

Moving Abroad Checklist



6–12 Months Before Departure

- ☐ **Check visa requirements and residency permits** – Rules differ by country, and applications can take weeks or months. Start early to avoid delays.

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- ☐ **Ensure your passport is valid** – Many countries won't grant entry if your passport is close to expiring. Renew in advance if needed.

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- ☐ **Research healthcare access and insurance** – NHS cover won't apply abroad. Check local systems and arrange private insurance if required.

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- ☐ **Look into the cost of living, local laws, and tax rules** – Build a realistic budget, understand legal restrictions, and know your tax obligations.

6–9 Months Before Departure

- ☐ **Apply for your visa/permit** – Bureaucracy can involve interviews, biometrics, and proof of funds. Begin the process early.
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- ☐ **Collect important documents** – Gather originals like birth/marriage certificates, NI number, qualifications, and medical records. Certified translations may be necessary.
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- ☐ **Make certified copies and digital backups** – Keep secure copies online or on encrypted storage for emergencies.

3–6 Months Before Departure

- ☐ **Inform your bank of your move** – Prevent account freezes or blocked cards by letting your bank know.
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- ☐ **Decide whether to keep a UK account open** – Useful for pensions, bills, or savings management.
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- ☐ **Research international banking options** – Some banks operate in both the UK and abroad, easing the transition.
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- ☐ **Submit a P85 form to HMRC** – Notifies HMRC of your move, adjusts tax obligations, and may secure refunds.
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- ☐ **Consider currency transfer services** – Specialist providers often beat high bank fees and poor exchange rates.
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- ☐ **Arrange accommodation abroad** – Secure temporary or permanent housing before you arrive.
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- ☐ **Confirm your employment contract or work arrangements** – Get written confirmation of terms like salary, benefits, and start date.
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- ☐ **Check if UK qualifications are recognised abroad** – Professions like teaching, medicine, or law may need validation or conversion.
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- ☐ **Book GP and dental check-ups** – Easier to handle health needs before leaving the UK.
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- ☐ **Request your NHS medical records** – Acts as your health passport abroad.
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- ☐ **Check vaccination requirements** – Some destinations require proof of immunisations.
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- ☐ **Notify your child's school** – Request transfer records in advance.
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- ☐ **Review pet export rules** – Complete microchipping, vaccinations, and paperwork for travel.
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2–3 Months Before Departure

- ☐ **Declutter and decide what to take, sell, or store** – Reduces shipping costs and avoids clutter.
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- ☐ **Pack essentials for the first few weeks** – Clothing, toiletries, medication, chargers, and key documents.
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- ☐ **Check airline baggage limits** – Avoid extra charges by knowing the rules for both checked and hand luggage.
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- ☐ **Check plug/voltage compatibility** – Pack adaptors or converters for devices.
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- ☐ **Create a packing inventory** – Label boxes and keep a record for customs and insurance.
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- ☐ **Cancel UK utilities, broadband, TV licence, and council tax** – Avoid being charged after you move.
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- ☐ **Inform your local council of your move** – Update electoral roll and council tax records.
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- ☐ **Leave updated contact details with family and friends** – Share your new number and address, plus a UK contact for urgent matters.
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1–2 Months Before Departure

- ☐ **Use professional packing for fragile or bulky items** – Protects valuables and eases the removal process.
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- ☐ **Prepare customs documentation** – Each country has different requirements; avoid delays at the border.
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- ☐ **Choose between air freight and sea freight** – Faster but pricier, or slower but cheaper.

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- ☐ **Arrange temporary storage** – Keep belongings secure if you're not moving everything at once.

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- ☐ **Check removals insurance** – Standard coverage is limited; declare valuables and consider additional protection.

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- ☐ **Opt for full-service delivery** – A removals company can handle packing, shipping, customs, and final delivery.

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- ☐ **Get health/travel insurance** – Covers medical care and emergencies not covered by NHS.

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- ☐ **Take prescriptions with you (plus doctor's letter)** – Ensures continuity of medication and smooth customs clearance.

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- ☐ **Cancel or redirect subscriptions and memberships** – Close gym, streaming, or phone contracts.

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- ☐ **Decide what to do with your vehicle** – Sell or ship, and update DVLA records.

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- ☐ **Notify GP, dentist, and optician of your move** – Prevents charges and keeps your records up to date.

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- ☐ **Check if you need an International Driving Permit** – Some countries require this in addition to your UK licence.

2–3 Weeks Before Departure

- ☐ **Set up Royal Mail redirection** – Prevent important post from being lost.

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- ☐ **Finalise outstanding tasks** – Check utilities, taxes, and redirection services are all confirmed.

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- ☐ **Confirm travel arrangements** – Double-check flights, baggage, accommodation booking, and airport transfers.

Upon Arrival

- ☐ **Register with local authorities** – May be required for residency, ID, or tax purposes.

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- ☐ **Open a local bank account** – Simplifies everyday expenses and salary payments.

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- ☐ **Register with a healthcare provider** – Gain access to medical care quickly.

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- ☐ **Explore transport options** – Convert your UK licence if required.

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- ☐ **Learn basic local phrases and customs** – Helps with integration and daily tasks.

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