

Kolkata Packing List

What to pack for Kolkata's humid streets, tram rides, and colonial-era walking routes — plus what changes if your trip lands during Durga Puja.

WHY KOLKATA PACKING IS DIFFERENT

Kolkata's climate is humid for most of the year, with a heavy monsoon from June to September and a brief, genuinely pleasant winter from December to February. The city rewards walking — College Street, the Maidan, the Victoria Memorial grounds, and the Howrah Bridge approach all involve long stretches on foot through crowds and traffic. If your dates overlap with Durga Puja (typically September–October), expect dense pandal-hopping crowds and plan for a packed bag that holds up to humidity and heavy foot traffic alike.

CLOTHING

- Lightweight, breathable cottons — humidity is constant outside the winter months
- A light rain jacket or poncho for the June–September monsoon
- Quick-dry fabrics that won't cling in humid, crowded settings
- A light sweater or shawl for the cooler December–February evenings
- Comfortable, modest clothing for visiting temples like Dakshineswar and Kalighat
- An extra change of clothes if visiting during Durga Puja pandal-hopping, since crowds and weather can both turn a day damp

FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES

- Sturdy, comfortable walking shoes for long days covering College Street, the Maidan, and colonial-era neighborhoods
- Waterproof or quick-dry sandals for monsoon-season streets, which can flood in heavy rain
- Slip-on footwear for temple visits where shoes come off at the entrance
- A compact umbrella — more practical than a poncho for sudden Kolkata downpours
- A crossbody or zip bag for navigating crowded trams, metro, and Puja-season streets
- Sunglasses for the bright, open Maidan and riverside areas

HEALTH, DOCUMENTS & TECH

- Mosquito repellent — useful especially during and after monsoon months
- Hand sanitizer and wet wipes for street-food stops and crowded transit
- Basic stomach medication, since Kolkata's street food culture is a major part of the trip
- A dry bag or waterproof phone pouch for monsoon-season outings
- Power bank for long sightseeing or Puja-night pandal-hopping
- Cash in small denominations — many older shops and street stalls remain cash-first despite wide UPI coverage

