



Pre-departure Preparation

Renting your home

The best way of doing this is to contact a local estate agent. They will act as managing agents for your property. There will be an initial charge and a subsequent monthly fee. They will relieve you of the hassle of finding suitable tenants, referencing them, securing the monthly rent, addressing any maintenance issues and inspecting the property. Ensure that the agent has all the necessary paperwork relating to any insurance cover you have for your plumbing, heating and kitchen appliances so they can address any problems without bothering you.

Before you are able to rent your property you must obtain a safety certificate from the local gas company and install carbon monoxide monitors. If you are providing furniture they must have labels to prove that they are fire proof. If you choose not to employ the services of a managing agent, you are then directly responsible for addressing issues that your tenants may raise and being so far away in a different time zone with a different weekend this is hassle you would rather not have!

If you want to rent your property to friends or family make sure that they have all the necessary contact details for maintenance issues. If you are working outside of the European Community you can opt to complete a form (provided by the agent) to exempt you from paying tax on income earned from your property at source; but this does not exempt you from tax payments. You will need to declare your earnings in annual tax return forms. More of that later!

Redirecting your post

This is one of those 'week before you go' jobs. Most of us have relatives and friends who will be able to receive and send on post. Contact the Post Office for details of their re-direction service. They will provide proof of both addresses. The service is available for different periods up to a maximum of 2 years, beyond which the post will revert back to the original address. If you have a managing agent, for a small fee, they will collect your post and send it on. If you envisage being overseas for some time, once you settle in your new location, you may want to write to everyone, the bank, the building society and the rest, to advise of your change of address and contact details.

Storing your personal items

If you are unable to store items with relatives or friends it is recommended to contact a local storage company that will provide a range of secure compartments in relation to your storage needs. These will include more personal items that you do not want to store in your home that you may be renting out.



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Obtaining a credit card

You should never leave home without one! If you do not have one allow plenty of time for an application; they are very handy to have when you are overseas. Keep it safe and ensure you have the relevant contact numbers for immediate cancellation if it is lost or stolen. Most retailers, restaurants and tour operators will accept credit card payments; make sure you know your pin number. You can also use your card to withdraw cash from ATM machines but you will pay interest on this. Just look out for the Visa or MasterCard sign.

Some people like to pay off their credit cards in full each month or at least pay off a fixed amount. Rather than waiting for the bill to come by post, which can take some time, you could arrange for your bank to pay off your debts by standing order. It is also advised to inform your credit card company that you will be making transactions overseas. If they see a lot of overseas activity they become suspicious and could cancel your card.

Opening an off-shore bank account

This is just an idea but many expatriates open off-shore bank accounts to evade, quite legally, tax on interest earned from their monthly saving. However, if you do decide to return to the UK/other, there may be tax implications if you then transfer funds back to the mainland. You need to check with the bank.

Avoiding the tax man

This is one of those rare opportunities that you may be able to pull it off, legally too! Taxes are individual, and you need to be aware of the requirements for reporting income and paying tax in your home country and in your new country.

Getting your shots

Travelling to a foreign country means you need to check out the health situation to make sure that you have the correct immunizations. It is recommended to make an appointment with your doctor to make sure you get the shots appropriate to your new region. If you are on prescribed drugs it may be wise you obtain a doctor's certificate as some drugs may be illegal in certain countries. You can check these online.

Getting a medical

Some schools may ask you to have a medical as part of your employment visa application. They will inform you about this and specify the depth of examination. Please follow their instructions.



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Obtaining an international driving license

Find out if your new country requires you to obtain an international driving license. You need to check the motoring organizations of your home country. In most countries all they test is your eye sight. When you have your license you must have it with you at all times when you are driving. It also acts as useful identification if ever you are asked to produce it.

Researching the country

Teachanywhere has a wide range of articles for different countries but it is advised to go down to your local book store to find a relevant guide. Try 'Lonely Planet' or the 'Explorer' series. The travel section will have a huge selection from which to choose but it is best to go for one that offers practical advice, contact details and ideas of activities and places to see. That is how we have put together our own documents. It is also useful to learn a little of the language and culture too; pick up a phrase book and enrich your language skills. Books relating to 'Culture Shock' are also a recommended read, not only to learn about the culture of your new country but to help you to adapt to it. Good idea to pick up a local street / town map if they are available.

Buying those last minute items

It is a great idea to buy a small digital camera. A universal adaptor is handy too. Although you can buy them once you arrive you may be landing in the middle of the night and you may need to charge your mobile or plug in your hairdryer. A travel wallet, sturdy baggage tags, suitcase locks and such items are recommended. You can bring your mobile too, but will have to change the sim card when you arrive. If you are able to use your mobile overseas you will also pay for incoming calls so change it as quickly as you can.

Leaving things behind

Before you go, leave behind copies of your critical documents, important telephone numbers and emergency contact details with a relative and / or friend.

Arranging travel insurance

Make sure you organize some travel insurance. Your contract may not cover you for your outward bound journey and it is wise to have extra cover before your residency visa is completed.



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Getting your travel documents ready

Of course there are the obvious items. By this time the school would have provided a flight ticket in some format and a copy of your employment visa. And you will also know your baggage allowance. You will need your passport, bank and credit cards and your original and photocopied documents. I have known people to arrive in their new country without sufficient funds; not sure what they are thinking, but please note that you will not be paid until after your first month of work. You will need enough money or sufficient access to funds to get you through this period. Do not expect the school to be giving out advances; they generally do not do this for new employees. Do not bring any pornographic material.

Remembering your dependents

If you are bringing your family then by this time you have made the necessary arrangements with your employer with respect to flights, baggage allowances, accommodation and schooling. Some employers may suggest that you arrive first, settle in and secure your visa, then receive your family. Whichever way it pans out you must not forget the relevant original and attested documents – marriage certificate and birth certificates. Please remember school reports and medical reports; these do not need to be attested.

Confirming who is meeting you

It is very important to make sure you have the name and contact number of the school representative meeting you at the airport. If there is a delay or a problem at least you can call them. Have a back-up plan if you encounter a real problem and no-one turns up at the airport and it is the middle of the night. Have sufficient funds for a taxi and a hotel room. Don't worry; everything will be sorted out the next day. Nobody will expect you to wait at the airport all night.