

The Essential Guide to Moving to another Country

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Abstract

Moving involves a lot of planning and preparation and steps you have to take to get everything done. But when it comes to moving internationally, there are even more things to consider. Visas, job-hunting, health care and other support systems need to be in place when you make the move from a country you have called home and are familiar with to a new place. This guide will show you all you need to do to prepare for a move overseas whether that's moving across a country border or to a place overseas.

1.0 Introduction

Moving overseas is often a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and one that takes careful consideration. Before you lose yourself in the excitement of being in a new place with a different culture and language, it's important to get realistic first. If you're thinking of moving to another country, learn how to plan your move, organise logistics and gather the patience and determination to see through your next journey.

The Gold Coast is an enthralling coastal city in Queensland, Australia that hosts beautiful beaches, a diverse range of socio-economic developments, high-standard lifestyle, top-notch infrastructural facilities and tons of commercial property development projects. That's the reason why people all around the world prefer relocating to this beautiful harbour city.

If you are among those who are planning for relocation but don't know how to get into the process, then this is the right place for you. Whether you are moving from Gold Coast to overseas or relocating to this city from any country, you have to ensure the safety of your possessions. With the support of experienced Removalists Gold Coast, you can take a sense of relief and hand over your belongings for safe relocation.

But apart from this, there are many things that you need to know while moving overseas. Below are the tips that will help you in adjusting to the new country with ease.

Here we go!

➤ **Nail Down Your Employment**

Finding a job overseas is possible, but searching for international employment can be frustrating due to the distance, change in customs and more. Thankfully, there are many ways to go about it, including contacting an international recruiter, requesting a company transfer or telecommute, posting on a job board or getting a remote role. You can also find an international job before you move by looking at competitors in your new location or simply calling a professional employment service to help do the work for you.

It's equally as important to learn how to negotiate a job contract. Your new location likely has a different cost of living, so it's worthwhile to look at the average salaries for various job positions and companies in your new area. Ensure that you specify your salary, living expenses, any currency changes, and more. You don't want to forget about your benefits package, if available, either. Ask about vacation days, sick time, and other coverage. Getting a work visa or a permit may be a requirement and can be hard to obtain. To simplify the process, apply for any needed permits before you leave.

➤ **Move Your Family and Pets**

Moving overseas may mean moving your family, too. Make a smooth transition for all your family members, including the four-legged kind. First, you can look for a great school for your children by doing some homework on the type of school you're looking for, whether state, private, or international. Taking your pet to another country also comes with its own special challenges. Be sure to contact the country's consulate and ask about vaccinations, restrictions, quarantine, and more.

➤ **Pack and Relocate Easily**

Once you know you're moving, consider what to take with you and how to pack and ship your things safely. For an international move, your household goods can be transferred by air and sea although the latter is a longer process. Consider the options by looking at cost and time.

Scaling down as much as possible will be a lot easier in the long run, though permanent moves should include essential items, things with sentimental value and important documents. Anything that can be easily replaced for a low cost can possibly be donated or sold before your move. Before relocating, consider big decisions to make like shipping your car or not. Weigh the option of buying a new car versus bringing yours with you. For example, you will want to think about the associated moving costs, if you can find the car you want in your new country or if you'll need it at all (a big city often offers public transportation.) If you decide to bring it, get quotes from moving companies that provide port-to-port service.

➤ **Organise Practical Matters**

Moving to another country means moving into a new environment where everyday living matters can temporarily become a bit more complicated. Learn how to take care of your health care, banking and other key needs before you move. Moving to another country also often results in financial changes when it comes to new costs, international and local taxes and wills and insurance. Get your ducks in a row so you can have peace of mind that all of your accounting is together.

➤ **Prepare for a Culture Change**

Moving to another country often means adapting to a new culture and a new way of life. While most of us have experienced culture shock at one time or another, it is not something to take lightly. Find out what culture shock is, its signs and symptoms and what you can do to prepare for the change before you leave your home country. Get used to your new home by making your place cozy with artwork from home and framed pictures of family members.

2.0 Things Every Expat Needs To Do before Moving Abroad

Moving abroad is equal parts exhilarating and terrifying. You're leaving behind family and friends to start a new adventure. With that in mind, it's best to start things off on the right foot.

Being an expat isn't always easy. Make sure you sort these items out before moving away.

➤ **Establish an official mailing address.**

Depending what country you move to, getting mail can be difficult. Personally, I seem to have a predilection for living in countries where letters only have a 50% chance of reaching their destination.

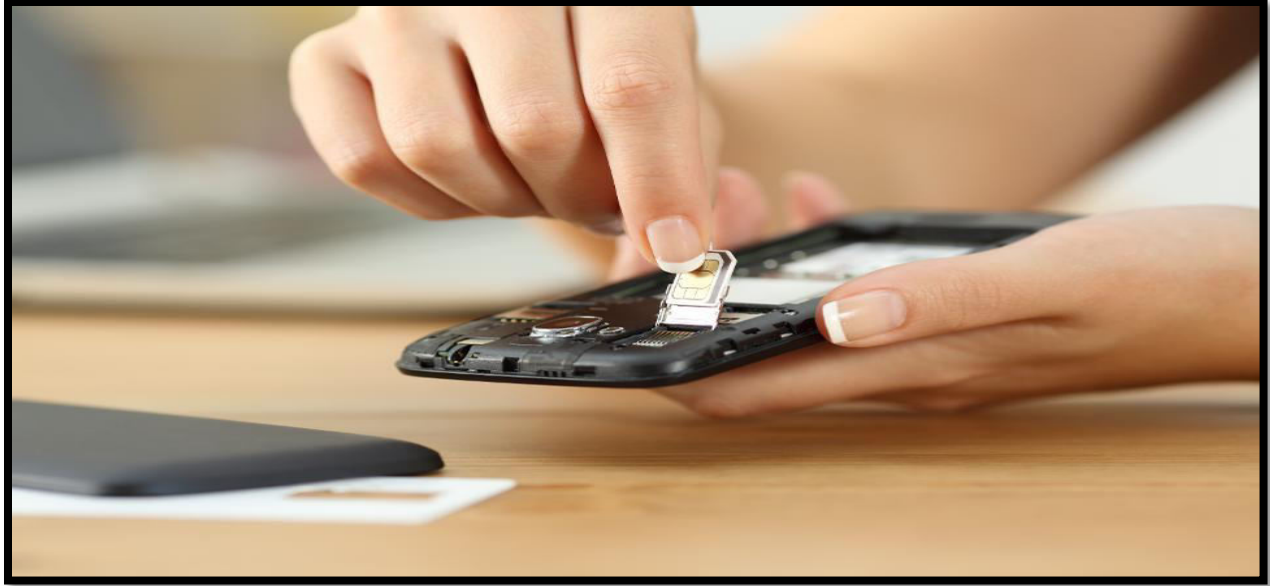


Ask a trusted friend or family member to be your official mailbox while you are away. Even if you are living abroad in a country where mail delivery is dependable, it is important to have a mailing address. Many companies, not to mention government services, require one, even if it is not your official residence.

Although you could just use a Post Office box, having an actual person who can check envelopes can be helpful if you need an immediate response.

➤ **Unlock your cell phone.**

If you are traveling long term or moving abroad, it is always cheaper to buy a local SIM and buy credit for your phone rather than paying the hefty fees for roaming.



➤ **Double check visa requirements.**

If you're moving abroad for work, your company is likely sorting out your residency, but it still helps to know exact regulations. I've been hassled at airports en route to Lebanon and even the Dominican Republic because the attendant wasn't sure of the requirements.



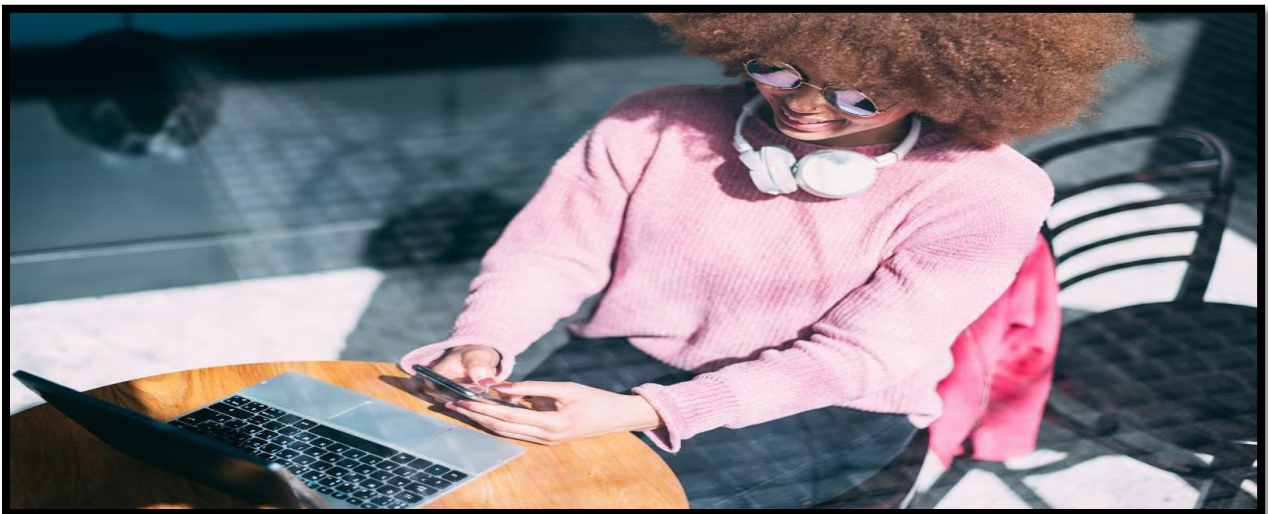
➤ **Never rent an apartment overseas without seeing it first.**

Saying that there are "so many bad stories" around renting apartments before arrival, Liz Carlson, travel blogger behind Young Adventuress, recommends staying at a hotel or even a short-term airbnb while scouring the local real estate market. You'll have a better idea of what neighborhood you're interested in and will avoid possibly being overcharged.



- **Set your two-factor authentications to your new phone number or, if possible, your email.**

Don't accidentally lock yourself out of your social media accounts upon arrival. If you log into your Facebook FB -2.97% or Gmail account from a new country, it can off an internal security alert. Most platforms now have two-factor authentication (which is great for travelers), so they will send an email or text to the number listed to confirm your identity. Make sure your authentication is linked to an email address, or if available, your new local number.



- **Get a multi-country adapter.**

This is non-negotiable. Although if you are living in a country for a long time it is better to have a convertor specifically for that place, it helps to have at least one adapter that can do it all.



- **Stock up on products you love + know you won't be able to get anywhere else.**

Although living abroad is all about new experiences, sometimes there are things that you absolutely cannot live without. That's ok.



Personally, I'm obsessed with chunky, salted peanut butter and have been known to pack a jar or three in my luggage.

- **Tell your bank you are leaving. Then, tell them again.**

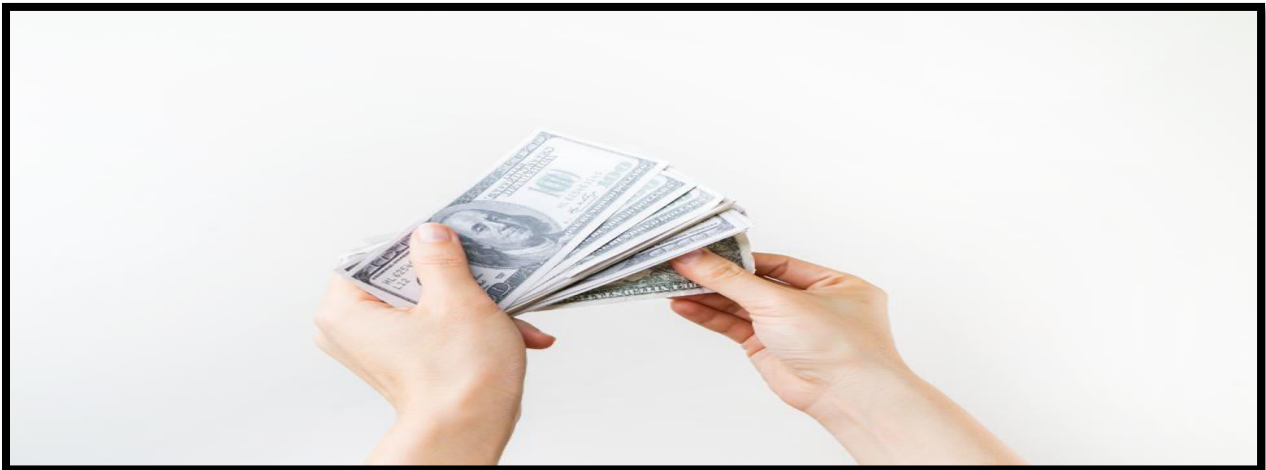
Make sure to tell all your various credit cards and debit cards that you are moving abroad. I've found that sometimes my bank will put an alert on one card and not the other, so it

really helps to call the bank directly and speak with someone. There's nothing worse than getting locked out of your account just after moving to a foreign country.



➤ **Keep a stash of dollars in case of emergencies.**

Things happen. And when things happen when you're living abroad, you can quickly realize you don't have a safety net.



Make sure to always have a small stash of cash so that no matter what, you have some money. I've dipped into mine when an ATM ate my debit card and I had to wait a month for a new one to arrive.

Since dollars are still a preferable currency globally, you'll always be able to exchange your wad of cash. The most important thing about this fund is to not touch it unless there is an absolute emergency.

- **Make sure you have a card with no foreign transaction fees.**

I've said this before, and I'll probably say it again, but spending 2% - 5% more per charge while you're living abroad is crazy.



- **Get a yellow fever card in case you want to travel somewhere that requires this vaccination.**

Depending on where you're moving, it might be worth it to load up on certain shots, even if the exact country you are living in does not require that vaccination. See what countries in your region require and plan accordingly.

3.0 How to Prepare For a Move Overseas

Whether you have found your true love halfway around the world, or some really promising job opportunities in a foreign country, a perfect retirement destination overseas, or an educational facility that offers great possibilities in your chosen area of studies, moving abroad is a huge step in your life that requires lots of careful planning and proper preparation. There are many important things to consider, consequential decisions to make, and arduous tasks to complete before moving abroad in order to ensure the successful start of your new life in another country. You will need about six months to prepare well for your moving adventure, so you are strongly recommended to start organizing the various aspects of the relocation process as soon as your decision to move abroad becomes a certain fact.

❖ What to consider when moving abroad

The more you know about your future country, the better. So, your first and foremost task is to research your new area and gather all the relevant information you can find.



- **Safety issues** – regardless of your reasons to move abroad, safety should be your primary concern. So, it is a good idea to check the State Department website for useful safety information, to sign up for the State Department’s Smart Traveler Enrollment Program so that you can stay informed and connected in case of emergencies, to follow your future country’s embassy on Twitter for up-to-date information about the current conditions in the region, etc.;
- **Climate** – sudden changes in your environment may result in allergies and other health issues, so if the temperatures and the humidity levels in your new surroundings are going to differ drastically from what you are used to, you need to prepare well – get prophylactic vaccinations, find effective allergy meds, buy appropriate clothes and equipment, etc.;
- **Employment opportunities** – you need to get familiar with the business environment in your new country and make sure that your skills and professional expertise are in high demand there, so you will be able to easily find a profitable occupation in the area;
- **Housing options** – unless you have friends in your new country who can help you settle in, you should contact trustworthy local real estate agencies to assist you in your search of appropriate living accommodations in the area. Otherwise, you will have to stay at a hotel until you get to know your new surroundings and find a suitable residence;

- **Cost of living** – the costs of utilities, transportation, medical care, education, food, clothing, entertainment, and other relevant amenities in your new country should also be taken into account when preparing for moving abroad;
- **Cultural issues** – when moving to another country, you will encounter different points of view, attitudes, and social norms. You need to be open-minded, tolerant, and receptive when it comes to the unique traditions and cultural practices in your new society. Besides, have in mind that some of the products and services you have been using on a daily basis in your homeland may not be available in your new country. Even the measurement system and the time zones are likely to be different, so do your homework well and get prepared for the peculiarities of your new life ;
- **Local language** – not understanding the local language will be the greatest challenge you are going to face. So, take some language classes beforehand to make your first days in your new country more manageable and make it your top priority to learn the language really well soon after your relocation – being able to communicate freely will open up new doors for you, will speed up the adaptation process, and will allow you to become a part of the society.

One final piece of advice: look for expatriate assistance. People from your homeland who have already relocated and settled in your chosen new country are sure to help you with inside information and reliable recommendations.

❖ **Things to do before moving to another country**

Take a closer look at our comprehensive **moving abroad checklist** – it will help you prepare well for your international move.

Moving Overseas Checklist

➤ **Assess your finances**

Assess your financial situation to make sure that your savings will be sufficient to cover all the expenses for moving abroad. You need to provide for:

- Fees for issuing visas and other legal clearances;
- Long-distance shipping of your possessions – you will need the professional assistance of trustworthy and affordable international movers to help you move to your new country;
- Travel expenses – plane tickets won't be cheap if you are flying half way around the globe;
- Accommodation costs – you will have to pay a security deposit and the rent for the first month if you are moving into a rented property, or to pay for your stay at a hotel;

- Costs of living for the first several months – experts recommend having at least seven months (preferably more) of living expenses in hand when moving abroad;
- Emergency funds – you need to set aside some money for unexpected extra charges, medical bills, return trips home in case of emergency, etc.

Have in mind that banking clearances and arrangements can take some time to be confirmed and instituted, so you should choose a bank and take care of the necessary paperwork before you actually move. Don't forget to check which credit cards you can use internationally without incurring fees and let your credit card companies know you'll be moving overseas. It is also very important to talk to the IRS to figure out your tax situation. If you are retiring to a foreign country, you also need to make the necessary arrangements to be able to receive your pension without any problems.

➤ **Prepare your paperwork**

Paperwork requirements vary widely from one country to the next, so you should contact the embassy of your future country and request all the relevant information you need to put your documents in order.

- Apply for a visa and a work permit (if necessary);
- Get proper insurance;
- Make sure you have all personal documents with you – birth certificates, marriage certificates, medical records, degree certificates, bank statements, references, statement of services, police checks, etc.;
- Update the necessary documents – passports, driver's license, car registration and insurance, etc.;
- Make copies of all your legal documents – email yourself scanned copies of all your important documents together with hotline numbers to call in case of theft or loss;
- Change your address and have your mail forwarded.

Have in mind that all the procedures for issuing and/or updating documents take time, so start early enough.

➤ **Address health issues**

Research your new country's health and medical regulations and visit your doctor to make sure you have the right shots and all the required medical documents:

- Get a record of all your immunizations (you may also need some new vaccinations, depending on your destination country);
- Retrieve all your medical records and get international health insurance policy;

- Check if you will be able to get your prescription medicines in your new area (have in mind that some drugs are considered illicit in certain countries) and make the corresponding arrangements to receive refills from your homeland, to replace the medications with similar ones that are available (and legal) in your future country, or whatever is appropriate in your case;
- Provide back-ups for eyeglasses, contact lenses, medical appliances, etc. that might be difficult to replace before you have learned your way around in your new surroundings.

It is also a good idea to learn the whereabouts of expat medical centers and approved clinics in your new area before your relocation to ensure your peace of mind and to be able to take quick and adequate measures if you get sick or injured.

➤ **Plan the moving procedure**

If you plan to return home after a couple of years abroad, you'll probably find it more convenient and more affordable to take only some clothes and other personal items you can't do without and put the rest of your belongings in storage. If you are moving to a foreign country for good, however, you'll have to ship your cherished possessions to your new home.

- **Arrange shipment** – finding a reliable moving company is key to organizing a successful international move. Research your options with great care and choose the company that best suits your needs and requirements, as well as your available budget. Make sure you are dealing with licensed and experienced movers who will organize the shipment of your items in an efficient and trouble-free manner and book their services as early as possible;
- **Sort out and pack your items** – moving large furniture and household appliances overseas is usually not worth the money and the hassle (especially if your future country uses 220V voltage system). You will be able to get what you need when you arrive at your final destination. Take only items of high monetary or sentimental value, or items that will be difficult to find in your new area. Pack them with utmost care as they are going to travel a great distance and will be loaded and unloaded several times. Make sure to bring along useful electronics, clothing, and personal essentials. Make sure the clothes you have packed will be appropriate for the weather conditions in your new country and for your new lifestyle (you need to follow the dress code established in your new area);
- **Plan your trip** – research travel sites for cheap airfare and convenient flights and buy your plane tickets well in advance. Don't forget to reserve hotels if necessary;
- **Decide what to do with your vehicle** – the shipment of your car may cost you thousands of dollars, so it may be a better idea to buy a new one when you get at

your final destination. Not only will you simplify your move, but your new vehicle will meet local emissions, safety and driver-side standards;

- **Plan for the shipment of pets** – contact your chosen airline in advance and ask about their pet policy. It may be possible for your animal friends to travel in the cabin with you, or they may have to travel in a special cargo compartment within the aircraft (in suitable pet carriers, of course), depending on a number of factors. Have in mind that insurance and certain medical certificates will be required when moving abroad with pets (don't forget to check your new country's import and quarantine restrictions);
- **Research schools and plan for the education of your children (if applicable)** – notify your kids' current school of your imminent relocation, request grade reports, teachers evaluations, etc. and ask for recommendations for good educational facilities in your new area. Research the education options in your future country to find an appropriate new school for your children (language training, friendly environment, etc.)

4.0 How to pack for an international move?

So, it's for real – you're moving to another country and a whole new life awaits you halfway across the globe (or just across the border, for that matter). You are, no doubt, excited and scared and overwhelmed all at the same time, and probably at a loss of what to do and how to best organize your international relocation. And while there are plenty of important decisions to make and laborious tasks to complete before moving abroad, packing for your international move should be among your top priorities. Why the rush? Shipping your household items to another country is not as simple as moving them across the states. You need to:

- make the right choices as to what to take to your new foreign home (shipping items overseas is both very costly and very risky);
- pack your belongings with utmost care as they're going to travel a great distance and will be loaded and unloaded several times;
- send your shipment as early as possible, as the transportation and delivery of your items will take plenty of time.

To do it all right, you have to be well informed and well prepared. The following international packing tips are exactly what you need in order to avoid rookie mistakes and costly blunders when packing for moving abroad.

❖ Decide what to pack for your international move

Paring down your possessions is generally recommendable when moving house – it helps reduce the moving costs and makes the relocation process simpler and easier. When

moving overseas, condensing your belongings to the bare minimum is not simply recommendable – it is an absolute must. The fewer items you choose to relocate, the less you will pay (significantly so) in storage and shipping costs and the less troubles you will encounter. So, when packing for an international move, make sure you take all the relevant factors into account:

1) Your new lifestyle. Depending on the purpose of your relocation, there will be certain items you won't be able to do without in your new country. If you are moving there to study, for example, you will definitely need your books and study materials; if you are going to retire to a rural country, you will probably bring along all your high-tech gadgets and favorite entertainment items, and so on.

2) Your new home. The type of residence you're going to live in after the move will determine what kind of household items (and how many of them) to take with you:

- a smaller home won't be able to accommodate all your stuff, so you will have to bring along only items of high practical or sentimental value;
- an apartment will have no outdoor space, so you won't need any gardening equipment and other related items;
- a rented home may be partly furnished, so you won't have to relocate all your furniture, appliances and other larger household items;
- corporate housing or other paid accommodations your new company is providing you with may be fully furnished, so you will only need your personal items and clothing; etc.

Therefore, you are strongly advised to research your housing options well in advance, choose the most appropriate type of accommodation under the circumstances, find out if anything is already available, and ask for the size and the layout of the residence – this way you will know what exactly you are going to need and what items will fit in.

3) What will help you feel at home. To be able to accept all the cultural and social differences in your new country and adjust to the new environment, first you need to feel safe, comfortable, relaxed and happy in your own home. So, think of all the little things that will make your new place feel like home – family heirlooms, framed photos, pieces of art, keepsakes, decorations, favorite furniture pieces, etc. – and make sure you bring them along.

4) The climate in your new country. Depending on the atmospheric conditions in your new area, you may or may not need certain items of yours (no point in taking long coats and fur-lined boots when moving to a country with a year-round mild climate, right?). Also, have in mind that very dry climates are bad for fine furniture, while high humidity can ruin artwork or antiques.

5) Non-allowables. Many countries have restrictions on what is allowed across their borders (live animals, plants, weapons, drugs, hazardous substances, etc.). So, you need to find out what you're allowed to import into your new country and what you'll have to leave behind before you start packing for your international move. It's a good idea to contact the embassy of the country you are moving to (or visit its official website) and ask about import restrictions, customs fees and other duties that may be applicable in your case.

Having considered all these factors, you can finally sort out your belongings and start preparing them for shipment. Get hold of appropriate packing supplies and make sure you create a detailed inventory of everything you're going to pack for moving abroad. Decide on the fate of the rest of your possessions – throw away damaged, worn out, or useless items, sell or donate everything that is still in good condition, and put into storage (or leave with friends or family) those of your belongings you want to keep but can't take with you.

❖ **Decide how to ship your items to your new country**

Your next step is to determine which of your items will be sent with your moving company and which ones will be packed in your luggage for immediate use. It's recommendable to keep all the essentials close at hand as your shipment may take long to arrive in your new country.

➤ **Carry-on**

Your carry-on should contain all the things you're going to need on the plane and immediately upon arrival (in case your checked luggage gets lost):

- Important documents (passports, birth certificates, marriage certificate, moving-related documents, financial documents, credit cards, school and health records, insurance policies, etc.);
- Your laptop, phone, camera, MP3 player, and other essential electronics;
- Medicines and prescriptions (as well as any specialized medical items you need on a daily basis, including glasses and contact lenses);
- Your jewelry and other very expensive or irreplaceable items;
- Some cash;
- A change of clothes;
- Basic personal hygiene items.

Have in mind that each airline has different rules regarding the size, weight and type of carry-on permitted on board, so you need to get familiar with the regulations beforehand.

➤ **Luggage**

Pack all the items you and your family are going to need to survive for a few weeks after the move in your luggage:

- Weather-appropriate clothes and shoes for all family members;
- Toiletries;
- Towels and bedding;
- Chargers, power cords and converters;
- Specialized kids' items;
- Some books, toys and games;
- Basic kitchen items;
- Pet items (if applicable).

➤ **Air shipment**

Shipping via air is very costly, but you may need some of your important possessions to arrive at your new home within days after the move. Just make sure you limit your air shipment to the absolute essentials – specialized items you need for your work or studies, cookware, kids' stuff, some more clothing and bedding, basic furnishing (rugs, curtains, etc.) and other everyday necessities.

➤ **Sea shipment**

Most of your household goods will be shipped as sea freight (or transported in moving trucks, if you are not moving across the ocean). Furniture, books, clothes, electronics, dishes, décor items and everything else you have decided to relocate should be safely and efficiently packed for the long trip to your new country and entrusted to reliable international movers.

❖ **How to pack household items for moving overseas**

Before making your final decisions and getting down to work, take a closer look at our detailed packing checklist for moving abroad:

1) Clothes and shoes. Make sure the clothes and footwear you pack for moving abroad will be appropriate for the weather conditions in the foreign country (And more specifically – for the specific season when your move takes place. Your new country may have four distinct seasons, but it will make much more sense to buy the clothes and shoes you're going to need for the next season there, instead of paying plenty of money to relocate your old garments that may not even be fashionable in that part of the world).

Consider shipping your fine clothes in specialized wardrobe boxes for optimal protection and vacuum packing casual clothing and underwear to save space.

2) Fragile items. Wrap every individual piece in bubble wrap or packing paper, use plenty of cushioning between the items in a single box, and make sure the box itself is very strong, well padded, tightly sealed and reinforced with quality packing tape. Mark all the boxes containing breakables as “FRAGILE”.

Consider packing your most valuable fragile items, family heirlooms, collectibles, and pieces of art in specialized wooden crates for maximum safety.

3) Appliances and electronics. Have in mind that moving large electronic devices and household appliances overseas is usually not worth the money and the hassle involved in the process (especially if they are not compatible with the voltage output in your new country). If you decide to take some of your appliances and electronics with you, make sure you pack them in appropriate sized strong boxes, fill in the empty spaces in the box with anti-static packing peanuts, bubble wrap or foam sheets, provide extra protection for the screens and glass elements, and secure any attached cables, wires, or hoses so that they don't move during the transportation and cause damage to the item. Clearly label the boxes as “FRAGILE” and “HANDLE WITH CARE”.

4) Furniture. Moving furniture abroad is not a good idea – it will cost you a fortune to ship large and heavy furniture pieces to your new country and the items themselves may easily get damaged in the process. If you want to bring along some of your favorite furniture, nevertheless, disassemble it as much as possible and protect all surfaces and protruding parts with bubble wrap, furniture blankets and other suitable materials.

5) Books. Pack your books flat in small sturdy boxes (wrap your most valuable reads in packing paper first).

6) Toiletries. Pack toiletries and other liquids in sealable plastic bags and place them inside tight-sealing plastic boxes.

Remember that you will be able to get what you need from your new country. So, when packing for an international move, take only items of high practical, monetary or sentimental value (and items that will be difficult to find in your new area).

5.0 Tips You Need NOW in Moving Overseas

Our last piece of advice when it comes to packing for moving abroad:

- ✓ Gather all the relevant information well in advance (regulations, fees, etc.);
- ✓ Allow yourself enough time to prepare properly and pay meticulous attention to the details when packing your belongings for overseas shipment;
- ✓ Get proper insurance;
- ✓ Find a reliable international moving company to take care of your possessions.

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