

# TOUR/DRIVER GUIDES

## MODULE 9: RESPONSIBLE GUIDING & ETIQUETTE

### INTRODUCTION

*As a guide it is important to know how to act responsibly while on a trip with clients. If guides do not act professionally towards clients or to other staff, this can really have bad consequences. But it is not only human beings to whom it is important to behave professionally, as we will find out at the end of this module, when we are going to look at dealing professionally with (dangerous) animals.*

### OVERVIEW



### Learning Goals



#### Knowledge

- The participants will know what behavior is appropriate in and around lodges.



#### Attitude

- The participants will be attentive to behave appropriately in and around lodges.



#### Skills

- The participants are able to act appropriately in and around lodges.

SESSION 9A: Lodge Etiquette

SESSION 9B: Hosting Your Clients

SESSION 9C: National Park Etiquette & Dealing with Animals

### BEFORE YOU START, YOU NEED...

- Flipcharts
- Large paper
- Marker and pens
- Sticky notes



# SESSION 9A: Lodge Etiquette

## AGENDA



**Introduction:**  
Responsible Guiding  
(10 min)



**Lecture:** : Lodge  
Etiquette  
(40 min)



**Roleplays:** Working with  
Lodge Managers and Staff  
(40 min)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Introduction: Responsible Guiding (10 min)



Tour guides are often called the gatekeepers of a destination, as they control what tourists see and impact their perceptions of a place. That is why it is up to you as a guide to act responsibly, as this will be in your best interest as well as that of your clients and the other people in the place.

According to the World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA)'s Code of Guiding Practice, tourists guide have:

- To provide a professional service to visitors, professional in care and commitment, and professional in providing an objective understanding of the place visited, free from prejudice or propaganda.
- To ensure that as far as possible what is presented as fact is true, and that a clear distinction is made between this truth and stories, legends, traditions, or opinions.
- To act fairly and reasonable in all dealings with all those who engage the services of guides and with colleagues working in all aspects of tourism.
- To protect the reputation of tourism in their country by making every endeavor to ensure that guided groups treat with respect the environment, wildlife, sights and monuments, and also local customs and sensitivities.
- As representatives of the host country to welcome visitors and act in such a way as to bring credit to the country visited and promote it as a tourist destination.



So what do we mean by saying Responsible Guiding?

During your trip you are going to interact with many different people, from your guests, to UWA rangers, to managers and communities. Everyone you come across deserves your respect and to be dealt with in a professional manner.

Advice and examples based on four principles of responsible guiding:

- Building relationships with communities and local businesses
- Minimizing environmental impact
- Delivering meaningful, high quality experiences
- Committing to continuous learning



## Lecture: Lodge Etiquette (40 min)

As a tour/driver guide you will often stay at hotels and lodges together with your clients. This means that you will have to act responsibly and follow a certain etiquette. Even after a long day, even after working long hours, and even if you know the place as if it is your own very garden, you have to act professionally. So how do you do that?

All guides, as a minimum requirement, should communicate well, be polite, approachable, knowledgeable, professional, attentive and respectful of the environment. These basic qualities are essential to any decent tourism experience.

### Say “Thank You”

Please remember, “Please,” “Excuse me,” and “You’re welcome,” are essential marks of good manners. It does not matter if you are speaking to your clients, the lodge manager or lodge staff, you must remember the basics when it comes to manners.

### Don’t be Boastful, Arrogant or Loud

When in a lodge always exercise self-control and good taste. Your voice, your behavior and even your clothing should reflect professionalism. Please do not brag about accomplishments; a well-mannered person has no need for self-advertisement. Let your deeds speak for themselves.

It is important to remember that the lodge is not your home, and therefore how you act when in the lodge is essential. Do not kick off your shoes and put your feet on the furniture. Do not answer your phone and speak loudly. Do not sit using the WIFI in the guest areas.

No private conversation should take place with or in the presence of customers. Guides must not disturb guests in any way. No loud music, laughter or shouting is permitted.



### **Listen Before Speaking**

Respect for others is a requirement of good manners. Listening to others is a way to show respect. Be genuinely interested in others; learn their names, and encourage them to talk about themselves. Never interrupt. Look them in the eye, and listen carefully.

It is very likely that you are going to be a regular visitor to certain lodges and therefore respecting the staff and management on site will help you in ensuring the best experience for your guests.

### **Speak with Kindness and Caution**

Before speaking to others, consider what effect your words will have. Also remember the language of the body (your posture and your mannerisms) is actually more important than the language of words.

It is important that you treat the staff with respect as they are also there to offer a service to your clients. So even if something has upset you, there is a way in which to approach the situation and deal with it.

### **Do Not Criticize or Complain**

Negativity in any form is to be avoided. Ignore gossip; don't participate. If you disagree with others, do so respectfully (agree to disagree). Never ever make a scene in front of your guests or any other guests at the lodge. You only make yourself look like a fool!

### **Be Punctual**

Appreciate the value of time, yours and others. If you call ahead to make an arrival time or book for lunch,, arrive on time. If you must be late, call first. Never arrive early for a social engagement (this is fine in a business setting).

Once at the lodge ensure that you do not abandon your guests. Even though they are now hopefully being well looked after, you must keep checking in on them when you know they are going to be in the main areas. Join them for a drink before dinner to talk about the plans for the next day. It is essential to properly communicate if you are going to be late.



### Do Not Embarrass Others

Demeaning anyone with rude jokes or an unwelcome nickname is disrespectful. In conversation, never ask embarrassing questions about relationships, or ask how much was paid for something. Understanding cultural differences is essential and during your tours throughout Uganda you are going to come across many different people. NEVER bring up cultural or racial differences.

### Act and Look Your Best

Take time and care in how you present yourself – both in appearance and in manners. Once you are at the lodge it is time for you to switch off a little, but that does not mean lowering your standards. When interacting with the guests in the main areas make sure you are still dressed appropriately, this does not mean wearing your favorite football shirt or your pajamas. Pack clothes that allow you to relax, but that also look acceptable when in front of guests.

Being respectful to those who look after your client will in turn make your clients happier resulting in a better trip. This is commonly misunderstood as rude lude behavior to get what safari guides want more often than not results in the clients complaining or the lodge giving less attention to your clients.

### Other General rules

- Contact the lodge prior to arrival (either the evening before checking in or the morning of).
- This will help them prepare rooms and have lunch ready on time for your clients to ensure there are no delays to the itinerary.
- Also inform them of any special requirements your clients may have, including dietary restrictions, disabilities, favorite drinks, etc.
- After arriving at the lodge, greet management and staff together with your clients, showing some familiarity. This is important to build up a good working relationship and shows your clients that you have mutual respect for the people you work alongside.
- While the clients are being shown to the rooms, be sure to inform/confirm with the lodge of any special requirements be it dietary, mealtimes, requests for rooms to make sure all is in order. Do not do this in front of the guests as it looks unprofessional on both your side and also for the lodge. While not with clients, take note that the general guest area is for paying clients. Clients have travelled long distances and paid a lot of money to be there, so it is vital you respect all clients in this communal area even if they are not yours.
  - Do not lounge on the sofas as if it is a bed.
  - Do not put feet on any furniture.
  - Do not take off your shoes.
  - Do not have loud conversations both with other guides or on your phone.
  - Do not watch videos on your phone.
  - Do not drink alcohol.
  - Do not interrupt briefings/greetings of other clients to make any requests or ask questions.



- While around any foreign clients, speak English or a common language that everyone can understand.
- While at the lodge, respect lodge rules and regulations. These rules are there for a reason and do not only apply to the guests but to you also!
  - Do not litter.
  - Do not walk around unaccompanied.
  - Do not play loud music.
  - Do not wander off marked paths.
- If there is a complaint from the client, be sure to inform the manager in a timely manner.
  - Often the complaints are fixable if the lodge management is informed as soon as possible. If management is not informed they cannot fix it.
  - Do not cause a scene by screaming and shouting.

You must remember that the lodge can remove you from the premises if they are unhappy with your actions and attitude both in front of the guests and towards the staff.

Don't forget you are also representing the Tour Operator and if a lodge feels the need, they can ban that Tour Operator from booking guests there if they are unhappy with the guides of that company. Therefore, building up a good working relationship with the Lodges is essential



# Roleplays: Working with Lodge Managers and Staff (40min)



Ask the participants to play out the following scenarios as roleplays.

## 1. Arriving at the Lodge (one staff member, one guest & one guide)

After a long drive, you finally arrive at the lodge. Your guests are a little cranky after the long drive and just want to have a shower but the lodge staff are out to welcome you and your guests. How do you deal with this?

## 2. Dealing with a miscommunication with the manager (one guide & one manager)

On your itinerary it says that the guests have already paid for a sundowner drink at the river. However the lodge does not have this information from the Tour Operator and also has not received payment. How do you deal with it?

## 3. Dealing with a problem/complaint at the lodge (one guide, one staff member & one manager)

Your guests have come to you on the morning game drive telling you that they had no hot water in the room and they are not happy about it. Once you get back to the lodge you talk to one of the staff members about this but they are not taking your complaint/feedback

## 4. Dealing with the staff (one guide & one staff member)

You ask one of the staff members for the log-in to the guest WIFI. The staff member informs you that you are not allowed to use this as this is for guests use only. What do you do?



# SESSION 9B: Hosting Your Clients

## Learning Goals



### Knowledge

- The participants will know more about table manners.



### Attitude

- The participants become more professional by possessing the right table manners.



### Skills

- The participants will learn to act appropriately during a meal.

## AGENDA



**Lecture:** Hosting Your Clients  
(30 min)



**Exercise:** Dining Etiquette  
(60 min)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Lecture: Hosting Your Clients (30 min)



Regardless of where you are eating, proper etiquette at the table is important. Even when it's just you and your family having a meal together, you still want to set an example for your kids.

It's important to follow certain manners guidelines in both formal lodges and hotels and also backpackers.

If you are invited to have dinner with your guests, it is always a good idea to follow a few important rules:

**1. Turn up on time** - Make sure you are not late to join your guests for dinner. It is advisable to turn up 30 mins before the dinner and even join them for a drink.

**2. What to Wear** - Make sure you wear something appropriate and smart. Please don't wear nighties or clothes that are too casual. At the end of the day you are still hosting.



**3. Seating Plan** - The host or hostess will most likely show you where they would like to sit. Wait until the host sits before you do. In some cultures, a blessing will be said. Even if you don't follow the beliefs of the prayer, show respect and be silent. If the host offers a toast, lift your glass. It is not necessary to "clink" someone else's glass.

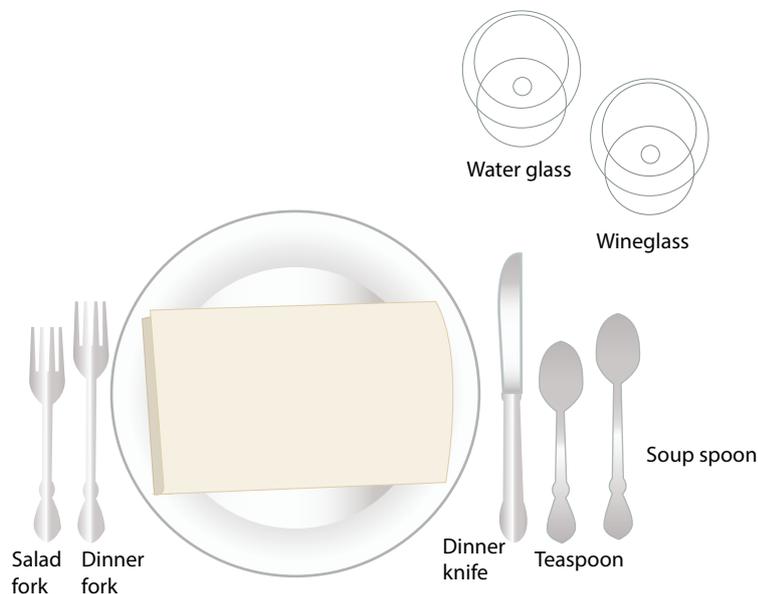
**4. Napkins** - As soon as you sit down, turn to your host or hostess and take a cue for when to begin. Once the host unfolds his or her napkin, you should remove your napkin from the table or plate, and place it on your lap. If you are dining out, you should place your napkin in your lap immediately after you sit down. Keep your napkin in your lap until you are finished eating. If you must get up at any time during the meal and plan to return, place the napkin on either side of your plate. After you are finished, place your napkin on the table to the left of your plate.

**5. When to Eat** - If you are eating out, you should wait until all the members of your group have been served before picking up your fork. At a private dinner, observe the host or hostess and pick up your fork when he or she does. However, if you are at a buffet, you may start when there are others seated at your table.

**6. What to Eat** - Most lodges have set menus for their guests. It is important that you also eat what the guests are eating and try to experience new food. The guests will feel uncomfortable if you start requesting special dishes to be made just for you when they are the ones that have invited you for dinner. If there is something you are allergic to then it is okay to request for an alternative (e.g you can't eat potatoes so you request for rice) however do not request for a totally different dish or insist on local food.

**7. Utensils** - One of the most common issues to confuse today's diners is which utensil to use for each course. A typical rule of thumb is to start with the utensil that is farthest from your plate and work your way toward the center of your place setting.

## Informal Table Setting



**8. Serving** - Never reach across the table for anything. Ask politely if the salt and pepper or other condiments can be passed to you.

**9. Are you Comfortable** - If you are not happy or comfortable to be joining your guests for dinner, that is okay. It will add to their experience if you join them as that means they enjoy your company, however if you would rather not join them then it is okay to turn down the invitation. Please do not feel obligated to join them for dinner. It is also important to not expect an invitation, please do not invite yourself to join them for dinner as they might not want that.



Here are some essential dining etiquette rules that you should follow:

- Turn off your cell phone before sitting down. It is rude to talk on your phone or text while in the company of others.
- Never talk when you have food in your mouth. That's just gross. Even if someone asks you a question, wait until you swallow before answering.
- Sit properly in your chair - don't slouch or sit inappropriately.
- Taste your food before you add salt, pepper, or other seasoning.
- Don't cut all your food before you begin eating. Cut one or two bites at a time.
- Never blow on your food. If it is hot, wait a few minutes for it to cool off.
- Some foods are meant to be eaten with your fingers. Follow the lead of the host or hostess.
- Break your bread into bite-sized pieces and butter only one bite at a time.
- Try at least one or two bites of everything on your plate, unless you are allergic to it.
- Compliment If you like the food, but don't voice your opinion if you don't.
- Use your utensils for eating, not gesturing.
- Keep your elbows off the table. Rest the hand you are not using in your lap.
- Eat slowly and pace yourself to finish at the same approximate time as the host or hostess.
- Avoid burping or making other rude sounds at the table.
- If you spill something at a restaurant, signal one of the servers to help.
- When you finish eating, leave your utensils on your plate or in your bowl.
- Never use a toothpick or dental floss at the table.
- Don't push your plate away when you are finished.





## Exercise: Dining Etiquette (60 min)

This activity can best be done during lunch or dinner so you can implement it in a real life situation.

Have a 2-course dinner organized and have everyone attend the dinner as if they were hosting guests. Set the tables as 4 or 5 people each

Next to everyone's dinner plate, place a little stack of sweets. Nobody can touch their sweets, yet. They are going to be their dessert, if they earn it.

Throughout dinner, they need to watch each other. If anyone can catch someone breaking a table manner's rule, they can have one of the offender's sweets to add to their stack. Any arguing will lead to two sweets being taken.

Everyone really has to be on guard to catch offenders, but to also govern themselves. When dinner is over everyone can enjoy the sweets they earned from having good manners.

The Rules:

1. Chew with your mouth closed
2. Put the napkin on your lap
3. Say "please" and "thank-you"
4. No reaching
5. No bodily noises (including slurping)
6. Don't start eating until everyone is seated
7. Don't leave the table until everyone is done eating
8. No elbows on the table
9. Use your utensils correctly
10. Thank the chef for dinner
11. No rude comments about the food
12. Sit on your bum / Don't tip your chair and sit up straight



# SESSION 9C: National Park Etiquette & Dealing with Animals

## Learning Goals



### Knowledge

- The participants will learn more about dangerous animals and how to deal with them.



### Attitude

- The participants will understand the importance of ethical behavior in parks.



### Skills

- The participants will learn how to respond when confronted with dangerous animals.

## AGENDA



**Brainstorm:** Ethical behavior in nature  
(30 min)



**Exercise:** How to Deal with Dangerous Animals Correctly  
(60 min)

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Brainstorm: Responsible Guiding in Parks (30 min)



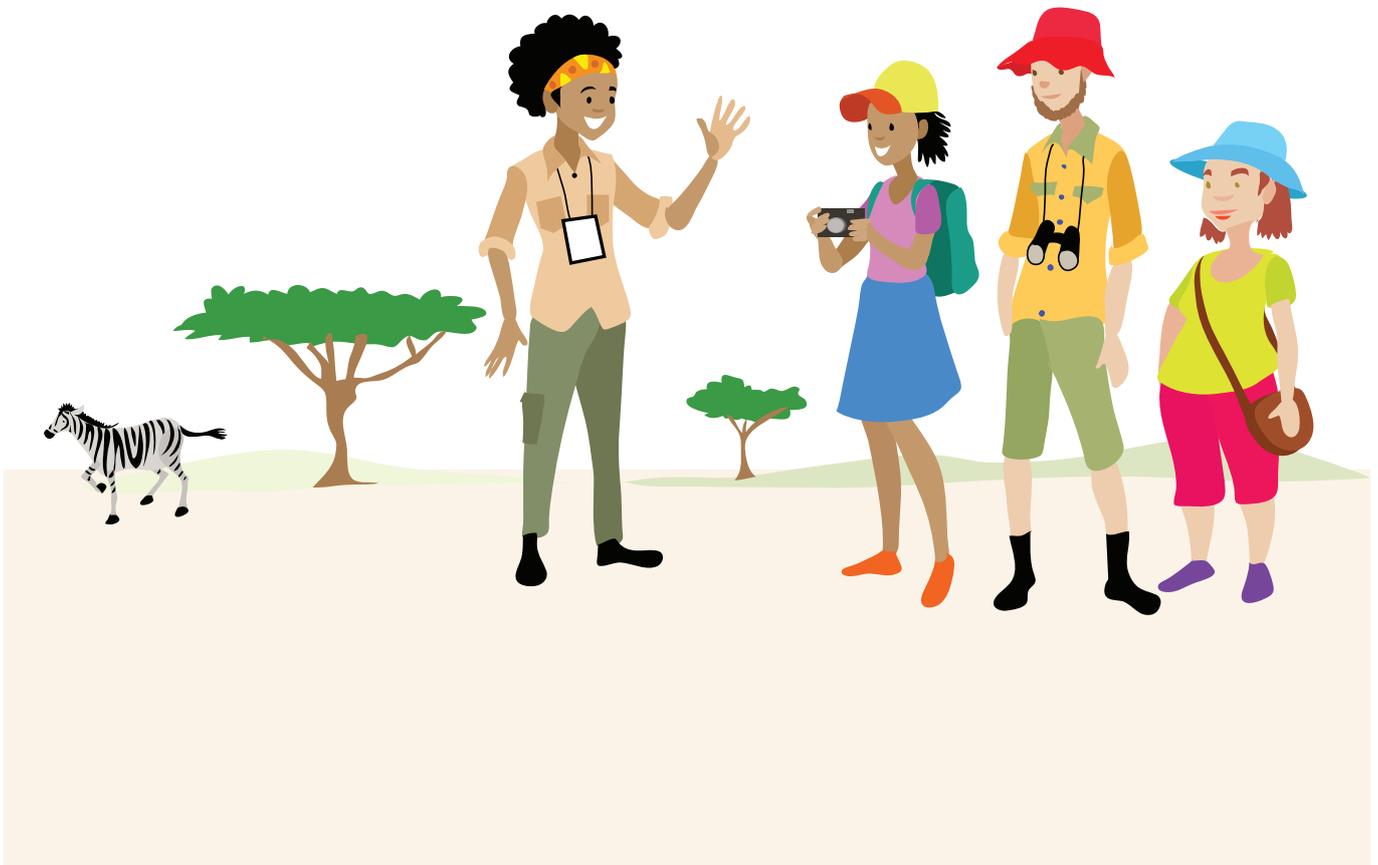
#### ? ASK:

Ask the participants in groups of 5 to brainstorm on how to operate responsibly in national parks (or in nature in general!). Let them present it to each other. If necessary, elaborate their lists with the following.

1. Stay on the tracks.
2. Do not take anything with you: no bones, no beautiful stones, no plants or mushrooms, etc.
3. Do not disturb animals by approaching too closely.
4. Don't imitate or play recordings of animal sounds - this includes not using mobile apps with bird sounds!
5. Do not clap your hands, pound the vehicle or throw objects.



6. Never feed wild animals.
7. Do not litter.
8. Do not introduce species from other environments, including seeds.
9. Do not make campfires (unless strictly following rules)
10. Do not swim or allow for swimming.
11. Do not play loud music or be noisy.
12. Always bring a flashlight and pay good attention to dangerous animals at night (including the premises of any lodge).



# Exercise: How to Deal with Dangerous Animals Correctly (60 min)



This exercise can best be done in collaboration with an expert.

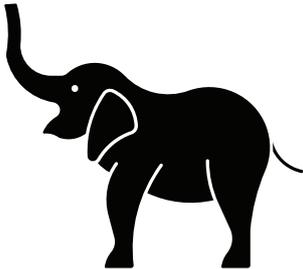
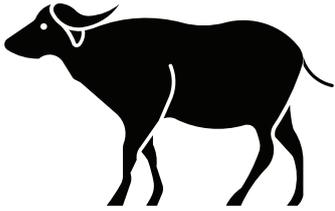
## SAY:

Introduce each of the animals listed and ask the participants to elaborate on whether they are dangerous or not, and in what cases.

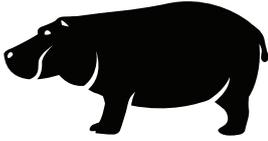
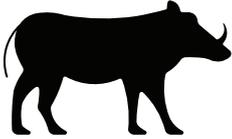
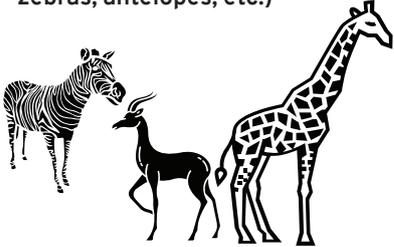
## ASK:

Ask them whether they know how to deal with them correctly. Make sure to be precise and separate fact from fiction. If unsure, feel free to use the internet to look it up.

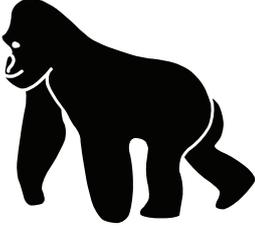
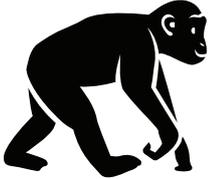
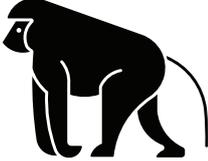
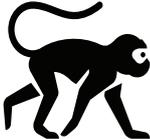
Use the following table for support.

Animal	Info	Do's and Don't
<p>Elephants</p> 	<p>Among the most dangerous animals in African national parks. They move surprisingly silently. Luckily their body language is relatively simple to read.</p>	<p>Read their body language: if an elephant is getting annoyed it will raise its head and spread its ears, often followed by a head shake.</p> <p>This is often done by older cows when they believe a vehicle is too closeby.</p> <p>You can communicate back by staying still and quiet. If this movement is followed by a few short running steps in your direction, it's time for you to move off if you can – again calmly and as slowly as possible.</p> <p>Mock charging is common. It will quickly rush forward, kick dust and stop abruptly. It often makes noise as well.</p> <p>In case of an actual charge it will silently run towards the vehicle with a curved trunk so that it can use its tusks.</p>
<p>Buffalos</p> 	<p>Buffaloes should never be approached on foot. Particularly lone buffaloes are extremely territorial and dangerous.</p> <p>The African buffalo is sometimes mistaken for a water buffalo, which is a mostly harmless, domesticated creature often found in Asia.</p> <p>However, they are not related and African buffaloes are never domesticated.</p>	<p>Do not get close to lone buffaloes as their body language is difficult to read.</p> <p>They show very few signs of aggression before they charge. They do not give warnings before they charge.</p> <p>Once they are committed, they will follow through with the intent to injure or kill whatever has offended them.</p>

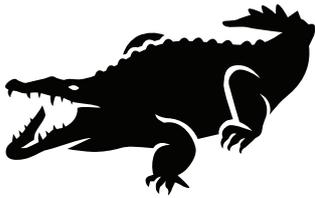
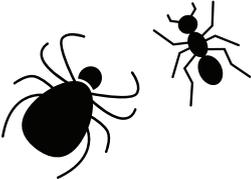


<p><b>Hippos</b></p> 	<p>During daytime hippos can generally be found in big groups in the water.</p> <p>At the end of the day they come out of the water to graze on land.</p> <p>Hippos are extremely dangerous and cause more fatalities than any other African animal - except for the mosquito!</p> <p>Don't underestimate the speed of a hippo, either on land or in water.</p>	<p>A yawning hippo is a sign of aggression and could precede an attack.</p> <p>Do not stand in between a hippo and the water.</p> <p>Stay away from calves. Mothers are extremely aggressive.</p> <p>As you can't outrun a hippo in a straight line, make sure to find cover</p>
<p><b>Warthogs</b></p> 	<p>Warthogs are common in many African parks. The ones you will find grazing near hotels and lodges are used to human beings and are generally not very dangerous - but be careful of the ones at other places.</p> <p>Any warthog can be moody and with their massive fangs they can kill people.</p>	<p>Keep a distance and don't upset them.</p> <p>Some people think warthogs are not intelligent and have a short memory as they tend to stop running abruptly. However, this is false.</p>
<p><b>Other ungulates (giraffes, zebras, antelopes, etc.)</b></p> 	<p>Most other ungulates are relatively harmless to human beings.</p> <p>However, they can become stressed and aggressive if they are approached.</p>	<p>Do not upset them.</p>
<p><b>Lions</b></p> 	<p>Although they rarely hunt actively on human beings, lions are obviously among the most dangerous animals.</p> <p>They hunt mostly at night, but can be active during daytimes as well.</p>	<p>Follow the instructions of local experts (the rangers) closely.</p> <p>Do not turn your back on lions and do not run, as this will trigger the lion to look at you as prey.</p> <p>Do not disturb lions.</p> <p>Take extra care at night, even in safari lodges.</p>
<p><b>Hyenas</b></p> 	<p>Hyenas are effective hunters and scavengers. They are pretty dangerous but have an important role to play in the ecosystem. They hunt both at night and daytime.</p>	<p>In case of aggression, do not run or lie down and. Instead, do not show your fear and make yourself as big and loud as possible.</p>
<p><b>Leopards</b></p> 	<p>Leopards are secretive creatures that mostly move at night. They can be very dangerous which is why it is important to look out for them.</p>	<p>See do's and don'ts with lions.</p>



<p><b>Gorillas</b></p> 	<p>Gorillas are generally peaceful although they (especially the silverback) can be very protective if disturbed.</p> <p>You can only come up close to groups of gorillas that have been habituated for years.</p>	<p>It is crucial to follow the exact instructions of trained specialists.</p> <p>Be quiet and don't make sudden movements. Stand still in case of a charge.</p>
<p><b>Chimpanzees</b></p> 	<p>Chimpanzees are more dynamic, noisy and aggressive compared to gorillas.</p> <p>You can only come up close to groups of chimpanzees that have been habituated for years.</p>	<p>It is crucial to follow the exact instructions of trained specialists.</p> <p>Be quiet and don't make sudden movements.</p>
<p><b>Baboons</b></p> 	<p>Baboons can be very bold and opportunistic, which is only exacerbated by people who feed them.</p> <p>Big baboons have big canines and may use them.</p>	<p>Do not feed baboons and keep a distance.</p>
<p><b>Other monkeys</b></p> 	<p>Other African monkeys are far less dangerous, although the most common monkey, the vervet, can be opportunistic at times.</p>	<p>Do not feed any monkeys.</p>
<p><b>Snakes</b></p> 	<p>Some snakes can be very dangerous, as their venom can cause severe injuries that may be fatal.</p> <p>However, the majority of snakes are not aggressive and many are not venomous.</p> <p>They have an important role to play in the ecosystem.</p>	<p>Do not disturb snakes. If you encounter a snake, allow the snake to move off. If they get aggressive, stand still and slowly back off.</p> <p>If a snake is inside your home, call in an expert to safely remove it. Do not kill it as doing so poses a big risk.</p> <p>In case of a bite, make sure to remember which snake it is. If you don't know, make sure to remember how it looked in terms of colour, shape of head, size, etc. This is essential for getting the right anti-venom. Get to a clinic as soon as possible.</p> <p>Participating in a training on how to recognize snakes and how to deal with snake bites is more than useful to any tour guide!</p>



<p><b>Crocodiles</b></p> 	<p>Crocodiles are dangerous but attacks on tourists are relatively rare.</p>	<p>Do not get near shallow waters where crocodiles are common. Keep a distance.</p>
<p><b>Tsetse flies</b></p> 	<p>Tsetse flies can not only cause painful bites, they can also cause sleeping sickness. They often follow vehicles as they mistake them for large animals.</p>	<p>Local experts will be able to tell you whether sleeping sickness is common in a specific area. Tsetse flies are attracted to blue colours, which is why many traps have that colour.</p>
<p><b>Mosquitoes</b></p> 	<p>Mosquitoes are Africa's most dangerous animals if you look at the total number of fatalities, simply because they may cause malaria, dengue or other diseases.</p>	<p>Use a mosquito net. Use repellent with DEET in it, or wear long sleeves.</p>
<p><b>Other insects</b></p> 	<p>Various other insects can cause injuries, particularly safari ants and ticks.</p>	<p>Make sure to not step in a colony of ants. Place your socks over your pants in areas that are known for safari ants. If the area is known for it, check for ticks after a safari or hike. Carry an epipen as some tourists might be allergic.</p>

