

The Church Today

Since first being exposed to the Gospel 450 years ago, and following 75 years of Protestant mission, it is now unclear how many churches there are in Cambodia, but some number the Khmer Christians at around 200,000 (doing a head count of whoever turns up to a church or fellowship group). How many true Christians there are is of course anyone's guess.

However, it should be remembered that after the Khmer Rouge regime there were only 1000 believers in Cambodia - so there has been spectacular growth in the last thirty years.

Today there is interest in the Gospel, especially amongst the young, though the number of Christians is still small. New groups are springing up all the time, but at the same time sects and cults are active and bringing confusion.

There is a great need for:

- ❖ a deeper understanding of the word of God

- ❖ trained and experienced leaders
- ❖ unity and trust among Christians, churches and church groupings (there is an attempted uniting effort by EFC to have a Christian presence in every village in Cambodia by 2021, and different Christian groups under EFC to work together towards this goal.)

The Scriptures



The considerable influence of Buddhism on Cambodian culture means that the basic notions of God, sin, life, heaven, forgiveness, salvation, etc. have an entirely different significance, thus making it difficult to translate Scripture in a way that is comprehensible to the Cambodian people.

The Bible in Khmer was published in 1954, having been systematically translated by an American pastor. This translation is well used and respected.

In 1997 a new Bible was printed in modern language by the United Bible Societies. While well received by some, other vocal Christians strongly opposed the changes from the 1954 version. In 2005 a revised version of the new translation was printed. This new version basically follows the 1997 edition but has changed some words back to the words used by the 1954 version, including the names of almost all the books of the Bible.

The Church's Future

Following years of conflict, violence and political insecurity in Cambodia, there is relative stability. There is opportunity for the Church to multiply and penetrate into remote areas.

There are still a number of people groups that have yet to be reached with the gospel or receive the Scriptures in their own language.

The vast majority of the Khmer people have never been presented with the gospel.

The Role of Expatriates

There is a need for dedicated expatriate Christians to assist the Cambodian Church in a culturally appropriate and sensitive way. This is especially true if the Good News is offered not just with words, but also in a practical caring and empowering way.



It is essential that expatriate Christians respect their guest status, working closely with local Church leadership, serving appropriately and recognizing that God's purposes are achieved when the Holy Spirit is fully in control.

What Do I Need to Know Before I Arrive?

What Do I Need To Bring?



Unaccompanied Baggage

If you have unaccompanied baggage you must have an original shipping document, a list of contents, (not too detailed as this sometimes has to be translated into Khmer) and be prepared to wait a number of days for the negotiations and payments for the release of your baggage. Cambodia does not follow the normal rules for unaccompanied baggage.

Importing Goods

There will be some things that you will want to bring with you, but be warned that the process of getting goods imported later on and then released is not always easy and requires patience. Packing lists are necessary and you must have your original Bill of Lading. It is the same process for air and sea-freight, with a lot of coming and going between government offices. The more information you have the better, but the process can last up to several weeks. Do not expect instant access to your goods and anticipate possible loss and/or damage.

Air freight gets here faster but is much more expensive. However, most prefer air freight. There is also a fee on this end for airport storage. Usually, it is given in small amounts to different agents who help get your shipment through.



What Important Documents Do I Need to Bring?

Health Insurance

You will need health insurance for your time in Cambodia. Your organization will advise you on their particular system. Bring a copy of your health insurance policy with you as this has the information needed to contact the insurer for permission to use the policy. A copy must be kept in your personal file at the CCFC office. Medical evacuation costs about US\$25,000. CCFC does not have this amount of money in country.

Driver's License

If you plan to drive while in Cambodia, bring your current driver's license with you. You will need it to obtain a Cambodian license.

How Do I prepare Myself Psychologically?

Loss

Prior to leaving the home country, farewells will have been made, but in the excitement and busyness of moving the real sense of loss may not have sunk in. However, while adjusting to the new situation and seeking to establish an identity, there will be times when the loss feels an unequal trade.



The greatest loss may be that of family, especially if the relationships were particularly close. The feeling of loss will be felt not only by you, but also by those who have been left behind; this can generate additional pressures. If children have moved with you then there will be their losses to deal with and those of the grandparents back home; and if children have stayed behind (at college or working) then additional losses will be faced.

Friends and colleagues with whom you may have spent considerable time (working, socializing, confiding in) will also be left behind. In the time that you are seeking to build new relationships, their loss may be felt heavily and the feeling of isolation may be considerable.

Although you may have come to Cambodia for new work purposes, in the period of establishing yourself in a new role, you may feel the loss of your previous work. This may be especially hard if your first few months are spent in language learning (which may not appear to be work and has its own associated frustrations), or if you have given up a well-paid job to do voluntary work.

If you have moved to Cambodia because your partner has a new job here, then it may be that you have given up your own work and it may take some time to find a new role. Or you may have given up your house and the roles you had there, possibly feeling redundant with a helper here doing many of the activities that used to provide some fulfillment.

All of these areas of loss may cause you to feel that you have lost your own identity, your value and your very purpose for being.

Value Conflicts



In moving to Cambodia, you are entering a new culture. The Khmer culture is likely to have a different set of rules, values and beliefs from that of your own culture. Most of your culture (or worldview) is learned in early childhood, and so many of your beliefs are long established and are not readily open to challenge. But in moving to Cambodia, you need to learn a new culture, with new rules governing the way you act. Thus you are likely to face confusion arising

from your actions not being understood, while also being frustrated at not understanding why the Khmer do certain things.

Entering a new culture is almost like becoming a small child again, with a need to re-learn how to think, how to speak, how to act and how to feel. Your view of what is right and wrong, what is good and what is bad may not necessarily be the same as that of the Khmer. You may instinctively think that your values are better than those of the host country, but you need to remember that you are the visitor in Cambodia. Have respect for their culture and try to understand a different worldview.

In your relationships, whether at work or socially, you will find challenges to what you believe to be important, to the methods that you think are logical and the practices that you consider to be normal. This may appear to challenge your competence to do your job.

But it is also necessary to see things from the Cambodian perspective and realize that your values and priorities may not be ranked in the same order as that of the host culture.



These conflicts of thinking arising from dealing with a new culture, when combined with the sense of loss and the process of adapting to change, can result in a variety of responses which may manifest themselves in different actions.

Typical Responses

In the simplest form, the responses below could be termed as culture shock. It may be that you experience none of them, but it is useful to highlight possible responses to the change, loss, and value conflict that you may encounter in living in Cambodia.

Response to Change

- fight, flight or freeze (usually as a consequence of stress)
- irritable, angry, tense anxious
- want to go home, panic, can't sleep
- stupor, tropical stare, exhaustion, sleep too much
- illness, drink too much, regress, old issues resurface

Response to Loss

- sadness, loneliness, depression, guilt
- withdrawal, isolated, become dependent
- loss of energy, sleep problems, eat more or less
- low self-esteem

Response to Value Conflict

- hostile, suspicious, critical, disapproving

- demanding, ordering, ridiculing, judging, disgusted, obsessed with changing "them"
- labeling (stupid, lazy, traumatized, wrong, immoral)
- feel ineffectual, confused, sense of failure
- identity confusion (who am I, what do I believe in?)

Coping Strategies

There are many different things that can be done to reduce the impact associated with the change of moving to Cambodia, the loss of leaving the home country and the value conflicts that may arise from the new culture.

Below a number of different ideas are outlined for these three areas of cross-cultural adjustment - but they are not amplified. Other expatriate staff may have dealt with the same issues and so can give you ideas as to how they coped.

Coping with Change

- relaxation exercises, stress management techniques
- set realistic goals, establish routines
- get "home" settled first before committing elsewhere
- maintain a sense of humor
- take one day at a time
- take a short break
- ask for help from others



Coping with Loss

- allow yourself to mourn losses, cry, feel sad
- share what you are going through with family/friends
- give yourself some TLC (massage, good meal, etc)
- get exercise
- begin to engage in social activities to replace social network
- get help if you can't manage it yourself

Coping with Value Conflicts

- avoid negative people
- take language lessons, get a cultural informant
- think similar and different, not right or wrong
- identify your own value system and patterns of behavior
- look for reasons behind "confusing" behaviors
- respect social norms even if you don't accept them
- ask questions, learn, and be curious, read
- increase your tolerance for differences and ambiguity identify the non-verbal cues in the society
- try to empathize, put yourself in their shoes
- avoid interpreting the behavior of another culture by your cultural rules.

What Will Happen When I Arrive in Cambodia?

Before leaving home you should be in touch with us by Email, fax, or phone. We will then be able to give you up to the minute instructions or advice.

There are a number of routes into Cambodia, but usually those coming to work in Cambodia arrive at Phnom Penh International Airport, Phnom Penh. International Flights arrive at Pochentong from Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Guungzhou, and Vietianne.

Prior to arrival the airline staff will provide you with a visa application form, customs declaration form, and an arrival departure card. It is best to have these completed upon arrival.

What Documents Do I Bring With Me?

Passport

As with any international travel you must have a passport. Make sure you have at least one year before your passport expiry date as that makes visas easier to obtain. You cannot get a visa extension beyond the date of your passport. If you need a new passport make sure you allow enough time for the process.



Visa

You will also need a visa to enter Cambodia to work with a Non Government Organization (NGO). CCFC is registered this way. The rules keep changing, but currently the best plan is to seek advice from your organization. If you have any questions please contact the Team Leader of CCFC by e-mail. After your arrival in Cambodia the CCFC Office Administrator will apply for a six-month/multiple entry visa for you.

Photographs

You will need to have 2 passport-sized photographs with you as you travel. Do not stock up as these are available much cheaper in Cambodia than at home.

Customs Formalities

On the last leg of your journey into Phnom Penh you will be given a visa application card on the flight, but you do not need to fill this in if your visa is stamped in your passport. However, if you do not already have a visa stamped in your passport you will need to fill out the visa form. The visa application can be perplexing, since there are a variety of visa choices, including:

Tourist T- \$20 US fee
Business E - \$25 US fee
Visa A (diplomatic) – free
Visa B (aid agencies) – free (CCFC)
Visa C (dependants) – free
Visa K (Khmer living abroad) – free

If applying for visas A, B or C it is necessary to come in to the country with a letter of attestation provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in response to a request from the organization that has invited you to work in Cambodia. Tourist and work visas cannot subsequently be changed to visas A, B or C, so it is necessary to make sure all arrangements are in place before arriving in Cambodia. The application for a letter of attestation will be processed by CCFC.



Who Will Meet Me?

If you have arranged for a letter of attestation, CCFC staff will meet you in the arrival hall with your letter. Go to the visa counter on the left where a whole array of officials are seated ready to process your application.

To the first official you will hand in your passport, completed visa application form, two passport photos and, if appropriate, the letter of attestation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He will then pass it on until it works its way down the full length of the desk.

If you are applying for a tourist or work visa, you will not pay the fee until you reach the final official, who will then return your passport with the visa stamped inside.

Upon return of your passport with the appropriate visa, you then go to the immigration desks where you hand in the arrival/departure form – they check your visa, staple the departure form inside and then wave you through to baggage reclaim.



Baggage collection is on the right after immigration; there is only one carousel so you cannot get lost (though your baggage or its contents may ☺).

After you claim your baggage, an official may check that the tag on your baggage matches the one on the back of your ticket.

Next, head to customs and hand them the declaration form saying whether you have anything to declare.

If your baggage does not arrive, on the opposite side of the hall to the reclaim section is an office where you can complete forms and receive instruction as to how to retrieve your baggage.

What About Money?

Currency Regulations

There are no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency or travellers' checks you may bring into Cambodia. We suggest you carry US dollars and US traveller's checks. There are banks in Phnom Penh where you can open a personal account.

The official currency is the riel, but this cannot be obtained outside Cambodia. This is not a problem, since the unofficial currency (the US dollar) is used for almost all transactions. Bring enough U.S. currency to last for the first few weeks. CCFC suggests you bring between US\$500 and US\$1,000, depending on your situation. If you plan to buy a car, enroll your children in school, or begin language study right away, you will need to plan for that.

The Riel

The exchange rate is approximately 4000 riel for one US dollar. There are no coins in Cambodia; all currency is paper notes, with its value written in Khmer and English.

The riel is most commonly used when paying for moto-dope rides, buying food at the market and paying some bills (water and electricity bills may be written in riel). Grocery stores, gas stations, supermarkets and restaurants use US dollars, but also accept riel.

Changing Money

Dollars can be exchanged for riel on the street or in all the markets at small money-changers. These small stalls, located in the front of shops, display the exchange rate for the riel, and usually give a more favorable rate than the banks.



Obtaining Cash

If your employer pays you then they are likely to open an account for you and either transfer money to it or give you a check to put into your account. However, if you are dependent on money from abroad, there are a number of ways of getting money into the country:

- Carry some cash when you come.
- Open a bank account in Phnom Penh and have money transferred from your home country to the new account.
- Use debit/credit cards. There are many ATMs in Phnom Penh and even in a few towns in the province like Sihanoukville and Siem Reap.

Banks

Some of the commonly used banks are:



ANZ Royal

This is a newer bank to Cambodia and has ATMs in many places in town. They issue debit cards which can be used in some supermarkets and bigger shops.

Standard Chartered Bank

This is a large international bank that operates within Cambodia. To open an account here it is necessary for your organization already to have an account with the bank.

ACLEDA

This bank has branches in most provincial towns and bigger villages. They have been established in Cambodia for many years and have interesting rates.

Cambodian Public Bank

This bank is owned by Malaysian interests and has a good reputation. They have ATMs for private accounts within Cambodia.

Foreign Trade Bank of Cambodia

When opening an account, you must have a letter from your organization stating your position, passport, address and telephone number, and US\$100.

Canadian Bank

Cambodia Commercial Bank

Maybank

Thai Farmers Bank

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)



There are ATMs in Cambodia! Major banks will handle the major credit cards for cash withdrawals, also with debit cards. Major hotels accept credit cards for meals or accommodation. Very few businesses use credit cards.

General Money Matters

Be careful how you spend your money in front of Cambodian friends. Do not be tempted to exclaim how cheap everything is in comparison with prices at home! You will have a good deal more money than many of the people you meet regularly.

Don't give or lend larger amounts of money to anyone without consulting someone with more experience in country. If you want to help a Cambodian family in some practical way it is best to do so in consultation with a Cambodian advisor. Repayment is a problem and often results in ill will. There may be a misunderstanding as to whether or not the person is really borrowing. Sometimes it may just be a way of asking for money.

Bargaining

Ask your language teacher or other staff members to guide you in bargaining in the market. Go along with your home-helper and watch the process.

Larger stores and supermarkets sell at fixed-prices. Don't bargain in these places. The currency used in these stores is generally US dollars.

In the markets and small shops it is better to use riel rather than dollars. You can pay significantly more if you use dollars as the exchange rate is always inflated!



What Commodities Are Available?

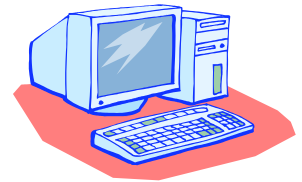
There is now a wide selection of goods available in the markets and stores in Cambodia.

Household Items

Wicker and wood furniture, kitchen pots and pans, dishes and silverware, and linens are available. Silverware and dishes are quite high in price. Sheets large enough for the beds here are hard to find. You may wish to bring queen or king size sheets, and your silverware and dishes if you already have them. Small appliances, such as toasters, coffee pots, mixers, etc. are available but also expensive. Large Japanese appliances are available new or second-hand - washing machines, good stoves, and refrigerators. Audio-visual equipment is also available.

Office equipment

Computers, printers (from recognized distributors) UPS units, etc. are available or can be ordered. There are numerous service centers for computer repairs.



Toiletries

Cambodia has most things you will need, unless you have special requirements. Readily available at reasonable prices are: anti-perspirants, shampoo, tampons, pads, toothpaste, soaps, face creams and hand creams etc.

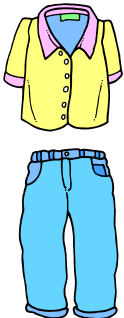
Hobby materials

Bring your own hobby materials. Very little is available at this time.

Books

English books are available but not specialist books or resources, although there is a small company that will order books from London and maybe other sources. Novels can be swapped and bought at a couple of shops.

Clothing



Clothing supplies for the entire family are available in all sizes in the Russian market for very reasonable prices. Name Brands are sold, as many are made in factories around the capital city. Shoes are also available but not in larger sizes. Underclothes are sold here but are NOT good quality. It is best to bring these from your home country. Many fabrics can be purchased at reasonable prices and there are many tailors and seamstresses. Most charge reasonable prices to make clothes, but check with those in country as some are better than others.

Shoes can also be made to order.



Where Do I Shop?

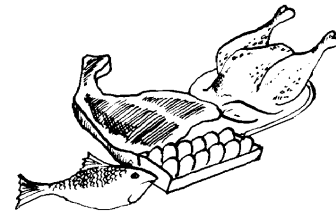
This section seeks to give an indication of where specific items can be purchased. Fortunately, shops in Phnom Penh selling the same item tend to be located near to each other (though this is not always the rule!).

Markets

The local markets provide almost everything necessary to live here. They sell food, clothes, toiletries, electrical and household goods etc. They are fun to visit and shop at. They also give a good picture of the Cambodian culture. Markets are where you can put your bargaining skills to the test.

Larger Markets include:

- Central Market = Psaa Thmey
- Russian Market = Toul Tom Pong Market
- Olympic Market
- O'Russey Market (a bit of a labyrinth)



There are also many smaller markets scattered about the city. If you employ a cook or helper, she will know the local meat and vegetable market.

A Khmer neighbor, or the helper of another foreigner, may be willing to take you and show you the vendors that they purchase food from. Normally it is advisable to go to the market early in the morning, before the produce has been exposed too long to the heat and associated flies.

Supermarkets



There are several supermarkets, nothing like you have access to at home, but they sell 'Western' foodstuffs. They are expensive because most of the products are flown into the country. You will find many items have higher prices than in your home country.

Meat and vegetables can be more expensive here than in the local markets. Prices of tinned or packet foods may also be higher. However, because the shops can purchase in larger quantities, their prices are sometimes lower.

The advantage of the supermarkets is that the price is clearly labeled and it is not necessary to bargain.

There are more and more supermarkets opening in Phnom Penh. The prices vary in each and the range of goods can vary. It should also be noted that what may be available one week may not be on the shelves the next. Thus, it may be necessary at times to stock up, or else to frequent a number of supermarkets.

Shopping Malls

Sovanna Shopping Mall (opened 2008, off the Dyke Road – 271)
Sorya Shopping Mall – near Central Market
Paragon Shopping Centre – behind the Royal Palace
Pencil Shopping Centre – Norodom Blv
Sydney Supermarket and mall – Kampuchea Krom
Big A – Monivong
Parkway Shopping Centre – Mao Tse Tung

Lucky Supermarkets

Sorya Shopping Mall
Sovanna Shopping Mall
Near Olympic Stadium – Charles DeGaulle blv
On Sihanouk Blv

Smaller Supermarkets

Arona – on Kampuchea Krom
Parkway Supermarket
Check your local area for others

Imported Foods

Bayon Supermarket – on Monivong
Thai Hout – near Bayon
Sydney market also has imported foods, especially from Australia

Shopping Centres with indoor playgrounds



Sovanna Shopping Mall
Sydney – upstairs
Lucky Olympic – upstairs
Pencil Supermarket
Lucky Burger – cnr Monivong
Big A

Furniture

There are a number of streets that have wooden furniture stores located in these areas:

Ochna Tep Phan – near Psar Depot
Monivong – heading south towards the southern bridge
Chba Urn Bur – just over the southern bridge there are other furniture shops.

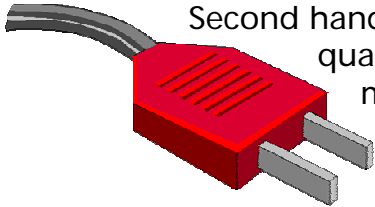
It is possible to buy ready-made furniture, or order furniture to be made to your requirements.

There are also rattan furniture shops, located in one main area: Mao Tse Tung Road to the east side of Norodom Boulevard.



There are numerous office furniture shops scattered throughout the town. These shops sell products such as Leeco desks and cabinets, metal and plastic tables.

Electrical Equipment



Second hand devices can be purchased in the markets, with prices (and quality) being lower than for new products. In and around the markets there are many small shops selling electrical devices. These include TVs, VCRs, DVDs, Stereo Systems, Washing Machines, Rice Cookers, Blenders, etc.

Voltage regulators to protect your equipment can be purchased on Monivong Street (opposite Big A) and also near Central Market.

Clothes

The cheapest place to get clothes for your family will be at the Russian Market. They have many named-brand things in all sizes for cheaper prices than clothes imported from Thailand, Malaysia or Vietnam.

Nice cotton fabrics are available from Olympic Market, outside O'Russey Market and inside Russian market. They are usually priced between \$1 and \$2 a meter. Silk Fabric is available at Russian market, but is more expensive (around \$6-8 per meter).

If you have a dress or shirt that you particularly like, take the garment along to one of the many seamstresses and they will copy it for you. Check with team members as some are more expensive than others.

Shoes in smaller sizes are available at the Russian Market. However, if you wear a large size, you may want to bring some from home or have them made here.

Underclothes are available here but the quality is not good. Bring enough from home to last you, remembering that the sun wears out the elastic more quickly than dryers at home.

Cloth Nappies/Diapers are not available here. Disposable nappies are readily available, but just as pricey or more so than back home.



What's Appropriate Clothing?

Modesty is important to Cambodians and we all need to avoid exposing too much skin (quite apart from the risks from mosquitoes and sun!). Be sensitive to the customs of the community in which you live and adjust your own customs accordingly.

Cambodians are generally very careful about their appearance, especially if they are going somewhere special. Around the home they may dress casually (e.g. in a house-dress or sarong, or in T-shirts and shorts), but our Khmer peers would not consider this appropriate for street wear.

Cleanliness and good grooming are very important, so foreigners need to be doubly careful about such matters. Westerners generally perspire more in this climate than Cambodians, so an extra shower and change of clothes is often a good idea; for some of us, up to four showers a day is not unusual during the hot season (April/May).

The garment industry is big in Cambodia and the markets are full of good cheap clothes. Good tailors are also here in abundance. Men, women and children can have clothes made to measure - or copied from another item - at very reasonable prices.



Cotton or cotton blends are certainly more comfortable than polyester.

Bring a supply of underclothes with you. Underclothes are available in the markets, but the quality is not always good.

Shoes and sandals can be purchased in the markets or made to order. They are not expensive.

Children

Normal western clothing is acceptable. Boys and girls can wear modest shorts.

Most of the international schools do not require uniforms. School clothing is normally neat and comfortable with sneakers or sandals for footwear.

Children need lunch boxes and drink containers for school. Consider bringing a small cool bag/box for each child. So far there are only larger cool boxes available in shops.



Remember to bring bathing suits for the children. There is now a limited supply available in country also.

Women



Cambodian women, like most Asian women, are very modest, and you will find you are more readily accepted if you respect their modesty and seek to emulate it while you are here.

Skirts and blouses, dresses and pants with t-shirts or blouses are normal wear.

You will see tourists and other expatriates wearing revealing blouses, tight-fitting jeans, or the briefest of shorts. However, these are not appropriate for those who have made Cambodia their home and who wish to make meaningful relationships here.

Some good guidelines would include:

- ❖ No low necklines.
- ❖ No tummies showing.
- ❖ Nothing above the knee.
- ❖ No high slits in dresses and skirts.

Like women the world over, Cambodian women are careful with their make-up and appearance. Hairdressers are readily available and normally offer manicures and pedicures also at very reasonable prices. Cambodian women also love to wear jewelry.



Comfortable, low-heeled shoes and sandals are good footwear. It is customary to remove shoes at the door of all residences and even some businesses.

Be sure to bring your bathing suit. Where there are a lot of Khmer present, some expatriate women prefer to wear a sarong over their bathing suit. Although there is no hard and fast rule, most feel more comfortable in a one-piece suit.

Men

Cambodian men will dress in casual clothing, but they still are modest by Western standards.

Long pants are recommended. However, longer shorts are becoming more acceptable in casual settings. Jeans and dress pants are both acceptable. Shorts are never worn to formal meetings or church services.

Collared shirts, polo shirts and t-shirts are fine. Some prefer to wear long-sleeved shirts for mosquito and sun protection. Cambodian men mostly wear long sleeves, but short-sleeved dress shirts are very acceptable.

Suits are NOT necessary, but a dress jacket of some sort is useful for more formal or government occasions.



Sandals are acceptable and shoes and socks are worn in dress or work situations.

Khmer and expatriate men wear modest bathing suits.

Some Cambodian men also wear jewelry.

Where Will I Live?

On arrival

On arrival in Phnom Penh, you may have temporary accommodation until a house or apartment can be found. This will give you some time to look around and find that special place you will call 'home'.

The choice of accommodation is improving all the time, with much new development in many areas of the city. The cost of accommodation varies considerably depending on what area you choose to live in and what type of housing you need for your family. It is important to keep in mind where you will attend language school, where your children will go to school and where your work and ministry will be.

Finding a House

There are now real estate agents with lists of properties and staff willing to search for properties in your preferred location.



Another way to find a house is to ask around or advertise among the NGO network. Many Khmer are keen to help you find a house because they receive a finder's fee from the landlord equivalent to one month's rent. This is a great incentive for people to look for houses for you.

If you wish to look on your own, then select the area that you prefer to live in and look for "House for rent" signs. Even if a house that you like is not advertised for rent, you can knock and ask if the owner is willing to rent.

Are There Some Guidelines I Should Follow?

Remember to commit the whole house-hunting matter to the Lord. No house will be 'perfect' but you can make it home.

Make a 'need list' of the things you need

- Secure doors
- Ceiling Fans
- Hot Water Heaters in the Bathrooms
- Screens
- Storm and Sewage Drains
- Etc.

Now, add your 'wish list'

- Balcony
- Trees and Flowers/Yard

- Air Con
- Garage
- Automatic Water Pump

Take your list, a note pad, pen and measuring tape with you when you house hunt. After seeing many houses you may forget what each one was like. It is good to look at lots so you have a good idea what is around and what you will need to pay.

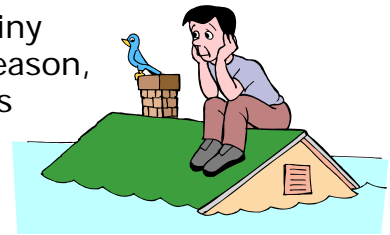
Don't get discouraged; God has a place just for you.

Rental Considerations

It is said that the three most important things to look for in real estate are "location, location and location". In Phnom Penh, "location" means more than "which suburb".

Does It Flood?

Parts of Phnom Penh have a propensity to flood in the rainy season. If you are looking for a house during the rainy season, go and visit the house immediately after heavy rain. If it's not the rainy season, look for signs of previous flooding: look at the outside and inside walls for "tide marks". It may be helpful to talk to neighbours but remember they may be relatives of the landlord!



What Utilities Are Available?

Power cuts are frequent in some areas (but your friend in the next street may have no problem). If possible, find out the situation from close neighbours or former tenants. Phone lines and cable TV coverage do not extend to all parts of the city.

Do I Want Furnished or Unfurnished?

Some houses are rented fully furnished, others unfurnished. The cost of providing furniture, stoves, refrigerators, etc can be significant, so it is worth considering these when looking at renting.

Is The House Near A Temple or a Restaurant or a Lake or Swamp?

Living near a wat (temple) or restaurant can be very noisy. Cremations at wats add unpleasant smells. Lakes and swamps breed mosquitoes as well as bad smells.

Will it be hot?

If the house is flat-roofed, or has bedroom walls that are south and west facing, the rooms are likely to be hot in the afternoon and evening. This can make sleeping difficult.



What do I need to Be Aware of Before Signing?

Before signing on the dotted line, make sure the landlord agrees to fix any areas of the house that need attention (such as painting, providing ceiling fans, raising the height of perimeter walls, providing screening from neighbors, updating the bathrooms etc). Do not be afraid to ask the landlord to fix or add things you need. They are far more willing to fix things before the contract is signed than afterwards.

Contracts

There are no standard contracts for renting houses, so it is possible to write your own and tailor a contract to suit your needs. CCFC also has a standard contract which you can modify as needed. It would be polite to have the contract translated into Khmer before offering it to a landlord. You need to consider:



- ❖ What amount of deposit will be put down for the house?
- ❖ How much notice do the landlord or the tenant need to give to terminate the contract?
- ❖ Who is responsible for repairs? How will urgent needs be handled?
- ❖ What is the length of rental? (One year is the norm for long-term staff.)
- ❖ What is the rental price?
- ❖ Is the house for business or NGO or your personal home?
- ❖ Who is responsible for bills and taxes?.
- ❖ Does the landlord expect/have free access to 'your' house?
- ❖ Many landlords want 6 months rent in advance. Some ask for more.



Usually contracts are in both English and Khmer. It is advisable to use a Khmer speaker when finalizing the contract agreement, to avoid any misunderstanding or subsequent dispute. The CCFC office administrator is available to help you in this area. Before signing, check with the CCFC team leader. All house contracts are in CCFC's name and should be filed in the CCFC office.

An extra sheet of paper should be attached to the rental agreement stating what furniture and fittings is the landlord's property.

Utilities

Dealing with the various utility companies can be a source of frustration. The price of water, electricity and rubbish collection is higher for foreigners than for Cambodians. Some foreigners and landlords allow the foreigner to pay lower rates; however, this is illegal, since the Royal Government sets out the charges, and it can also be expensive if you are faced with back charges.

Electricity

Cambodia has a 220v–240v system. Electricité du Cambodge provides electricity within Phnom Penh. The company office is located on the east side of Wat Phnom (Tel. 360189, 360451 or 365827). Power failures occur frequently during the hot months, more in some streets than others. Rarely are any power outlets earthed. All sorts of adapters can be purchased cheaply locally.

Bills are received monthly, based on a meter that is in the street, with the bill being delivered to your door. The bill is payable at the company office, during normal working hours (there are many clerks receiving payments, but usually there is also a crowd of customers with no concept of queuing).



Garbage

"Cintri" is the City Cleaning and Waste Collection Service. Rubbish is collected at irregular (but frequent) intervals from outside your front gate. The bill is included in your electricity account.

Water

Regis des Eaux de Phnom Penh provides the water for the city. Water is charged per cubic meter but is relatively cheap.

Bills cover a variety of periods, sometimes being delivered each month and sometimes quarterly (this may be based on the employee getting access to your meter). Normally the company employee visits the house, reads the meter and provides a bill there and then (the meter reading is then reflected in the next bill).

Gas

There is no piped gas service in Phnom Penh. LP Gas cylinders can be purchased. When empty, arrange with one of the many little local shops to bring a full cylinder to your house to exchange.

Where Will My Children Go to School?



Local International School Options

There are now several options for parents with school age children in Phnom Penh. The international schools are as follows. Listed beside them are a rough estimate of school fees as of June 2008.

Hope International School (approx \$2,500 per year)

Preschool-12

Street 271 (Dyke Rd) #239-243

Sangkat Toul Tompoung 2, Khan Chamkarmorn

Email: enquiries@hopeschool-cambodia.org

Website: <http://www.hopeschool-cambodia.org>

Logos International School (approx \$2,250 per year)

Preschool-12

Street 592, Toul Kork (Expected to move to Phnom Penh Thmei Dec 2008)

Email: logosoffice@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.logoscambodia.org>

Northbridge International School (NISC)

Preschool - 12

located halfway between the airport and Toul Kork

Email: NISC@NorthbridgeCommunities.com

Website: www.NorthbridgeCommunities.com

International School of Phnom Penh (ISPP)

Preschool - 12

located on Norodom Blvd.

Email: ispp@worldmail.com.kh

Website: www.camnet.com.khispp

Lycee Francais Rene Descartes (French Private School)

St 96, Wat Phnom (near the American embassy)

Email: administration@descartes-cambodge.com

Website: <http://www.descartes-cambodge.com>

Pre-schools

There are a number of other private preschools in Phnom Penh. It is best to ask those who have children attending Pre School in your area what they would recommend.



Do I Need A Helper In My Home?

In your home country, having domestic staff may be considered a luxury, in Cambodia, the Khmer often expect the seemingly affluent foreigners to provide employment and a livelihood for the nationals. There are numerous positions that could be filled:

- A guard against theft.
- A helper to clean and to look after the children.
- A cook to go to the market and prepare food.
- A driver to transport children to school.
- An interpreter to help with language and customs.



The staffing of your house will depend on your needs, expectations and your financial situation. Initially the idea of domestic staff may seem extravagant or exploitative; however, if you are working there will not be time to deal with the daily cleaning required due to the excessive dust and the hassle of going daily to the market and bargaining for food. Your Khmer helper may be a great help to you in learning the language. A helper allows you to learn the culture more quickly and gives you the freedom to have a ministry in Cambodia.

How Do I Find A Helper(s)?

If a house has been rented for your, the staff working there may have been retained, or provided by the landlord (often relatives of the owner). You are under no obligation to keep them if you wish to employ other staff recommended to you by others.

Often staff are found by word of mouth. Sometimes expatriates move away and their trained staff may be seeking employment. Usually it is not difficult to find willing employees; the problem is whether they have any aptitude to work.

It is advisable to have a trial period, as this will protect you from expensive commitments. Having an interpreter present when you work out your initial agreement with a new household employee may help to assure correct understanding of all duties, wages, length of the trial period, time off and other agreements.

Some CCFC expatriates have been very pleased with hiring staff through Nyemo. They are a French NGO helping to train girls to clean and cook. Ask your friends and co-workers for leads.

It is often not advisable to employ relatives, as if there is a problem with one employee, you may find the relatives take sides, and then friction or bad feeling arises amongst all staff.

Employing staff

Some organizations recommend that employees should have medical examinations. It is important to know that a prospective employee is not suffering from any diseases that could endanger your family's health (i.e. amoebic dysentery, tuberculosis, venereal disease, or trachoma). If you consider this necessary, take the employee yourself to a responsible physician to be sure that it is they who are being X-rayed or tested, to avoid the use of stand-ins for the tests.

For some employees (such as a guard), you may be expected to provide accommodation and basic facilities to make it habitable (bed, mat, pillow, fan, etc). These can be fairly basic, as the employee will not be used to the standard of living of the foreigner, but it is necessary to consider such things as bathroom facilities and eating arrangements. All these can be discussed at an early stage.

CCFC has a National Staff Policy which includes guidelines and much detailed information on what is required of us as employers. Here are some general notes:



Salaries

Pay the going wage, with occasional bonuses for good performance or the big public holidays (such as Khmer new year). Some give the equivalent of a month's salary in gifts or as a bonus sometime during the year (Christmas time, local New Year, etc.).

Holidays

The length and number of paid holidays as well as customary working hours and days off are usually a part of the custom of the country. Inquire about local practices and follow them as closely as possible, but note that Cambodia has the most public holidays of any country in Asia, and it may not be convenient to give all days off. CCFC office will have a list of official holidays.

Kickbacks

Employees who shop for you will probably be able to make purchases at prices lower than you could, and they may receive a bonus from the dealer. When the kickback does not exceed 10% they are probably being honest within their tradition. You can check this by shopping yourself occasionally to see what prices you would have to pay.

Managing Money

Frequently, employees will need help in managing the household money if they are doing the marketing for you. Ways of establishing good management may include furnishing the employee with a notebook in which to list household purchases, giving limited amounts of money, replenishing the household fund as needed, and regularly going over the accounting.

Lending Money

Some keep a notebook, entering each salary payment as it is made. Employees may ask to borrow ahead on their wages and may have difficulty understanding why, in your affluent position, you are reluctant to lend them money. Even if you have made it a condition of employment that money cannot be borrowed, you may be asked for a loan or salary advance.

Paying Salaries

Paying salaries more frequently (bi-weekly, weekly) so that employees do not have so long between paydayes may decrease the need for advances.

Firing An Employee

If you need to discharge an employee, it is best to offer severance pay and request that the employee leave immediately, rather than to give notice and risk retribution during the notice period. If they leave with your key, change your locks.

Training and Supervision

- Write down what you require of your staff.
- Make sure your staff understands.
- Adhere firmly to your expectations.
- Communication takes patience.
- It may be helpful to have the employee repeat to you all instructions so that any misunderstandings can be cleared up immediately.
- Many work techniques can be demonstrated. You may have to demonstrate a particular task several times before the employee learns how to do it your way.
- Once trained, let your employees assume the responsibility for doing the work, but keep an eye on them.
- Showing interest in the work, reminds the employee of its importance.
- Compliments encourage them in their work, while active interest ensures that misunderstandings do not develop and lead to friction.
- Maintain your own standards and those of your children by assuming responsibility for your personal belongings.
- Often, employees will prefer to 'do everything' for small children rather than waiting while the children tie their own shoelaces or pick up their toys.
- Give clear instructions for specific items that are expensive or breakable (television, stereo, glassware, etc.)
- In Cambodia 'saving face' is very important. Not only do the employees want to save their own; they want to save yours also. If an employee looks dubious about an order, ask why. A good employee can set you straight so tactfully that you don't even know you have been corrected.
- In Cambodia, it is often expected that the foreigner will support the employee when in need, such as when sick or when getting married. In responding to such situations you should be careful and considerate. As an employer you have greater wealth than the Khmer staff and there is a cultural expectation that those with power should be courted in order to provide help to those near to them.



What About Language Learning?

Options for language study can be looked at when you arrive in Phnom Penh. There are a number of options available from classes to couples or individual studies. You can go to the school or a tutor will come to your house. With the help of other CCFC team members, choose carefully your preferred method of study and budget \$7 an hour for one to one tutoring or US\$180.00 (beginner) to US\$300.00 (advanced) a term for classroom studies. Practising with the neighbours is free (although the occasional bag of fruit would be appreciated)!

There are a variety of methods for learning Khmer, but currently there are only limited schools for regulated study. It is generally advised that the new expatriate member of staff combines a private tutor with an organized school.

The initial orientation period usually enables the new staff member to be free from any work responsibilities, and therefore to be able to concentrate time and energy on language acquisition. However, other responsibilities, such as finding a house, furnishing the house, getting to know the town, shopping, cooking and family responsibilities usually encroach on the language learning.

ជំរាបសួរ=hello

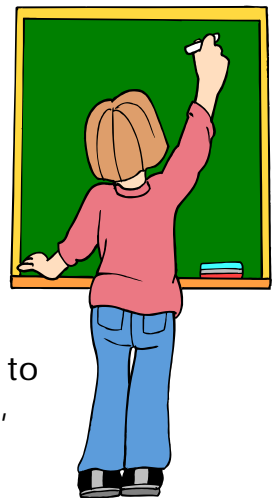
Some organizations advocate treating the language study period as though it was work; therefore giving a minimum of six hours a day to it is a good discipline.

Language Centers

The following language facilities are available in Phnom Penh:

Institute of Foreign Language Khmer Language Course
Phnom Penh University, Pochentong Road; Tel: 012 866 826
Good for written Khmer. Four levels offered in the course of a year, approximately 10-week terms with daily 1½-hour lessons, costing US\$200 per term.

Khmer School of Language (KSL)
#10 Street 420, Toul Tom Pong; Tel: (023) 213 047
Founded by SAO. Uses own resources with 5 levels. Offers short courses in listening/speaking and reading/writing (max 5-10 students) over five 7-8 week terms, costing from \$180 beginners to \$300 advanced. Tutoring available at US\$5 per hour at the school, US\$4 per hour for group (2 or 3) and \$US6+ at home and out of hours (increases for greater distances). Plus \$20 registration fee.



Khmer Language Classes for Expatriates ("the French School")
Corner of Sihamony and Norodom within Education Institute at Wat Lanka
(near Independence Monument); Tel: 012 520 106
Good for conversation classes. Two levels of writing and speaking classes
offered each month, consisting of 20 one-hour classes at US\$7 per hour or
US\$140 per month

Language Exchange Cambodia (LEC)

#40 Street 460; Tel: 092 619 091

Good reports from this new school established by an expat frustrated by
language learning options. Has a 10-lesson "Survival Khmer" course for
newcomers. Experienced teacher US\$5 per hour or trainee teacher US\$4 per
hour. US\$3 per hour for group (2-3 people) session.

Many private tutors and smaller schools also offer services to students.

***All the above prices are subject to change.*

Recommendations

Depending on your personal learning style and language
aims, it would be helpful to combine one or two courses
with a private tutor.



Generally it would be sensible to do a course in the morning and combine
this with a private tutor for a few hours in the afternoon. Leaving time during
the day for private study, practising (ie tormenting) your new skills with your
neighbours, activities associated with the house and rest.

ក្នុងសង្គម

Learning Khmer is essential for everyone living and
working in Cambodia. Even those here for a relatively
short time (e.g. two or three months) should make an
effort to acquire some basic language skills. For those
with a longer term focus, learning to read and write is highly recommended
as this helps you become an independent language learner; also, literacy is
highly regarded in Khmer society.

Everyone will have to consider learning opportunities that are suitable to their
own circumstances but colleagues will be able to help you with the decision.

How Can I Be A Christian Witness?

Hindrances to Reaching Animistic Buddhists:

1. The syncretistic nature of the beliefs.

Their belief is full of inconsistencies, and being irrational, they can always find something to justify their actions e.g. wearing an amulet is opposed by Buddha. They think inconsistencies don't matter since, in folk religion, people do not ask the question "what is true?" but "what works?" and what works is often a case of what has power to accomplish the practitioner's desired end. Religion at its best, according to them, is Buddhism; Christianity is a good religion in its infancy. They are supposed to be tolerant of all religions (remain cool, calm and collected) but actually, social ostracism, even violent opposition, results if someone converts to Christianity.

2. Theravada Buddhism in Cambodia equates itself with nationalism.

High government officials tend to be Buddhist. Christians get pushed aside. A rural farmer who converts is considered a traitor. Christians in the villages have difficulty to find burial grounds for their dead. At a cremation, the monks want to have the last say.

3. The binding effects of spiritual worship.

From the cradle to the grave, Cambodians are influenced by spiritual power:

- ghosts of the dead - to harass you
- property spirits - rule over certain locations
- guardian spirits - oversee a city via a king or venerated priest
- nature spirits



Numerous objects, charms and fetishes are connected with each of these types and are used at birth, marriage and death, blessing the house, harvest thanksgiving, etc.. All of this is derived from Brahmanism.

4. The traditional values and ethics of Khmers.

The 5 precepts of Buddhism are:

- ❖ do not kill
- ❖ do not lie

- ❖ do not commit adultery
- ❖ do not drink alcohol
- ❖ do not steal

Behavior is secondary to status. A high standard is taught at the temple but most live by another. One example: 12-year-old boys are taken by their fathers to visit brothels and told to leave the village girls alone. They believe that they will still reach nirvana as they gain merit at the temple. Good deeds balance the evil ones.

5. The missionary can be a hindrance if they lack proper orientation to the Khmer people.

- apparent affluence, unwillingness to adapt to the culture, language and customs - will not know their felt needs. Must differentiate between pure culture (which is good) and the baggage.

- his/her approach in preaching i.e. being too direct. The culture requires indirect teaching e.g. stories along the lines that Jesus told.

- a lack of understanding (by Cambodian and ex-pat Christians) of how the Bible applied in original context and to Cambodian context today.

- John 3:16 is the worst Scripture to begin preaching to Buddhists - unless the terminology is extremely well known: God, agape love, sin. "God's love" could be regarded as sensual, i.e. God lusted. Buddha had removed himself from sensual things. Another misunderstanding is that God must be married to have a son. Also, Buddhists consider that heaven is the bottom rung of the long ladder to nirvana. They have 13 "hells". The word for "spirit" has various meanings.



Traditionally, violent deaths require burial so the spirit is not reborn; a violent ghost would be released by cremation. The crucifixion was a violent death – to a Buddhist, this suggests that Jesus had bad karma!

Talk instead about substitution e.g. a story where Prince Rannaridh substitutes himself for a criminal. The king (God) would have been grieved for the law cannot be violated; the penalty must be paid. Once the penalty is paid by the substitute, the king can declare the real criminal as guiltless.

Death, as in many cultures, is an important aspect of Cambodian life. Explaining clearly the Bible's teaching on death can be very helpful, in particular highlighting that Jesus has defeated death.



It is okay to debate during a sermon. Can debate at a stalemate, change

tack, say you're impressed with their knowledge and ability; be deferential and respectful. The hierarchy of Buddhism, with the monks being over all, is reflected in the spirit world. Even necklaces or fetishes have their own spirits. Khmers will agree that there must be a Great Spirit over all of them.

Spiritism is inextricably bound with Buddhism. Buddhism always dominates other religions but never eradicates them. It is tolerant and syncretistic.

At birth, grandma sprinkles holy water on the child and dedicates them to a spirit. A "good" name is whispered to the mother. A "dirty" name is shouted out - to deceive the spirits so they won't harm the child.



At 12, boy's heads are shaved except the topknot and blessed by a priest.

At 20, boys enter the priesthood to make merit for the mother who needs to be reborn a male to reach nirvana.

Marriages are usually officiated by a Brahman. There are many fertility rites in Theravada Buddhism. For example, Royal Ploughing Day is a Brahman ceremony which ends with obeisance to the goddess of fertility.

At death, the spirit world still dominates.



IMPORTANT NOTE: When evangelizing/witnessing, never draw in the net too soon. Wait and wait. Initial "conversion" may be just interest. You have to win the right to be heard.

Suggested resources for further research

- ❖ Lin, D. & Spaulding, S. (eds), *Sharing Jesus in the Buddhist World*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2003)
- ❖ Lin, D. & Spaulding, S. (eds), *Sharing Jesus Holistically with the Buddhist World*, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005)
- ❖ Zacharias, R., *The Lotus and the Cross: Jesus talks with Buddha*, (Oregon: Mulnomah Publishers, 2001)

What About Health Issues?

Health In Cambodia



Cambodia is a developing country, one of the poorest in Asia, and this can be seen especially in its health statistics. While there is considerable effort and expenditure in preventing illness, and in the care of major global illnesses like AIDS and TB, the government spends only a few dollars per year on providing general health care for each citizen.

In practice most Cambodians cannot access care of even reasonable quality. Illness is the biggest cause of indebtedness and an important cause of ongoing poverty as poor families sell land or borrow money to pay for health care.

Health Insurance

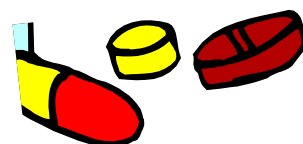
If you become seriously ill in Cambodia, you will most likely be evacuated to Bangkok or Singapore. It is important that you have good health insurance cover as the costs of such medical evacuation may exceed \$30,000, even without medical care at your destination. Your organization will guide you in purchasing appropriate cover for you and your family before you come.

General Medical Care

There are doctors from many different countries working in Cambodia and some work in general practice clinics. It is best to ask the advice of team members as to their experience of particular doctors. CCFC has a current list of doctors and clinics who have been recommended by team members.

Several hospitals in Bangkok offer "packages" for routine medical screening and many expatriates find them a satisfactory and relatively cheap option.

Unlike in most Western countries, the local medical system is based on a simple "user pays" concept. You can buy medicines of all sorts over the counter (usually from people who can't read English and know little about the medicine). There is also a thriving business in selling counterfeit medicines which may be ineffective or, less commonly, harmful.



In the cities, you can have almost any medical test done on request just by walking into the appropriate hospital, clinic or laboratory and paying for it. Costs and reliability of results vary immensely, so you should be guided by longer-term residents.

Emergency Assistance

If you are involved in an accident in the street, an ambulance can be summoned by dialing 119. The ambulance staff will usually have little training and may require payment (e.g. \$100) before showing any interest in caring for you. It may be quicker and just as safe to travel to a hospital by personal car or moto (depending on the severity of the accident).



If you have medical insurance, remember that a claim can be invalidated if you have not phoned the emergency number in your own country before getting medical treatment. Therefore, ensure that you carry your medical card with you at all times, so in case of an emergency someone can call the insurance help line.

Many foreigners use the S.O.S Clinic and the Naga Medical Clinic for general health problems. Both clinics can arrange medical evacuations from the country. More facilities are being built to cater for the upper end of the "health market" but most foreigners, and many Cambodians too, choose to leave Cambodia for serious problems.



Obstetric Care

Most expatriate women choose to deliver in Thailand or their home country. Airlines sometimes require certification of duration of pregnancy before allowing you to fly and will not allow you to fly past a certain date.

Dental Care

There are a number of options, including some foreign and some Khmer dentists. Some clinics offer specialist orthodontic and cosmetic dental care, including implants. Some foreigners still prefer to have their regular dental work attended to in Thailand but many find the standard here is good and also relatively inexpensive.



Eye care



There are many Opticians and some Ophthalmologists. If you wear glasses, you should bring a spare pair and your prescription. Glasses are not expensive in Cambodia. Most complex prescriptions can be made up at a little extra cost.

Current Medical Status

If you are currently on medications, we suggest you bring enough to last for at least the first month or two. This gives you time to settle before having to worry about this matter. Most medicines (but not all) are available here in abundant supply and often much cheaper than at home. If you would like, we will happily check the pharmacies here in advance for any special needs.

First Aid Supplies

It is useful to have a small supply of the first aid items you would normally carry when traveling. Items such as vitamins, band-aids, antiseptic lotion, insect repellent, pain tablets, anti-histamines, antibiotics, anti-diarrhoeals and oral rehydration solution are cheap and readily available here.



Vaccinations

There are no legal vaccination requirements for visitors entering Cambodia. Your organization may have particular requirements, but we advise that consideration be given to all of the following before you come here:

Typhoid

Vaccination by a series of capsules or a series of injections is recommended. Both are effective.

Hepatitis A and B

There are good vaccines for both of these and they are recommended. Each involves a series of injections.

Japanese Encephalitis

We suggest you have this, but wait and have it in Cambodia, as it is readily available and much cheaper here.

Tetanus toxoid

You should have had a full course of vaccinations sometime in your life (usually as a small child) and a booster within the last ten years.

T.B.

TB is a common infection here. Many older foreigners will have had BCG vaccination as children. It should be offered to children and young adults coming to Cambodia if they have a negative response to the Mantoux skin test. Older adults cannot be vaccinated.

Diphtheria

Boosters are often given with tetanus vaccine. It is recommended that you maintain your cover.

Polio

The last case of polio in Cambodia occurred in 1997 but it is important to keep up our cover. Children should already be covered. Usually a single booster dose of oral vaccine is offered to teenagers and adults before travel.

Rabies:

You are at risk of rabies if bitten by a dog or other animal in Cambodia. This infection can be prevented by either

1. vaccination before AND after any suspicious bite

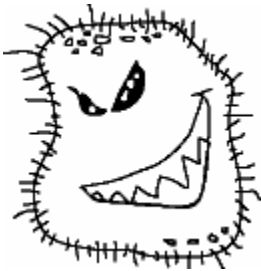
OR

2. vaccination immediately after any suspicious bite (more expensive, more injections involved, but still effective)

Your choice may depend on your likely contact with animals and where you plan to live, but dog-bite in the street is not uncommon.

Cholera:

The cholera vaccine is no longer recommended as it is relatively ineffective.



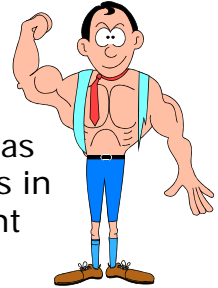
a Cambodian bug

These vaccinations are all available in Cambodia but it is wise to come already protected for at least some. New "bugs" are enough to contend with. Many people have tummy upsets within a few weeks of arriving, so it is reassuring to know you are protected from the more serious illnesses.

Staying Healthy In Cambodia

Acclimatization

Adapting to a warmer Climate may take a few weeks. It is important to increase your liquid intake (up to four liters per day) as you lose more fluids through perspiration. Avoid outdoor activities in the heat of the day, wear loose/light/cotton clothing, take frequent showers and change your clothing regularly.



Prickly heat is a red bumpy rash which sometimes occurs due to sweat being trapped under the skin. Wearing loose-fitting clothes, taking a cool shower, or spending time in an air-conditioned room may help soothe prickly heat irritations. Prickly heat powder can also be bought at some supermarkets.

Fungal skin infections are fairly common and can be treated with anti-fungal creams bought from the pharmacies. The risk of fungal infection may be less if you wear loose fitting clothes and dry the skin properly after washing.

Water

Although Phnom Penh town-supply water is probably safe at least sometimes and in some areas, most people choose not to drink water straight from the tap. Drink only bottled, filtered or boiled water unless your host tells you otherwise.



It is recommended that tap water be boiled for 20 minutes if it is to be used as drinking water - keeping just-boiled water in a thermos for 20 minutes is also effective. Do not leave water exposed after boiling; bottle it and keep a lid on it to avoid it being contaminated.

Another alternative is to use a water filter; they are readily available and not expensive.

Most houses do not have hot water, so dishes are usually washed with lots of detergent and rinsed with cold water. You may wish to take extra precautions by rinsing with filtered, bottled or boiled water.

When outside your house, it is safest to ask for bottled water. Do not buy un-bottled drinks and be wary of added ice which may not be pure. Be guided by other residents regarding ice at restaurants - in many places, it is safe and acceptable.

Brush your teeth only with clean water.

Try to avoid using straws - they could have been recycled! Definitely do not use a dyed straw.

Food

Eating food from street stalls is a risk that you may not want to take. Consider the washing-up facilities before you decide where to eat. The food may be clean but the plates and cutlery dirty.

Don't buy food that has been sitting unprotected in a food stall. Whenever possible, buy food that you have seen being prepared, thus ensuring it is reasonably fresh.

As there are no restrictions or legal requirements, pesticides are widely used. Faeces may be used as a fertilizer. Eat fruit and vegetables raw only after they have been cleaned or peeled.

After washing with tap water to remove surface dirt, soak fruit and vegetables in "vegetable wash" or a salt solution or bicarbonate of soda before rinsing with clean water.

The Khmer like to cook with MSG (monosodium glutamate) as it adds flavor to the food. Your cook may refuse to believe that the food will still taste good without it, so it may be necessary to teach and watch her if you do not wish to consume MSG.

Ensure that your cook:

- ❖ washes her hands after returning from the market, and before preparing food.
- ❖ always covers food, even as she is preparing it to cook. Flies carry all kinds of germs and a quick stir-fry may not be enough to kill them.
- ❖ does not return cooked food to surfaces where uncooked food was prepared.
- ❖ scrubs the chopping boards very well.
- ❖ washes pans and dishes after cooking to avoid attracting the geckos, cockroaches and mice or even just humble ants.



Cupboards can be made ant-proof by using ant chalk around the cupboard legs or putting the legs in castors of water. Be sure to add a drop of bleach or a teaspoon of salt to discourage mosquitoes from laying their larvae in the water.

Some put a few drops of kerosene in toilet bowls/cistern if they will be away for more than a few days.

Exercise



We need to exercise regularly to feel good and stay well. (Unfortunately, just sitting and sweating does not have the same benefit!) Some find it difficult to find a form of exercise that's safe, affordable and tolerable in the heat – but it's worth the trouble to find something that fits your style.

Sun Problems

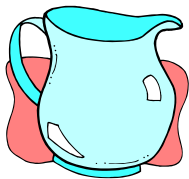
In the tropics the effect of the sun is stronger than you might expect; use a sunscreen and wear a hat. Good sunglasses, with UV protection, are essential. Sunscreen creams are available here but expensive. It is wise to protect your skin from direct sunlight as much as possible. Be especially careful at the beach, where the white sand can cause you to burn much faster than you expect.



Heat Exhaustion

Temperatures can reach 30–40°C for weeks at a time without much relief. Many houses have air-conditioning but it is expensive to run and power-cuts are common. Overhead fans are common. It may be wise to plan to slow down a bit until you get used to the climate. Expect to achieve less in a day than you normally would. Do as much work as possible in the mornings. November to January are usually the coolest months and, for that reason, they may be good months to have your visitors come.

Sufficient Fluids

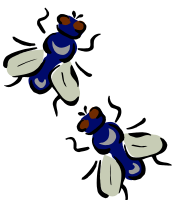


In the very hot weather, you may need to drink around 4 liters per day (16 cups of water). You lose the majority of body fluid through perspiration. Episodes of vomiting and diarrhea are fairly common and can quickly lead to dehydration.

Flies

Flies spread Hepatitis A, polio, bacillary and amoebic dysentery, as well as other food poisoning organisms. To reduce health risks:

- ❖ screen houses
- ❖ keep food covered
- ❖ carefully dispose of waste to discourage flies and ants
- ❖ wash out tins



Bites

Avoid mosquito bites (and the infections they transmit) by:

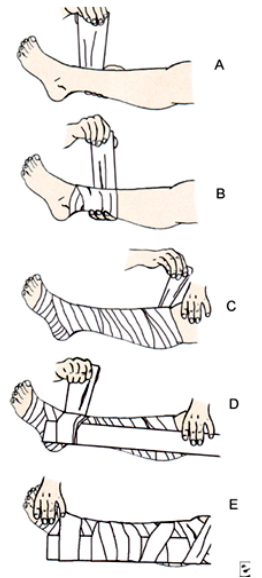
- ❖ minimizing breeding places for mosquitoes around your house
- ❖ using insect repellent
- ❖ using mosquito nets
- ❖ covering your skin when out at dusk or evenings
- ❖ maintaining screens in your house where possible
- ❖ using mosquito traps in your house

Avoid snake bites by:

- ❖ using a flashlight when walking in the dark
- ❖ walking only on paths
- ❖ never putting your hands or feet into places where you cannot see
- ❖ being careful about exploring dark cool places where cobras may live

If someone is bitten by a snake:

- ❖ immediately wrap the whole limb with a firm pressure bandage (as tight as for a sprained ankle), elevate and splint the limb, carry the person to get medical attention quickly
- ❖ most local snake-venoms kill by causing muscle weakness and most victims of serious bites can be adequately treated with breathing assistance and other support. Anti-venoms are expensive and unlikely to be available.
- ❖ some snake-venoms cause nasty local swelling and ulceration. These bites should not be wrapped; they are not life-threatening and keeping the venom in the bite area may lead to worse ulceration. If in doubt, wrap!



Avoid being bitten by animals; never touch an unknown dog or wild animal.

Malaria

Malaria is rare in Phnom Penh. For those living outside Phnom Penh, the best advice comes from the medical people in Cambodia. Usually the approach for long-term workers is to avoid mosquito bites, seek early diagnosis if fever occurs and then treat with effective drugs. (Diagnostic kits and drug treatment kits are readily available.) Malaria prevention drugs may be recommended for short visits to malarial areas.



Dengue Fever

This nasty viral illness is transmitted by mosquitoes that bite during the day; it is preventable only by avoiding mosquito bites.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and AIDS

The most recent figures on the HIV epidemic in Cambodia come from 2005. It was estimated then that 1.6% of the adult population age 15-49 were infected. 45% of those were women. 16,000 Cambodians died from AIDS in 2005. (By comparison, Australia, with a population greater than Cambodia's, had less than 200 AIDS deaths in the same year.)

In Cambodia, transmission is mainly through heterosexual intercourse and vertically from mother to baby. Men who are mobile and have a little cash frequently acquire the infection from sex workers and take it home to their families. Some studies have shown that military, police and moto drivers in Phnom Penh have a high rate of infection, as do female sex workers. Recent availability of ARVs (anti-retro-viral drugs) for pregnant women has decreased the rate of transmission to their babies; many other infected people have had their health improved and life prolonged by these drugs. However, this infection is still the cause of much suffering for individuals, families and communities.



There is no known risk of infection from social contact such as talking, shaking hands or kissing, unless both people have recent cuts or moist sores on the hands (or lips if kissing).

Potential routes of HIV infection to expatriates working in Cambodia include:

- ❖ Unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected person.
- ❖ Violence or rape. Heed local advice as to which districts should be avoided, especially if alone.
- ❖ Infected blood transfusions, needles, surgical and dental instruments.
 - Any planned medical treatment involving injections, obstetric deliveries, surgical or dental procedures should be in clinics and hospitals in which you have full confidence. If there is any doubt about the standard of procedures in the hospital or clinic, evacuation to Thailand (in consultation with your insurance) is recommended.
 - All blood is tested before transfusion (at least in theory), but these tests may not detect donors with recent infections. If urgent transfusion is needed locally, consider obtaining blood from suitable donors in the expatriate community (via email and sms networks).
 - It is helpful to bring documentation of your blood group.
- ❖ Medical personnel can be infected by contaminated needle or scalpel injuries, although the risk of infection in most such events is much less than 1%. Needles must always be disposed of carefully.

- ❖ Clearing up blood, vomit or diarrhea without rubber gloves.
 - Always use rubber gloves and soak up the bulk of the spillage with sawdust, absorbent paper or cloth; these should be disposed of by burning. Clean residual stains with Methylated or Industrial Spirits or a strong solution of disinfectant.
 - Infection in this manner is very unlikely unless you have open wounds on your hands.
 - Sharing razors or tooth brushes or manicure/pedicure instruments.



Insects such as mosquitoes are not known to transmit HIV. There is a theoretical risk that flies could carry sufficient material from an infected individual with open sores to someone with recent cuts or moist sores.

Be aware that anti-viral drugs taken immediately after (within 1-2 hours of) exposure to HIV-infected body fluids will greatly decrease the chance of infection. Health workers and others at higher risk should ensure they have easy access to starting doses of such drugs. Everyone should have access to medical advice in case of some sort of accidental exposure.

A few other matters



- ❖ Get enough sleep. Days start early, so should usually finish early too. Don't despise the afternoon siesta!

- ❖ Minor skin wounds can easily become infected, so clean and cover and care for them.

- ❖ Electrical fittings are, almost without exception, unsafe and should be treated with caution.

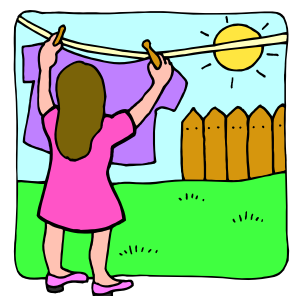


- ❖ Washing clothes

- A mildew smell could be a fungus in the clothes - use bleach or bicarbonate of soda or boil them, especially if you have baby's nappies (diapers).
- If you develop rashes, soak underwear and towels in a weak bleach solution or in bicarbonate of soda (which is less likely to rot the clothes than bleach). Be careful that your helper doesn't put the bleach directly on the clothes. The bleach will make your clothes yellow if poured directly on.
- If washing is done by hand, rinse clothes several times.

- ❖ Drying Clothes

- Clothes dry quickly even without direct sunlight. During the rainy season it is useful to have indoor lines or a clothes rack, which can be bought here.



What Do I Do To Remain Safe In Cambodia?

Embassy (or Consulate)

As you are an alien resident in a foreign country, it is wise to register with your embassy as soon as you arrive. This can usually be done online, but it's good also to know the physical location of your embassy. Most embassy websites offer advice to travellers and an email alert service to keep you informed of any new security or major health concerns.

Emergency Services

- Police: Phone 117 or 012 999 999
- Tourist Police (speak English): 023 726158
- Fire Fighters (may want payment before they attend to any fire):
Phone 118 or 023 722 555
- Ambulance (may want payment before they attend to anyone):
Phone 119 or 023 724 891

Personal Safety

The following are some guidelines to help you along the way in Cambodia. Most of these would apply in parts of your home country too – Cambodia does not have a monopoly on crime.

BE SENSIBLE, MODEST AND CAREFUL.

DO NOT

- Carry large amounts of cash on you. Take only what you need for that day or trip.
- Flaunt (seemingly-) expensive jewelry.
- Travel alone, especially late at night.
- Give your address to strangers.
- Go away for the night without letting another team member know where you are.
- Accept packages/bags/cases from strangers when travelling across borders.

DO

- Make sure another staff member knows your general whereabouts or timetable. Otherwise, it is difficult for team leaders to know when to be alarmed.
- Always carry a photocopy of your passport, your ID Card, emergency phone numbers (in your phone) and an address.

Moving Around The Country

In 1999, following the defection of many Khmer Rouge to the Government, the last of the hard-liners were captured. This effectively brought peace to the country and led to greater freedom of movement within the country. However, there are still some bandits and poorly-disciplined members of the security forces in the countryside. These armed groups prey more on the Khmer than on foreigners but, if encountered, they should not be provoked.

Always take advice before traveling. It is also essential to let others know of your itinerary.

Trips out of town should usually be in full daylight hours or by scheduled bus service. It is best not to travel in the countryside, including near Phnom Penh, after dark.

Many expatriates do travel by boat to destinations such as Kratie, Stung Treng and Siem Reap. Some embassies advise against boat travel as risks may arise from bandits, poorly maintained boats or hazards in the water - particularly in the dry season.

Travel by air within Cambodia can have its own risks. Some commercial airlines have poor standards of training and maintenance; in addition, traffic control standards have sometimes been questioned. MAF (Mission Aviation Fellowship) operates a small plane to Australian standards and flies regularly between many of the major provincial centres.



Phnom Penh

There is a need to exercise careful judgment when making decisions about places to go, how late to stay out and the company that you keep in Phnom Penh. Hard and fast rules cannot be applied, but it is possible to exercise common sense and establish some practical guidelines. Prevention is better than cure.

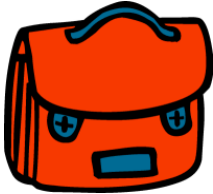
It is safe to assume that military hostilities and danger in Phnom Penh will not erupt suddenly overnight; normally a build-up of tension can be observed. On the other hand, from the advice above, you will be aware that you are living in an unsettled country with a high crime rate.

In the past, expatriates have many times been targeted by criminals; there have also been rioting and civil unrest on many occasions. At all times, avoid crowds around an accident or any event, such as the apprehension of a thief, where violence can easily erupt.

Make sure that other team members generally know your whereabouts and your planned movements. Be informed with what the Khmer are saying and doing and share this information with the team.

Day-time

During the day, traffic accidents are the biggest risk to moving around Phnom Penh. Some find motorbikes convenient, but they can be dangerous and a crash helmet should always be worn. If you plan to use a motorbike, as driver or passenger, consider bringing a quality helmet with you.



When cycling or on a motorbike, put your bag where it cannot easily be snatched by a passing rider.

Do not display large amounts of money or wear flashy and expensive jewelry.

Night-time

Walking the streets and riding motorcycle taxis or cyclos at night is dangerous and not advised. (Some moto drivers will not even go to certain parts of town after dark!) As in towns all over the world, people are sometimes robbed and/or assaulted.

If you have to travel at night, get someone to accompany you. If you take a moto, ask a driver who you know and trust. Be home by 10pm if possible, especially on Friday and Saturday, unless you are driving in reliable and safe company.

Do not go out late at night to expensive Khmer restaurants, nightclubs and karaoke bars which draw a rich crowd including off-duty police and soldiers. Be particularly careful and, if possible, avoid the vicinity of casinos, brothels and local dancing bars at night. You are safer going to establishments that cater to families or mainly expatriate clientele. Money, alcohol and guns can be a dangerous mix.



Try to avoid parking in dark side streets. When leaving a house or restaurant, check the street scene and consider asking others to walk with you to the car.

When dropping someone at their home, wait to see them safely in the door.

Roads and Driving

You will quickly discover that the roads in Phnom Penh and throughout Cambodia can be quite treacherous to negotiate, as a pedestrian or as a driver. In theory, we drive on the right-hand side of the road in Cambodia but, in practice, vehicles may come at you from any direction and may stop or turn in front of you without warning. Defensive driving is the order of the day.

Never insist on your right of way. Road rage can occur here as elsewhere and some people do carry weapons. Be polite and predictable in your driving.

Drink-driving is an offence but, like many traffic offences, often seems to go unnoticed. Drunk drivers are prevalent after mid-evening.

The streets are often poorly lit and pot-holed; bicycles, cyclos and other vehicles often have no lights. Motorbikes are often driven at night with lights turned off. It is actually illegal to have your headlights on during the day except in heavy rain or fog.

If riding a moto (as driver or passenger), protect your brain and face with a comfortable close-fitting full-face quality helmet.



Keep the petrol tank of your vehicle(s) full.

Keep the doors locked and windows closed while driving.

Always know where you are going, especially if you have to travel after dark. If your destination is unusual, tell a friend where you are going and with whom you will be.

When a VIP convoy approaches with wailing sirens, move quickly and safely to the side of the road.

Do not argue with security personnel or try to run roadblocks. Soldiers can be drunk and trigger-happy. If such a situation arises, be polite and proceed, or go back and find another route, but do not lose yourself in unfamiliar streets in the dark.

If you notice a moto or other vehicle following you in a suspicious manner, do not drive straight home. Avoid private premises and instead drive to a well-lit and guarded public place, such as a large hotel (Le Royal, Cambodiana, Intercontinental).

If you are driving outside Phnom Penh, remember that many parts of Cambodia are still littered with land mines and that it is dangerous to leave the main roads.

Accidents



Many drivers and motorcyclists seem to have few driving skills and obey few road rules. Minor traffic accidents are common and responsibility is not assigned in the way we might expect. Foreigners in cars are generally judged to be responsible, particularly if a smaller vehicle is involved. You should avoid arguments about the rights and wrongs of particular accidents in

which you have been involved as these situations have the potential to become dangerous. Try to leave the scene after talking to police if necessary. The question of compensation is best handled on the spot and quickly. Do not give out your address.

Should you be involved in a serious accident, contact a colleague ASAP.



Vehicle Theft

Because theft is common, cars should never be left unlocked. When parking in streets, even in daylight hours, every effort should be made not to leave cars or motorbikes unattended. Many install a steering lock and/or pay a guard. Theft of petrol from vehicles is common. When having a vehicle serviced, it is wise to stay and watch (or have your helper/employee do so) as mechanics may be tempted to replace good parts with bad ones.



House Security

Be alert to persons lingering by your gate. It may be best to drive on to a secure place.

Don't allow people you don't know into your house, office, or project site, especially at night. Keep everything locked.

Robbery

Do not argue with people who have a gun pointed at you. Do not resist, but give them whatever they want to take. You don't need to be afraid or panic: robbers generally want only your money or your vehicle. Your first responsibility is to avoid injury to yourself or others with you.

If you are robbed, get to a safe place as soon as possible and get help from colleagues or your embassy.

Security Forces

The Cambodian Government has tried to reduce the number of weapons in circulation. Security forces mount roadblocks to search for illegal weapons in the city but, unfortunately, the possession of guns is commonplace. Law enforcement is weak and the perpetrators of serious crimes often go unpunished. Any security incident should be reported to your Embassy and to the local police as quickly as possible.

Riots - Civil Unrest

At any time, but particularly during periods of increased political tension, stay away from political rallies, groups of armed men and the residences of political and military leaders.



Resist your curiosity and don't go near a place where people are rioting, looting, demonstrating or shooting! Even crowds around traffic accidents pose a risk.

If unrest is city-wide, stay home, inform your fellow-workers, listen to the radio and observe curfews. Check your e-mail for the latest information. If the situation of unrest continues to deteriorate:

- ❖ contact your country director
- ❖ contact your embassy
- ❖ prepare to leave the country
- ❖ withdraw all your money immediately

Phones we can call

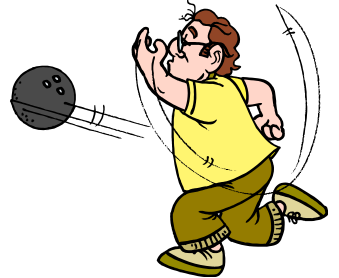
- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|
| ❖ Australian Embassy | 023 213470 | 012 812065 | 023 213477 |
| ❖ British Embassy | 023 427124 | 023 428153 | |
| ❖ Danish Embassy | 023 211484023 | 993075 | 023 987629 |
| ❖ New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok | | +66 2 254 2530 | |
| ❖ Swiss Consulate | 023 219045 | | |
| ❖ US Embassy | 023 728000 | | |

What Do I Do For Fun?

New things to do in Phnom Penh keep coming up, so watch the website:
<http://www.expats-advisory.com/cambodia/phnom-penh/places-to-go.php>

Bowling

#113, Mao Tse Toung (in Parkway Square) Tel: 012922896



Golf

Cambodia International Golf Academy
N°. 42 - 44, Street 606, Phnom Penh Tel: 023 353 368 www.cigakh.com

Theatre, Films, TV

Chaktomuk Theatre is near the Cambodiana hotel, with national dance and performances (information through the Ministry of Tourism).

The French Cultural Center and the Foreign Correspondents' Club also put on films, exhibitions or performances from time to time.

The Phnom Penh Players, amateur dramatists, put on the occasional show, which is advertised in the local newspapers.

VCD's and DVD's can be purchased from the local markets, where pirated copies of the latest blockbusters retail for \$2. The quality varies, but they can be returned if they are not good.



Cable TV is also available for \$10 a month. CNN, BBC, CNBC, ESPN, STAR Sports and other sports and movie channels come with the monthly fee. For some, it is worth it just for news!

Massage, Snooker Halls and Nightclubs

More often than not, a massage or nightclub is synonymous with prostitution. However, some establishments do have the authentic thing, such as the Juliana Hotel with Thai massage, several locations with 'Seeing Hands' massage, and many 'aroma therapy' massage places.

Snooker halls are also often located near to brothels, and those who use these clubs often gamble, with games being fixed. Generally, alcohol, girls and gambling prove a dangerous combination, and places such as the Martini Club or Manhattan Club should be avoided.

Swimming



Places to swim are rather limited and often expensive. Prices range from US \$15 for a swim at the nicer hotels to US \$1 for one time entrance fee at the Plaza in Toul Kork. There are several places in town (VIP, Billabong, Kabiki, Parkway) and also across the Vietnamese bridge (L'Imprevu and L'Elephant Blanc) where you can swim for \$5. Monthly and yearly membership fees are available but also expensive. If your children attend either of the big International Schools, they both offer swimming to families at reasonable rates.

Gyms and Exercise

Exercising in Phnom Penh is difficult and can be expensive. There are gyms, tennis courts, and basketball courts. The nicer and cleaner ones will cost a membership fee. Northbridge Club has facilities, as do many of the larger hotels, such as Le Royal, the Cambodiana, and the Intercontinental. However, they are not cheap. There are some clubs for those who want to run, play soccer, play rugby, cycle, etc.. It is best to ask around and also look in the Phnom Penh Post for advertisements of different groups.



Places Of Interest

Royal Palace - home to the Silver Pagoda (containing artifacts showing the variety and wealth of Khmer culture)

National Museum - displays of Khmer crafts and artifacts from the Angkor temples

Toul Sleung - the prison and torture museum

Killing Fields of Choeung Ek - reminders of the genocide of the Khmer Rouge. Some 17,000 people were taken from Toul Sleung and murdered in the Killing Fields, just 15km southwest of the city center. A Memorial Stupa contains skulls of those murdered in the Killing Fields.

New Market - crafts, household goods, plants and flowers, food, clothing

Olympic Market - household goods, food, clothing

Russian Market - crafts, dishes, antiques, food, clothing

Riverboat ride especially nice in the late afternoon. Rent a boat for \$10/hour at the riverfront

Eating Out

Eating out is a favorite pastime in a city where the choice of relaxation venues is fairly limited. Prices range from less than \$US1.00 in the local market stalls to in excess of US\$20 in the nicer hotels.

BEWARE! Cheap sounds good but often the water used to clean food and dishes are not clean and you can become very ill.

There are the middle range (US\$4.00 to US\$5.00) restaurants that are clean and serve good food.

There are too many restaurants to mention, but colleagues will tell you their favourite place to go.

Three main areas for restaurants are:

Brileap

Over the Japanese bridge (to the north of Phnom Penh) there is a whole selection of restaurants that are dotted along the Mekong River.

River Front

Facing the Sap River, near the Royal Palace there are numerous restaurants.

The Foreign Correspondents Club -very popular with foreigners

The Ponlok - good, clean Khmer food

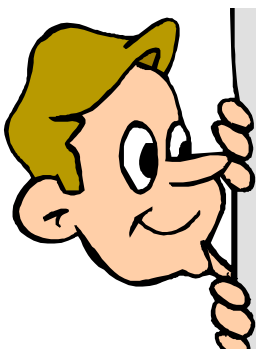
There are many, many others that keep popping up. Ask your teammates and look for ads in the paper.

Near Lucky Supermarket to the Independence Monument

In front of Lucky there are numerous stalls where chicken is grilled in front of you. If this is not what you desire, there are a variety of restaurants and patisseries.

There are many Chinese restaurants in Phnom Penh serving good food at sensible prices. They may not look very attractive from the outside (or inside) but don't be put off by that.

Have an adventure



- Get out of town and see something different.
 - Accept your Khmer friend's invitation to visit their village.
 - Run the Angkor marathon (shorter options available too!).
 - Swim the Mekong (annual event).
 - Ride a motorbike up Bokor Mountain (and down again).
 - Walk a National Park.
 - See the countryside from the air in the wet season.
 - Join the choir or players groups.
- etc. etc. etc.....

How Do I Communicate With Friends And Family?

When you come to Cambodia, one of the first things that you may want to do is to let friends and family back home know that you have arrived safely. In Phnom Penh, communication is fairly easy, though later, if you move to the provinces, they may be more of a trial.

Cambodia is developing all the time, and more and more facilities are becoming available.

Telephone

If you are initially staying in a hotel or the house of another member of staff just ask to use the phone.

To call abroad dial 001, followed by the country code (i.e. UK is 44), the town code (if it has a 0 remove this) and then the person's phone number. As a rule of thumb, calls abroad from Phnom Penh are charged at about \$1.00 per minute.

Three Types of Phone

1. Landline - telephone line to your house

Contact Angkor Telephone Company

Calling facilities within Cambodia - Installation US \$60

International and in country calling facilities - additional US \$150 deposit.

2. Shinawatra - provides a phone without a line

Is inefficient in terms of email but can be useful if you are frequently changing address (since the phone can move with you).



3. Mobile Phone

Check the coverage, monthly fee, cost of calls, local and long distance. The following companies currently provide mobile phone services:

011/ 099 Cambodia Shinawatra

015/ 016 HelloGSM - Malaysia Telecom

012/ 017/ 089/ 092 Mobitel - CamGSM

or

013 QB Cube

098 StarCell

www.camshin.com

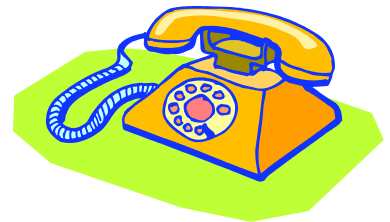
www.hello.com.kh

www.mobitel.com.kh

www.cellcard.com.kh

www.qbmore.com

www.star-cell.net



In addition, there are public phone boxes in the streets (phone cards can be bought for use with these - \$3 and \$5) and also private phone boxes (people rent out the use of their mobile phone).

Voicemail / Internet Phones

You can make an overseas call using the internet at the internet shops around town in Phnom Penh. They are legally operating the service after banning in 1996.

Email (and internet)

Email is significantly cheaper than phoning abroad. There are no free service providers, so a monthly fee is payable on email accounts.

It is also possible to access internet and email by mobile phone.

The following companies provide email and Internet facilities in Cambodia:

Angkor Data Communication Group	www.mekongnet.com.kh
AngkorNet	www.angkornet.com.kh
AZ Communication/ Online	www.online.com.kh
Cambodian Broadband Technologies	www.cb.net.kh
Camintel	www.camintel.com
Camnet	www.camnet.com.kh
CityLink	www.citylink.com.kh
Gateway Communications Ltd	www.gatewaycambodia.net
TeleSurf	www.telesurf.com.kh
WirelessIP	www.wirelessip.com.kh
Ezecom	www.ezecom.com.kh

Check the prices and options of the different companies.

An alternative to having an account is to use the internet shops.

Mail

In Cambodia there is no mail delivery to the house. It is necessary to have a PO Box address at the central post office. CCFC has a box for its team members. Your postal address will be:



c/o Christian Care For Cambodia, P.O. Box 830, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

There are no mailboxes on the street; mail can be posted only at a post office. The central post office is close to Wat Phnom. There are several smaller post offices in other areas.

Letters

There is a list of prices for postage on a signboard within the entrance hall of the post office; however the post office staff may charge more than the official price. To be confident that letters are posted, it is necessary to buy the stamps and stick them on the letters yourself. Letters left at the CCFC Office will be mailed for you by the office. Please check with the team leader as to how payment should be made.



Packages

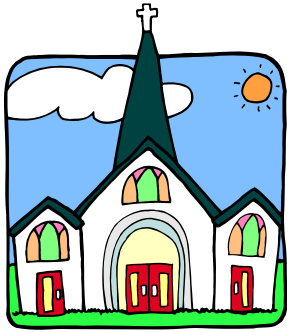
The office staff can pick up packages arriving and you can receive them at the CCFC office. Sometimes there are small charges for packages. Many people receive packages with no problems. Many still don't trust the postal service and have their packages sent to Cambodia with travellers.

Packages leaving Cambodia are less likely to arrive at their destination than letters. Postage for parcels is expensive.

Couriers

There are international couriers in Phnom Penh. If you are receiving packages this way, it is advisable for the sender to include your contact phone number as well as your address, so that the company can call and advise you of receipt. If the sender only uses the PO Box number, you will be notified by receipt of a card in your PO Box from the courier company.

The main couriers have offices in Phnom Penh (including DHL, Western Union) and their addresses can be found in the Phone Book produced by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, or other 'yellow pages' type phone books, produced and on sale at private companies.



Where Do I Attend Church?

While recognizing that each member agency of CCFC has its own requirements, CCFC encourages attendance and involvement with Khmer-speaking churches. For those intending to serve an extended period of time in Cambodia, it is desirable for them to be regularly involved in a Khmer Church fellowship.

Khmer Churches

There are a variety of Khmer churches in Phnom Penh, usually these meet in houses and most meet in the morning. These churches can be friendly, often treating the foreigner with considerable respect. If you desire to improve your Khmer and work with the national church, then the local churches are excellent. They often are less formal than the international services and can be very lengthy.

English-Speaking Churches In Phnom Penh

Anglican-Episcopalian Church

Church of Christ our Peace ; #57, Street 294. Tel: 023-362023
Sunday services: English 10AM, Khmer 8AM

International Christian Assembly of Phnom Penh (AOG)

World Vision Building, #20, Street 71
Sunday service 10:30AM

International Christian Fellowship. (ICF)

#19/21, St 330, Boeung Keng Kang 3. This is just around the corner from the Tuol Sleng entrance. Stand in the entrance with Tuol Sleng behind you and the Boddhi Tree Restaurant across the road. Turn left (North) and after around 10 metres, turn right (East) and you'll find the new centre about 40 metres down the road. It's very easy, the only building of any size in the area. The sign on the wall/fence says Phnom Penh Ecumenical Diakonia Centre. There is also an ICF sign. Sunday services 9.00 am and 4.00 pm services; both have Sunday Schools

Catholic Mass

www.catholiccambodia.org/en/mass/mass.php

in English: #20, Street 71
every Saturday at 5.00 pm (many non-Roman-Catholics attend this service)

*in French: 1788-B Ntl. Rte. #5
every first and third Saturday at 5.00 pm*

What About Transportation Around Town?

Public Transportation

Motodupe - a motorbike taxi

This is the easiest way to get around town. It is quick, convenient and reasonably safe. It is recommended people wear a helmet when using this mode of transport.

Motorbike helmets are available in Cambodia but are of inferior quality. You might like to bring one from home that meets the safety standards of your country. Many expatriates do not use a helmet because of the heat. Others use a good quality cycle helmet with air vents.

Cyclos - a three-wheel cycle

The passenger seat is in front, and the driver behind. It is common and reasonably safe, however somewhat slower than a motodupe.

Tuk-Tuk

There are many around in town. They can hold more people and it is safer than on a motodup. They wait on certain stops on road side.



Taxi

There are many taxi services that can be called. Do not expect to get a taxi on the street. They are in line for you only at the airport.

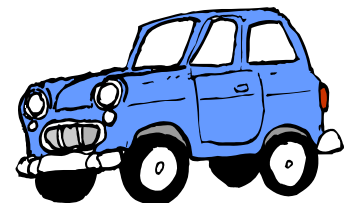
Cars, Vans, 4 x 4's, and Buses

Can be rented at various places for trips in town or up country. More information from CCFC office.

Private Transportation

Private Cars

For a second-hand family car you need to budget between US \$2,000 and 3,000. A four-wheel drive will cost US \$5,000 or more.



Be prepared to have to spend money on getting any second-hand car sorted to your satisfaction. Fortunately labor costs here are low, which make running a car somewhat cheaper. If you consider purchasing a car, talk to other staff members as there are many things to be aware of and help can be offered.

Vehicle insurance and registration are priced reasonably. CCFC team members use Forte for car insurance. There are other insurance companies too (Asia Insurance, Infinity...etc.). Check with the CCFC office for information.

Private Motorbikes

Motorbikes come in all shapes and sizes and prices. Check with the CCFC Office staff and team members who own them before buying one.



Bicycles

Bikes are plentiful, new and used, with a range of styles. Prices vary depending on the country in which the bike was made.

What About Transportation Outside Phnom Penh?

Private car

Due to various risks, including unsafe traffic conditions, some expatriates do not stray far from Phnom Penh on the roads.



Buses

Cambodia has air-con bus services to some of the larger cities in Cambodia and to Ho Chi Minh City and Bangkok. Prices are reasonable but some roads are still in poor condition.



Vans and Taxis

A seat or an entire vehicle can be purchased for trips up country. Not all roads are good and so it is best to leave in the morning to be sure you reach the provinces by dusk. Ask others where to catch a van or taxi, as various markets cater to certain provinces.

Note: A taxi or van 'seat' means different things to Khmer than Westerners. You may need to buy two seats to get what you assume would be one seat. It is customary to fit in as many people as will physically fit, sometimes even an adult between the driver and his door.

Air Travel

Air travel in-country is expensive and local airlines may not have a good safety record. Not all provinces have airports. Consider contacting MAF for information and safe flights.

Boats

Both fast and slow riverboats travel to various ports up country. Prices are higher for foreigners than Khmer. It is best to check with a travel agent to find out destinations, prices and times.



Trains

Foreigners are still advised not to take the trains due to the risk of robbery.

So.....

If you have a sense of adventure and a pioneering spirit, then travel within Cambodia is fun. If you have a delicate posterior, dislike crowds and enjoy smooth journeys on large empty freeways, then travel in Cambodia may not be something you enjoy.

Where Can I Go for Vacation In Cambodia?

Around Phnom Penh

Some people check into a local resort or hotel for a few days and turn off their phones. Even a day or two may provide a relatively cheap and easy escape and refreshing change of scenery.

Siem Reap

Cambodia's greatest tourist attraction comprises the temples of Angkor, near Siem Reap. These were once part of a much larger administrative and religious center, which lasted from the 9th to the 13th centuries. After being abandoned in the 15th century, the temples were lost to the forest, before being rediscovered by a French naturalist at the end of the 19th century. The major temples to see are Angkor Wat (depicted on the national flag), the Bayon (with its spectacular carvings) and Ta Prohm (still overrun by jungle).



Kampong Som = Sihanoukville

Kampong Som is Cambodia's main holiday resort, with beautiful beaches and good snorkeling and diving around the nearby islands. Travel from Phnom Penh to Kampong Som is easy by plane, taxi or regular bus service.

Ratanakiri

Mountainous Ratanakiri Province is best known for its isolated hill tribes. The capital of the province, Ban Lung, is a good base for visits to places such as Yak Lom Volcanic Lake (4km to the east) and several waterfalls to the west of the town.

Other areas

New areas are opening up for tourist and vacation spots and hotels and guest houses are improving; however, the roads to most destinations are still poor. Check with team members as things are constantly developing. These areas include:

Mondulkiri – hill tribes (and hills!), waterfalls, elephants. 6-10-hour drive, roads improving.



Kampong Cham – longest bridge, Cham people, rubber. Good road, 3-hour drive.

Takeo – silk weaving, Tonle Bati, Ankor Borei. 1-hour drive, poor road some of the way.

Kampot – river town, waterfalls, Kep Beach. 3-hour drive, poor road.

Battambang – killing fields, wats, river town. 8-hour drive, some poor roads, nice town.

How Can I Learn More About Cambodia?

Newspapers and Magazines

In Cambodia there are a number of useful publications that can be picked up which give the visitor a view of the country, these include:

- Cambodia Daily (A4 size photocopy newspaper with limited news)
- Phnom Penh Post (bi-weekly A3 newspaper, with out of date news)
- Visitors Guides (free for Phnom Penh, Kampong Som and Seam Reap)
- Bayon Pearnik (bi-monthly magazine)
- Phone Book produced by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (not much plot but a great set of characters!)

Books

The following is a short list of books that gives some initial background to Cambodia:

- Guide to Living in Phnom Penh (1997) Women's International Group
- Don Cormack *Killing Fields Living Fields* (1997) OMFIMARC
- Saphir Athyal (Ed) *Church in Asia Today* (1996) ACWE
- Russell Bowers, (ed), *Folk Buddhism in Southeast Asia*, (Cambodia: Training of Timothy, 2003)
- David Chandler, *A History of Cambodia*
- David Chandler, *The Khmers*



Web Pages

There are many useful pages on the Internet, where it is possible to catch up with the latest news on Cambodia, or to gather general information on the country. The following pages have useful information and/or links to other sites:

- www.everyday.com.kh (in both Khmer and English)
- www.phnompenhpost.com
- www.cambodia.gov.kh (information on Cambodian government)
- www.asiatour.com/cambodia/e-01; and [/ec-lanl3.htm](http://www.asiatour.com/cambodia/ec-lanl3.htm)
- www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/cb.html
- www.care.org/programs/country_profile.html
- www.excite.com/travel/countries/cambodia
- www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/sea/camb.htm
- www.dccam.org/Tribunal/Analysis/Begrudgement_Reconciliation.htm
- www.kambodscha-botschaft.de/buddhism.html (for Cambodian Buddhism)
- www.frizz-restaurant.com/pearls3.html (for Cambodian festivals)
- www.visit-mekong.com/cambodia/background/festivals.htm (for Cambodian festivals)
- www.embassy.org/cambodia/cambodia/constitu.htm (for Cambodian constitution)

