

## **ACTION Zambia DRESS CODE**



A few general cultural considerations should be kept in mind as you pack...

Individuals coming to serve with AZ represent Christians from their country as well as reflecting on Action International Ministries. Some leeway exists; this is probably the most conservative (culturally sensitive) list. Though we try to be culturally respectful, it is also true that Zambians recognize that we are Americans (Westerners) and give us grace to not look just like them! The most important times to be conservative in dress are when serving or attending church. However, we suggest that anytime you leave your residents you should be conservative in your dress as a representative of AZ.

Some clothing may be worn at our homes that should not be worn elsewhere, but visitors should be aware that our homes are an open facility, and we receive guests all the time.

Women in Zambia (especially the poorer areas) wear long chitenges (traditional Zambian wrap around), and below knee skirts or dresses almost exclusively. Women serving with AZ will have opportunity early in the trip to buy a chitenge at the market. In other places, such as the local shopping center or on working sites loose fitting pants are acceptable for women. Capri pants for women are very popular with Westerners. Going to church all women must wear a dress or long skirt. No exceptions.

Zambian sensibilities about what part of the body should or should not be seen are different from ours.

- ✓ In general, thighs are never to be shown. Skirts and shorts should be worn long. Swimsuits are often worn with lightweight shorts. Pants should not be tight. Shorts should be long and loose and worn infrequently. Please do not bring tight or short shorts, even for running.
- ✓ Low-cut tops, or tops emphasizing the bust (close to the body rather than loose), are generally not worn by Christians. Stomachs are NEVER shown, nor emphasized.
- ✓ Low-on-the-hips pants are undesirable, because they emphasize the stomach and lower body. If your pants are lower than your belly-button you will be required to wear shirts that completely hide the fact that they are low. Please respect this guideline.

Visitors are encouraged to stick to the most conservative dress code.

In general, Zambians dress very nicely. While we tend to bring our older, less-nice clothes on missions trips, it is more in keeping with the culture to wear simple, comfortable, but medium-nice clothes. Also, Zambians tend to wear nice shoes. You will see them after a long walk, pull out a cloth and dust their shoes off.

If you need suggestions on what to pack, please feel free to contact your team leader.

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