

# International Moving Checklist



## Here's Your Ultimate Moving Overseas Checklist

Moving overseas is an exciting event and could mean a new career, opportunity, or adventure. To make sure your international move goes smoothly, it's important that you have a plan in place so you can enjoy the experience. This ultimate checklist will provide you with a step-by-step plan to help make sure you have a stress-free transition across international borders.

### 1. GET THE RIGHT DOCUMENTS

The first step in any international move is researching the proper documents and making sure you have everything you need to get them. The reason this is such an important step is because it helps you save valuable time when you have each document you need in place. That means knowing where each document is and storing it securely in a place where you can easily find it before your international move.

Set aside these important documents:

- Adoption papers.
- Birth certificate.
- Child custody papers.
- Divorce papers.
- Driving license(s).
- Marriage certificate.
- Passport. You can also bring your passport card if you are traveling moving to a new country in North America.
- Social Security cards.
- "No-Claims Bonus" (NCB) record. This is a document provided for your overseas car insurance company that rewards you with a discount for making no claims on your car insurance. Make sure you have this document on hand if you plan to drive in your new location so you can prove you have a claims-free record and can receive a discount on your car insurance.
- Medical and Dental Records (including insurance cards and prescriptions). Gather copies of your health records, including your medical history, immunization records, insurance cards for your medical, dental, eye and/or disability insurance. Also, make sure you have copies of your prescriptions for your medication and disability records.
- School records/University papers. If you or your family members will attend school overseas, make sure you bring copies of your school records, including school transcripts and/or a homeschool portfolio and grade reports.
- Other insurance policies and legal documents. This includes any legal documents, such as your power of attorney, will, trust, health power of attorney, medical consent forms and any other important notarized or legal documents.

- ❑ Financial records. Make sure to bring copies of your bank statements if you don't have access to them online to prove your income, as [some countries, such as Thailand, may require you have a certain amount of money saved before you move overseas](#). Also, have copies of other important financial records, such as your income tax statements and financial statements for any business you own.
- ❑ Other travel documents. This may include your passport card or any other important travel documents you may need, such as your work permit or custom forms.

## 2. DON'T FORGET FIDO

When you're [moving your pets overseas](#), it's important to make sure you have all the necessary documents in order. You also want to make sure your pets are prepared for the move by getting them cleared for travel by your vet. Here are some steps and paperwork to take care of for your pets before your international move:

- ❑ Verify requirements. Before you head overseas, make sure you verify the new country's requirements for moving your pets. Make sure your pet is allowed to come into the country. Some countries, such as [Australia](#) and [New Zealand](#), restrict the importation of certain pets, such as birds, ferrets and the American pit bull terrier. Also, some countries require immunizations and clearance within a certain time frame before your pet is allowed to enter the country. Your pet may require quarantine depending on the country you move to and its live animal importation laws.
- ❑ Immunization records. Gather all of your pet's shot records together before your international move. You'll need it to prove your pet's immunization history. Make copies for the international moving companies that will also coordinate your pet's overseas move.
- ❑ Health certificate. Your veterinarian can provide you with a veterinarian international health certificate.
- ❑ Get a pet carrier. Whether your pet is traveling by air or sea, you'll need a proper pet carrier to transport your furry friend. Your airline may require a pet carrier, so make sure you check with your airline's restrictions and requirements before well in advance. Also, pick up one that's [IATA-approved](#) so you can avoid possible delays.

## 3. GET A 3-MONTH START

Now that you know what documents you should have in order, it's time to establish deadlines to accomplish the most important tasks. If possible, give yourself a three-month head start and get these tasks completed.

- ❑ Decide on a timeline. If you're moving your family or loved ones overseas, it's important to decide when everyone is moving. Consider your budget and schedules to determine if it makes sense to move everyone at the same time or to settle in your new home before the rest of the family comes. You may require time to get familiar with the new environment along with work or everyone's schedule may not allow for the change. Also, ensure you take the time to map out a timeline for completing each task, including considering the length of time required to complete the task. For example, you may need more time than you think for the approval process for moving your pets, so budget your time wisely.
- ❑ Start Saving. If you haven't already, start setting aside extra funds for your international move. It can serve as an emergency fund should you need to take care of any last-minute expenses.
- ❑ Review tax obligations. Just because you move across international borders doesn't mean you're removed from your tax obligations. If you are a United States citizen or permanent resident,

you are expected to pay taxes no matter what country you move to or work in. The good news is that there may be provisions to help lower your tax liabilities. For example, you may be eligible to deduct up to \$104,100 for the 2018 tax year under the [Foreign Earned Income Exclusion](#) tax deduction. There are also tax provisions for homes you own or rent overseas, too. Make sure you make an appointment with your tax professional to consider your tax obligations before you go overseas.

- Consider property insurance. If you are purchasing a home overseas, it's crucial to buy property insurance. Also, consider getting rental insurance to ensure your belongings in the home are covered from damage if you're renting your home.
- Think about storage. If you're handling storing your belongings on your own, make sure to research the costs.
- Focus on healthcare. Healthcare can become a major unexpected expense in a new country if you're not properly prepared. Make sure to do your research and contact your current provider for advice based on the country you're moving to and any current healthcare needs you have. You may opt to purchase international private medical health insurance to cover you and your family if you're not receiving healthcare benefits from your employer.
- Don't overlook additional insurance. Think about other insurance, such as travel insurance and life insurance, so you can ensure you're covered on all ends.
- Schedule your insurance and appointments. Book any medical or dental checkups you or your family needs now. Also, set up your insurance coverage once you select what you need. Some insurance plans require you make your selection before a certain date in the month so that it's valid for when you need it. So, make sure you verify cut-off times and procedures.
- Research and book temporary housing. You may need some extra time to settle in your new home overseas before your belongings arrive. So, make sure to research potential places to stay on a short-term basis and book it early so you don't risk losing out on a deal or having no place to stay.
- Think about your housing. Consider how long you will be at the new location and decide whether or not it is best to continue to rent your current home, sell it or cancel your apartment lease.
- Apply for your visa and passport. Now is the time to take care of the application procedure for your passport and visas. The time it takes to get a visa approved depends on the country, so double-check the deadlines for where you're going. Also, renew your passport if you haven't already so you can avoid paying additional to expedite the application process.
- Gather your documents. Get copies of the original documents listed above, such as your passport and medical records. Also, request any necessary school documents or records if you have children.
- Plan your visit. If you have the time and budget, schedule your flights for a pre-move visit. This makes it easy for you to scout schools and a place to live in person.
- Research schools. If you're planning to attend school or have school-aged children, it's time to research schools in the area of your new home abroad. Start by finding out the country's requirements for education so you can ensure you're in compliance. Also, verify that your location has reliable Internet service if you're planning to attend school online.
- Set up an in-home survey with your mover. Reputable international moving companies will review the moving process with you and determine what they can and cannot move from your home. They may also be able to spot items

that require moving, such as items in your garage or basement. Here's a useful [international moving infographic](#) that illustrates what you can expect from your international mover.

#### 4. RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL MOVING COMPANIES

Before you make your big move, it's important to enlist the help of professional [international moving companies](#) that have experience with the moving process and regulations for the country you plan to reside in. That's because laws are different for each country. It's critical to research the international companies you plan to use before you make a commitment.

Here are some tips for [selecting an international mover](#) who is right for you:

- Compare Three or More International Moving Companies. Compare quotes from at least three overseas moving companies. Determine the packing materials they use and what their full-package services cover.
- Look at their licenses. A reputable international mover isn't afraid to show you their license. Consider using international moving companies that have a license to transport your belonging across seas with the [Federal Maritime Commission](#) or a [FIDI](#) license.
- Find out who moves your items. Knowing who will be moving your property is important. You don't want to work with any company with a poor history of theft from hired contractors. Inquire about who the company hires to move your valuables. Find out about its vetting process, including whether or not it requires any background checks.
- Consider storage. If you need storage, find out if the international moving companies you're considering offer this service and the costs for storage.
- Select your mover. After conducting thorough research of the overseas moving companies,

pick the international mover that best meets your needs. Make sure to do this at least three months in advance. [Overseas moving companies](#) can book quickly, especially during high-season months in the summer.

#### 5. KNOW WHO TO NOTIFY

You will need to update a few organizations or people before you move. Here are some common ones to consider:

- The U.S. Postal Service.
- Your bank.
- The United States Embassy.
- Utilities companies (Electric, Gas, Solar)
- Social Security Administration.
- Tax Agencies (IRS/Tax agencies abroad).
- Insurance providers.
- Your employer.
- Friends and family.
- Your landlord/realtor.

#### 6. TAKE ON THESE IMPORTANT TASKS ONE MONTH BEFORE YOUR INTERNATIONAL MOVE

With just one month left before your big move, there are some tasks you definitely want to handle. Don't overlook these very important tasks:

- Cancel your subscriptions and inapplicable insurance policies. This is the time to cancel any service you don't need or won't be able to use when you move. That includes any streaming services, such as Netflix or Hulu. Cancel insurance policies that won't apply abroad. Also, don't forget to cancel your cable so you can avoid being charged in advance for the upcoming month of service.
- Set up mail forwarding. Also, update important parties about your new mailing address, such as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and your bank.



- Take care of financial tasks. Determine if your bank has a branch in the new country. If not, make sure you research and sign up for a bank account that can accept your paychecks or direct deposits. Get the routing and bank account information so you don't delay getting paid.
- Request your NCB. Have your car insurance company prepare your No Claims Bonus (NCB) statement.
- Have your medical appointments. Make sure you are checking off your appointments to see your dentist, eye doctor, therapist and/or medical doctor. Ask about the medications you'll need including the generic names of the medication. Also, arrange to get the original documents of your medical history transferred and/or get copies.
- Sort and donate. Sort through any clothes, art, shoes and any other belongings you have and decide what you're bringing with you. Anything you plan to leave behind or don't need should be stored, sold or donated.
- Visit your new location. If you have time, take a trip to your new location across seas. You can preview the neighborhood and visit popular destinations. Also, visit any new schools you or your family members will attend and the location of your new job or business.

## 7. CONTACT THE INTERNATIONAL MOVERS

The international movers you contracted with are your key coordinators and helpers who can assist you with having an easy transition to your new home abroad. Make sure to contact them before your [overseas move](#) and take care of these important steps:

- Confirm your appointments. At least two to three weeks before you leave, reach out to your [international move coordinator](#) and review the move in detail. This includes confirming any applicable permit

bookings for parking and elevator entry as well as appointment confirmations.

- Review your final contract. Go over any minor details in your contract, including the name of the company or contracted international movers that are being used.
- Verify document receipts. Make sure all necessary documents are received.

## 8. KNOW WHAT TO TAKE CARE OF TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Here are some important tasks to handle two weeks before your international move:

- Give friends and family your new address. This is the time to share your new address with your friends and family so they can send you mail or know where to find you when they visit. This is also the time to let any friends and family members who you may have not told about your move know that you're going to live abroad. Make sure to notify them so they have time to say their "goodbyes" without feeling rushed or so that you don't feel overwhelmed.
- Set up bank account transfers. Contact your bank so you can ensure your account transfers properly.
- Visit your vet. Take your pets to the vet for any required immunizations, such as rabies or booster shots. Also, make sure you have your pets checked out to ensure they can safely travel across seas.

## 9. MAKE LAST-MINUTE ARRANGEMENTS ONE WEEK BEFORE YOU GO

With just one week left in the moving process, you'll likely come across a few last-minute arrangements to make and different tasks to handle. Take care of these tasks the week before your international move:

- Get cash. Withdraw cash or purchase traveler's checks so you have access to money instantly.

- Contact your card companies. If you plan to use your credit or debit cards, make sure you contact the card company to let them know you are moving overseas so you can ensure your purchases are authorized.
- Confirm your flight. Review your departure times and luggage restrictions for your flight. If you possible, check into your flight later during this week so you can save time with boarding.
- Confirm your appointments with your international movers. Review your appointment time and confirm it with your international movers to avoid rescheduling it.
- Take care of any uncompleted tasks. Anything that you haven't already handled should be taken care of this week. This is the time to review this Moving Overseas checklist again and make sure you take care of everything.
- Pack. Pack your belongings, including clothes and shoes you plan to wear on your trip. Label your items using a color-coded system. If you have children or pets, pack their belongings last so you don't miss any crucial items.
- Celebrate. Take time to celebrate your move with friends and family during your last week.

## 10. GET READY FOR MOVING DAY

Before you move, make sure you pack some essentials that will keep you cozy on your plane ride. You also want to ensure you have everything you need, so make sure to review your packing list. Consider packing the following:

- A blanket.
- Your valuables.
- Toys or games for children.
- Daily medications.
- Carry-on bag.
- Pajamas.

- Extra socks and underwear.
- Books or other reading material.
- Your phone.
- Headphones.
- A sleeping mask.
- Earplugs.
- Gum.

## 11. IT'S TIME TO MOVE!

It's finally time to move, so it's important to know what to expect on your moving day. You should also know what to check for, too. Handle these tasks, and you'll be on your way to a smooth moving day:

- Check for your international movers. Your international movers should have an easily identifiable vehicle, so make sure to check for IDs, company logos and licenses to make sure you are working with the right people.
- Know what you shouldn't have your international movers pack. If you have any hazardous materials, moving day is not the day to tell your international movers. Packing of these materials should always be arranged in advance to ensure proper shipping and handling. Also, avoid having your international movers pack your perfume, jewelry, food, money or medication to avoid any potential issues.
- Unlock your mobile phone. Make sure your [cell phone is unlocked and get a SIM card when you arrive in the new country](#) for cheaper rates.
- Sign on the dotted line. Review the fine print of any documents before signing them.

## 12. MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Congratulations! You're finally in your new home. But before you settle in completely, make sure you take the necessary steps to unpack your items carefully. You also want to get to know your new neighborhood by exploring it.



- Verify all items were unpacked. Start by unpacking your most valuable positions first, such as your children's birth certificates and medical records. Double-check that all the important documents listed on the Moving Overseas checklist are present.
- Take a home tour. If you have children or pets, it's a great time to take a tour of your new home so they can get familiar with it.
- Be a neighborhood explorer. If you haven't already, it's definitely time to get out of the home and explore your new environment. Get to know your neighborhood by exploring the local shops and farmer's markets.
- Meet your neighbors. Get to know who you're living next to and arrange to meet your neighbors. It's a great way to get comfortable and make new friends.
- Relax. You deserve to take a few moments to yourself after a big international move. Make time for rest and relaxation and enjoy your new home.

#### MAKE YOUR MOVE WITH TRUSTED INTERNATIONAL MOVERS

As one of the top international moving companies, you can count on Suddath to help make your overseas move an unforgettable experience thanks to its team of moving experts and vetted international movers. Keep this 'Moving Overseas' checklist handy so you can make your move smooth.

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