

International Moving Checklist

The countdown to moving day, stage by stage · fusionrelocations.ae · +971 58 879 4825

Planning an international move

Most of what makes a move go well is decided months before anything is packed. These are the things worth working through, in roughly the order they become urgent.

The countdown, stage by stage

Three to four months out

- ☐ **Book a survey**, even if your date is not fixed. It costs nothing and produces the volume figure everything else depends on.
- ☐ **Establish the immigration position** at your destination. This is the constraint the rest of the plan hangs off, and it is the one nobody controls.
- ☐ **Check school admission windows** if you have children. For families this usually sets the move date, not the job start date.
- ☐ **Read your Dubai tenancy** – notice period, penalty for early termination, and what condition the property has to be returned in.
- ☐ **Decide about the big awkward items**: the car, the piano, the gym equipment, anything oversized. These have their own timelines and some destinations will not admit them easily.

Two months out

- ☐ **Agree the written scope and book**. Packing crews and sailings are finite, particularly around the school-year peak.
- ☐ **Start the pet process** if you are moving animals. Microchip, vaccinations and health certification run on a fixed sequence that cannot be compressed.
- ☐ **Begin disposing of what is not going**. This takes longer than anyone expects and is the only reliable way to reduce the cost.
- ☐ **Gather documents** – passports, visas, tenancy papers, purchase receipts for high-value items, veterinary records.

One month out

- ☐ **Apply for the building move-out permit or NOC**. Many Dubai towers and communities require several working days' notice and will name the moving company.
- ☐ **Book the service lift**. In high-rise buildings this is the real constraint; weekend slots go first.
- ☐ **Arrange final DEWA and chiller settlement**. District cooling is frequently a separate provider with a separate final bill.
- ☐ **Settle the insurance valuation**, itemising anything of significant value.

- ☐ **Confirm destination access:** lift dimensions, parking, whether a permit is required, and any building rules on move-in times.

The final fortnight

- ☐ **Separate what is not shipping** – hand luggage, documents, medication, anything you are selling. Put it in one room and tell the crew.
- ☐ **Plan the first-week bag.** Assume your sea shipment is weeks away and pack accordingly.
- ☐ **Photograph anything valuable** before it is wrapped.
- ☐ **Run down the freezer and the cleaning cupboard.** Food, aerosols, paint, fuel and most chemicals cannot travel.
- ☐ **Redirect post, close local accounts, cancel local subscriptions.**

Also worth knowing

What cannot travel in a household shipment

Rules vary by destination, but some categories are near-universally restricted or prohibited: flammable liquids and gases, aerosols, paint, fuel, fireworks and ammunition; perishable food; most plants, seeds and soil; and anything made from a protected species – which catches ivory, some corals, and certain hardwoods and skins. Alcohol, tobacco, medication and new goods still in their packaging are frequently dutiable even where the rest of your shipment is not. If you are unsure about something, ask before it is packed rather than after it is sealed.

Guides by destination and topic

Country-by-country coverage sits in [destinations](#), with customs detail in the [customs guides](#). Practical articles on packing, freight, pets, vehicles and settling in are in the [newsroom](#). Terminology you will meet in a quote is explained in the [glossary](#), and what drives the price is covered in [moving costs](#).

Ask us instead

None of the above replaces a conversation about your specific move. If you have a question that a checklist cannot answer – and most of the good questions are – [get in touch](#). There is no obligation and we would rather answer it early than fix it late.