Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe e. V.
www.berggorilla.org

Dear Gorilla Friends,

You are certainly looking forward to visiting the gorillas. In order that this unique experience will not be spoiled, we ask you urgently to read and observe the following rules of conduct.
The number of tourists and the period of time you are allowed to stay with the gorillas are fixed so that the disturbance of the animals is minimal. **Please observe these regulations and do not try to circumvent them!** Guides and trackers will lose their jobs if they violate the rules and you would be expelled from the park.

Preparation

Please keep in mind that this might be a very long, strenuous hike – get properly prepared!

- Carry sufficient drinking water and food with you.
- Take binoculars to better observe the gorillas.
- In most locations, porters can carry your luggage to the gorillas; in places where this is not possible you are advised to take only as much luggage as you can carry yourself. Mobile phones generally should stay in your lodge.
- Ask your guide for a walking stick if you need one.
- Trousers, long sleeves and gloves protect you from nettles and thorns.
- Take rain-gear – the weather is unpredictable.
- Sun-glasses and a hat are recommended if you are sensitive to the sun.

Illness

Visitors who show signs of illness will not be allowed to visit the gorillas. **If you are sick, please do not try to hide it!** Unfortunately, human diseases can be transferred to gorillas easily, and their immune system cannot cope. This means that even viruses causing „only" a cold or flu in humans can be fatal for gorillas. Children's diseases are also extremely dangerous, therefore children younger than 15 years are not allowed to visit the gorillas.

- If you have to cough or sneeze during your visit to the gorillas, **turn away from the animals and cover nose and mouth**.
- If you have to use the toilet, please inform your guide. He will dig a hole for you which will be covered immediately after you have finished.
- Gorillas react to disturbance like provocative behaviour and approaches very sensitively; the changes in their behaviour are often visible only for experts, but they may be dangerous for their survival.

You can contribute to the conservation of gorillas by supporting our work!

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In the Forest

- Please speak **quietly** – behave like a silent guest in the gorillas' habitat. This way you'll be able to observe other animals as well.
- If the guides proceed too fast for you, ask them to walk more slowly and give them a sign if you need a short rest.
- If you come across an ants' trail, cross it quickly and stamp your feet afterwards, so that the ants will fall off your shoes (except if you are with gorillas, then you should not stamp your feet under any circumstances). Gaiters or long socks that are pulled over your trousers give some protection against ant attacks.
- Please take all litter out of the park. Litter may draw the gorillas' attention and cause infections.
- The guides will tell you when you approach the gorillas so that you can get your cameras ready. The porters will stay behind with your bags – this means you should take with you everything you require, including all your valuables.

With the Gorillas

Gorillas are wild animals who are at liberty to withdraw from visitors when they feel like it. **Please respect their dignity and behave in such a way that your presence does not create an additional risk for these animals who are under threat already!** It is particularly important that the rules are observed when you are in close proximity to the gorillas.

- The trackers cannot guarantee the good visibility of the animals.
- All visitors should stay close together. **Always stay behind the guides and at least 7 m away from the gorillas.** This distance decreases the risk that the gorillas will be disturbed or infected with human diseases.
- Eating, drinking and smoking is forbidden as long as you are close to the gorillas.
- Please do not point fingers at the gorillas.
- If plants obstruct your view, please do not try to remove them yourself. Ask a guide; he will try to clear the view as far as it does not disturb the gorillas.
- **Turn off the flashlight of your camera permanently.** It could frighten the animals.
- Avoid rushed movements.
- **Do not try to touch the gorillas!** Physical contact is dangerous for the animals because of the risk of infection and because it creates stress. It can be dangerous for you, too, if an adult gorilla misinterprets your intention. If a gorilla moves towards you, withdraw **slowly** together with your guide.
- The maximum duration of the visit is restricted to one hour. **Please observe the guides' instructions for departure without delay.** In this way you show respect for these unique creatures.

This list was designed by Berggorilla & Regenwald Direkthilfe. We would be glad if you could send us a report of your experiences with the gorilla visit. If you want to receive additional information on our activities and the gorillas' situation, please contact us.

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