

International Moving Tips



Relocating internationally can be an exciting time for you and your family. The challenge of adopting a new position, combined with the excitement of developing new acquaintances, exploring your new environment and adopting a new culture, can make your international relocation an extremely enjoyable experience.

What you don't need is the distraction of problems arising with the relocation of your personal possessions to your new country. It is important to undertake some planning and research, to ensure you understand the requirements involved in moving your treasured possessions, and to appreciate the laws and regulations governing the importation of your personal and household effects into your new country.

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Surface Shipments via Ocean Vessels

The vast majority of Household and Personal effects moved internationally are forwarded on the oceans aboard modern containerized vessels.

Generally, this is the most economical way of forwarding goods. However, there are differing service levels available in this category. In moving goods internationally, like most things, there are usually several options available governing the level of service provided, the length of time taken for the journey and the reliability and frequency of the ocean carrier.

Some carriers provide a direct service, where a consignment remains on the same vessel for the entire journey, from the original port, through to the destination port.

Other carriers provide services, which tranship the cargo en route i.e. the cargo is moved from one vessel to another, at some stage during the journey.

As a general rule, a direct shipment will be more expensive than a transshipment service. However, this cost factor is normally offset by the transit time, as transshipments often provide longer times at sea.

A transshipment service also incorporates an additional risk, in that the cargo is transhipped in a foreign port, where there is little direct control from either the origin or destination country.

Full Container Load (FCL) - Sole use container

This category ensures that the container carries only your goods, and under normal circumstances these can be loaded directly into the container, with the container sealed, at your residence.

This leaves the container ready for delivery, direct to the departure wharf, without the need for any further handling of your goods in the origin country.

As a rule, because the entire container is utilised, this is the most economical method of shipment. It also generally provides the fastest transit times, as there are no delays in waiting for other freight to fill the container.

Less than Container Load (LCL) Consignments

This method is used when there is insufficient cargo to justify the use of an entire container.

Shipping Companies and Freight Consolidators provide this service by consolidating freight from different shippers, to a common destination, into container loads.

When shipping via LCL, the goods are required to be crated, to ensure their protection during transit. This is necessary, as there is no guarantee as to what other cargo may be consolidated with your household effects in the container.

Unfortunately, due to the necessity of crating the goods, and the higher freight cost involved, this can be an expensive means of forwarding goods overseas.

Air Shipments

The option of moving some, or all of your goods via air is worth considering. Many people elect to take a "survival" shipment of their personal belongings via airfreight, as it generally allows quick arrival of the basic items required to commence life in your new country.

Whilst, as a general rule, airfreight is more expensive than surface freight, there are situations where even entire households may prove to be more economical to be forwarded via air.

As with the services offered by surface carriers, there are similar options available with air carriers, with consolidated and transshipment services being widely available.

Every individual household will have its own requirements, and we would be happy to discuss the most suitable options available to you with regard to your own specific needs.

Types of Storage

If you are moving on a temporary posting, Smart Removals can provide secure long term storage in your origin country for those household items that are not required in your new location.

In addition, we can provide secure storage facilities in your destination country, should that be required, whilst you source appropriate accommodation.

Destination Country Rules & Regulations

Since every country has its own laws and customs, it's a good idea to study the etiquette and customs of your destination country before your move.

This should assist you in avoiding any inadvertent problems after you have arrived in your new country. The embassy or consulate of your country of destination is a good starting point for this information.

Smart Removals can assist you with any additional information you may require on request. Call us today.

Know What Items Allowed & Not Allowed

Many countries apply stringent rules, as to the acceptability of some items being imported. Indeed, some items which may be common in your country of origin could be prohibited in your country of destination.

Most countries apply restrictions to firearms, alcohol, drugs and often, political or pornographic literature is totally prohibited. In other instances, some items can attract Duty or Tax liabilities,

and in order to avoid any problems at the time of clearance of your goods, you should make enquiries with the embassy or consulate of your country of destination, to ascertain their advice.

We can also assist in this regard, and our removals consultants would be happy to discuss this with you in advance of your move.

Additionally, you should be mindful that due to differing voltage requirements and broadcasting frequencies, some of your current electrical items may not be suitable for use in your new country. Again, you can discuss this with our removals consultants.

Ensure Visas & Passports Up To Date

For entry into most countries, on a long term or permanent basis, it will be necessary to have the appropriate visa and passport requirements.

You should contact the consulate of the country to which you are relocating to ensure that your documentation is in order, and that entry of both yourself and your goods is allowable.

Some countries apply strict regulations in importing your household effects, and heavy financial penalties can be applied if the appropriate visas or work permits are not in place.

Smart Removals cannot advise you in respect of immigration and the Consular Representative should be equipped to advise you of all documentary requirements, and how to apply for appropriate Visas and work permits.

Consider Vaccinations for That Country

You and your family may need immunizations, inoculations or booster shots before moving overseas.

You can find out what inoculations are necessary (and recommended) by contacting the Consular Representative of your destination country.

Your family Doctor should also be able to provide valuable advice in this area.

Documents Required For That Country

You and your family should get complete medical and dental check

ups, prior to your departure, and obtain copies of your records to take to your new country.

In addition, you should obtain all other personal documentation e.g. prescriptions, birth certificates, marriage certificates etc. and carry these with you for quick reference, if necessary.

Valuables from safety deposit boxes, jewellery boxes and the like should also be carried on your person.

Currency, Tax, Banking Accounts, Debit Orders

When moving internationally, you will need to determine your tax obligations in both your country of departure and your new country.

Additionally, you will need to consider the transfer of funds and the closure of your current bank accounts, together with the opening of appropriate bank accounts in your new location.

The overseas department of your current bank should be able to provide assistance with the transfer of funds, letter of credit, currency exchange rates etc.

Ensure Services Cancelled, Put on Hold, Registered For

Don't forget to contact your telephone, electricity and water supply authorities to discontinue your current services and to settle your final accounts before you move.

Also consider newspaper deliveries and any other supplier, who should be notified of your pending departure.