



The Essential Relocation Checklists

INTRODUCTION

Relocating abroad takes a lot of courage, whether it is to move closer to a loved one, for a new job, an exciting adventure, or to simply go! More than anything, moving abroad requires plenty of preparation. Finding a place to live, applying for a visa, and getting yourself established in your new country, are processes that can be overwhelming to think about, let alone handle on your own. Even for the most experienced of expats, tackling the intricate steps of an international move becomes extremely complex very fast.

There are plenty of items to check off your to-do list when planning a major move abroad. You will need to open a bank account, find a good neighborhood to settle down, find schools in the area, find doctors, lawyers, and financial advisors who speak your language, and more. You do not want to forget a single step in the process, because doing so could set your expat adventure back for several months.

That is why our experts at [InterNations GO!](#) created this helpful ebook full of checklists to ease each phase of your relocation process. You can proactively prepare for every essential step you will need to follow: from finding a home abroad, applying for your residence and work permits, settling-in, and everything else in between.

Need to move abroad? Organizing an international relocation is not something you should do on your own. As expats ourselves, we understand what you need, and offer [the essential services](#) to help you move and live abroad easily.

[Contact us](#) to jump start your move abroad!

Be sure to follow InterNations GO! on social media.



[InterNations GO!](#) is a comprehensive relocation service company started by InterNations, the largest global network dedicated to expats. Inspired by the stories of more than three million of our users and our own experience, we founded InterNations GO! to solve the common problems that expats encounter when moving from one country to another.

VISAS AND PERMITS

Checklist #1 – The Visa Application Process

- ☐ You will need to secure a job first and foremost. Ideally, you will have a signed employment contract. If not, at least ensure you receive a formal job offer signed by both you and the employer.
- ☐ Ask HR to what extent they will be able to help you regarding your and your family's visa process. Ask them to put you in touch with any colleagues that may have gone through the visa process in the country you are moving to.
- ☐ Begin your research and figure out what type of visa you and any accompanying family members will need, based on your particular employment situation.
- ☐ Gather multiple copies and originals of all the documents you require to accompany your visa application. Ensure you get any documents you need officially translated and notarized.
- ☐ Research when you can drop off your visa application. Make an appointment if required.
- ☐ Triple check you have every form you need for your interview and ensure you arrive early, even if you have a set time for your appointment. Inquire about the processing time for your visa before leaving the interview.
- ☐ Upon arrival to your new expat destination, ensure you show your visa to a customs officer and make sure you get the appropriate stamp in your passport when passing through immigration. You might need this stamp later.
- ☐ Make sure you register with the local authorities once you are officially in your new country. Apply for a residence card at your new destination if necessary.



HOUSE HUNTING ABROAD

Checklist #2 – Getting Started

- ☐ Create a timeline and set realistic goals depending on the timeframe you have to work with.
- ☐ Make a list of your house requirements.
- ☐ Research and study the housing and real estate market in your new destination.
- ☐ Understand tenant laws and rights in your new country.
- ☐ Plan, outline, and define your budget for housing. Ensure you have enough savings for upfront fees and deposits.



Checklist #3 – The Hunt

Choosing a neighborhood:

- ☐ Decide what your priorities are when looking for a neighborhood.
- ☐ Get started with some online research and read about different areas.
- ☐ Join social networks, forums, and reach out to future work colleagues to get recommendations about different neighborhoods.
- ☐ Check some areas remotely using online map services available go on a virtual tour.
- ☐ Research crime rates and trends of the zones you are considering.
- ☐ Look into schools in the zone and bus routes for your children if applicable.
- ☐ Consider neighborhoods with parks and other outdoor areas for your pets if applicable.
- ☐ Book short-term accommodation to continue your hunt for the right neighborhood once you arrive to your new destination.
- ☐ Once in your new city, visit different areas (both during the day and night).

Beginning the house search:

- ☐ Research which are the popular real estate websites for your destination and start your home search.

- ☐ Start bookmarking homes that fall within your budget and meet your needs.
- ☐ Contact advertisers to set up viewings.
- ☐ Hire an independent destination services provider to help you with your search.

Checklist #4 – Making the Decision

- ☐ If you are renting with pets, bring your animal along to house viewings.
- ☐ Once you have found a home you like, ensure you have copies (and originals) of all the necessary paperwork for renting (including pet documentation if required). Provide them to the landlord.
- ☐ Figure out a safe way to hand over your security deposit and then be prepared to do so before deciding on a move-in date with your landlord.
- ☐ When you are ready to sign a lease, make sure you take the time to review it carefully and understand it in full before signing (if needed, make sure the contract is professionally translated first).



SETTLING-IN

Checklist #5 – Covering the Basics

Opening a bank account:

- ☐ Research the requirements to open a bank account in your new country. Can you open an account as a non-resident or will you need a residence permit?
- ☐ Research different banking options. Look at offers from both international and national banks to know which are most suitable to your needs.
- ☐ Gather all the necessary documents. If you need an address in the country (a PO box may suffice), make sure you have a proof of address with you (bank or utility statement).
- ☐ Open your bank account while still abroad if this is an option.
- ☐ Transfer the minimum deposit or your desired amount to your new account.
- ☐ Visit a branch once in the country to finalize the procedure and officially activate your account.
- ☐ Cancel your previous bank account if you are switching banks entirely.
- ☐ Apply for a credit card.
- ☐ Connect to your bank's net banking platform and mobile app.

Setting up utilities:

- ☐ Have your current meters read one final time and cancel your utilities on the day of your departure.
- ☐ Research the process of setting up basic utilities in your destination country.

- ☐ Look for main utility providers at your destination.
- ☐ Find out how long in advance you need to request the set-up of utilities.
- ☐ Research the main telecommunications companies to familiarize yourself with their offers for internet, TV, cell phone, and landline.
- ☐ Choose an exact date for your utilities to be set up and make the necessary arrangements with each utility company.

Checklist #6 – Becoming a Legal Alien

- ☐ Research any mandatory registrations in your destination country along with the corresponding local authorities. These can be the police station, immigration office, local council, etc.
- ☐ Make sure you have the necessary certifications and stamps for your documents and certified translations, etc.
- ☐ Check the validity of your ID, passport, or driver's license and see if it is worth renewing any of them before leaving your home country.
- ☐ Register for a tax or social security number. This may be done online or in person at one of the tax agency's local offices at your new destination.
- ☐ Gather all the necessary documents and apply for your residence permit.
- ☐ Research the healthcare system to know if you meet all the requirements to register.
- ☐ Know how to find a family doctor in your new country and the process for registering with one.

Checklist #7 – Once the Dust Settles

Exchanging your driver's license:

- ☐ Find out if you can exchange your current driver's license in the new country or if you have to take a driving exam.
- ☐ Consider getting an international driver's permit if your license is not printed in English. This must be done in the country where the original license was issued.
- ☐ Make an appointment with the appropriate driving authority to exchange your driver's license—there may be long waiting times for this.
- ☐ Study a map of the local transportation network and assess whether local transportation is more advantageous than driving.
- ☐ If so, apply for a monthly transportation card.

Finding local professionals:

- ☐ Make a list of all the local services you will need and budget accordingly.
- ☐ Ask for recommendations from locals or other expats, search for local services online, or hire settling-in services.

Building your social circle:

- ☐ Connect with locals or other expats in meetups, events, and online.



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