

BEFORE YOU MOVE ABROAD MASTER CHECKLIST



Your international to-do list for a smooth departure

Disclaimer: This checklist is provided as a free resource. It is for informational purposes only and cannot be considered legal, financial, or medical advice. No rights can be derived from this document.

3–6 MONTHS BEFORE DEPARTURE

Visa & Legal (always consulting legal advisor/attorney)

- ☐ Confirm visa type, requirements, and processing times
- ☐ Passport valid for at least 6–12 months after arrival, depending on country
- ☐ Collect documents for legalization/apostille and certified translation
- ☐ Police clearance / background check if required
- ☐ Research family/partner visa options

Finance

- ☐ Create a relocation budget (rent, deposit, transport, groceries, insurance)
- ☐ Build a savings buffer (3–6 months of expenses)
- ☐ Research international bank accounts or multi-currency options
- ☐ Check double taxation rules and tax residency implications

Housing

- ☐ Research neighborhoods (safety, commute, cost)
- ☐ Shortlist temporary housing options (hotel, Airbnb, serviced apartment)
- ☐ Check rental requirements (proof of income, references, deposit, credit check)

Work & Career

- ☐ Confirm job contract, start date, relocation package
- ☐ Collect diplomas, certificates, and references (translate if needed)
- ☐ Update CV and LinkedIn to international standards

Health

- ☐ Check required vaccinations for destination
- ☐ Request medical records (doctor, dentist, optician, specialist)
- ☐ Arrange prescriptions (90-day supply if possible)

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Logistics

- ☐ Request moving/shipping/storage quotes
- ☐ Decide what to bring, sell, donate, or store
- ☐ Check pet import rules, vaccinations, microchip

Digital & Data

- ☐ Set up a password manager and enable 2FA
- ☐ Organize important documents in cloud + offline backup
- ☐ Standardize file names (e.g., 2025-Visa-Smith.pdf)

Language & Integration

- ☐ Learn basic phrases in local language
- ☐ Research local expats and alumni networks

1-2 MONTHS BEFORE DEPARTURE

Visa & Legal (always consulting a legal advisor/attorney)

- ☐ Submit visa application / attend biometrics
- ☐ Finalize translations and apostilles

Finance

- ☐ Apply for international credit/debit cards (low fees)
- ☐ Notify banks of upcoming move
- ☐ Set up autopay for bills left behind

Housing

- ☐ Book temporary housing with flexible cancellation
- ☐ Prepare rental documents (ID, employment, bank statements, references)

Work & Career

- ☐ Sign HR/payroll documents
- ☐ Schedule intro calls with manager/colleagues

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Health

- ☐ Dentist, optician, and GP check-ups before leaving
- ☐ Renew prescriptions and request doctor's letter in English
- ☐ Arrange international health insurance

Logistics

- ☐ Cancel or transfer subscriptions (internet, gym, phone)
- ☐ Set up mail forwarding
- ☐ Confirm moving company date and insurance

Digital

- ☐ Unlock phone / check eSIM options
- ☐ Back up laptop/phone (cloud + encrypted USB)
- ☐ Store 2FA recovery codes securely

Pets (if applicable)

- ☐ Obtain vet & health certificate and import papers
- ☐ Book pet transport (IATA-approved crate)
- ☐ Complete final vaccinations/worming treatments
- ☐ Check local import regulations
- ☐ Contact airlines to confirm traveling with your pet

2 WEEKS BEFORE DEPARTURE

- ☐ Print 2–3 sets of documents + keep digital copies on phone/cloud
- ☐ Grant power of attorney if needed
- ☐ Exchange a small amount of local currency
- ☐ Arrange home handover / end-of-lease cleaning
- ☐ Book airport transfer and transport for arrival
- ☐ Download offline maps and translation apps
- ☐ Pack a travel pharmacy (basic meds, prescriptions, first aid)
- ☐ Create an emergency contact list (family, HR, embassy, insurance)

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TRAVEL DAY – HAND LUGGAGE ESSENTIALS

- ☐ Passport + visa + copies + (if possible) birth certificate
- ☐ Phone + chargers + power bank
- ☐ Laptop/tablet + chargers
- ☐ Wallet, credit cards, small cash
- ☐ Insurance card/policy + medical documents
- ☐ Universal adapter
- ☐ Headphones, hoodie/scarf, lip balm, snacks, empty water bottle

FIRST WEEK ABROAD

Admin & Legal (always consulting legal advisor/attorney)

- ☐ Register address at local municipality (if required)
- ☐ Collect residence permit/ID card
- ☐ Apply for tax/social security number

Practical

- ☐ Buy local SIM/eSIM
- ☐ Arrange transport card / download ride apps
- ☐ Open local bank account (passport, visa, proof of address needed)

Health

- ☐ Confirm health insurance coverage
- ☐ Identify local doctor, clinic, pharmacy
- ☐ Save emergency numbers

Work & Career

- ☐ Collect office badge/laptop
- ☐ Meet with manager/team
- ☐ Confirm payroll setup

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FIRST 30 DAYS

- ☐ Sign rental contract + transfer utilities
- ☐ Get home/liability insurance
- ☐ Register with GP/dentist
- ☐ Adjust budget to real-life costs
- ☐ Attend first networking/expat event
- ☐ Explore language course or community group

Feeling overwhelmed by the move? You don't have to do it alone. Find free resources + a global community at yourinternationaljourney.com and join the conversation on Instagram [@borderlessdiariescommunity](https://www.instagram.com/borderlessdiariescommunity).

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