

# International Moving Checklist

Compiled from the expertise of Lucia Shropshire, Manager of Global Relocation at Interstate Moving | Relocation | Logistics, with nearly 16 years in the international moving industry.

✓	Task	Why It Matters
<b>8+ Weeks Before Your Move: Research and Planning</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research customs requirements for your destination country	<i>Every country has different import rules; some require permits for specific items</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get estimates from international moving companies	<i>Ask about door-to-door pricing, inclusions, and exclusions</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand how your move will be priced (weight-based from the US, volume-based internationally)	<i>Bulky but light items can cost more than you expect</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask about shipping method options: ocean freight vs. air freight	<i>Ocean takes weeks but costs less; air takes days but costs significantly more</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inventory your home and identify specialty, antique, or high-value items	<i>These may need special documentation, permits, or additional insurance</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify prohibited and restricted items for your destination	<i>Lithium-ion batteries, aerosols, flammable liquids, and certain organic materials may be banned</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begin decluttering; every pound or cubic foot you cut saves money	<i>International moves are priced by weight or volume, so less is literally more</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Research destination-specific documentation (visas, work permits, residency requirements)	<i>Administrative delays are one of the biggest causes of move slowdowns</i>
<b>6 Weeks Before: Booking and Documentation</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Book your moving company and confirm your shipping method	<i>Peak season fills up fast; booking early secures your preferred dates</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gather and safeguard essential documents: passports, visas, birth certificates, vehicle titles	<i>Never pack these in your shipment; carry them with you</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm what your estimate includes and excludes (get it in writing)	<i>Ask specifically about customs exam fees, destination terminal handling, and duties on new items</i>

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Understand payment terms (typically 50% at pickup, 50% before delivery)	<i>International moves collect differently than domestic moves</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify your employer if this is a corporate or government-sponsored relocation	<i>Employer-sponsored moves may have additional administrative requirements</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Check whether your destination charges duties on new or unused items	<i>Newly purchased goods may be taxed at import; used household goods typically are not</i>
<b>4 Weeks Before: Survey and Preparation</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete your in-home or virtual survey with your moving company	<i>Be thorough; show every room, closet, attic, basement, shed, and storage area</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disclose any unusual items: taxidermy, antiques, collections, fur, alcohol	<i>These may require CITES permits, USDA licensing, or destination-country approval</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask about shipping minimums (typically 1,000 lbs for ocean, 500 lbs for air)	<i>Shipping below the minimum still costs you the minimum rate</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decide what to carry in your checked luggage vs. ship	<i>A suitcase checked on a flight costs \$30 to \$50; shipping the same contents can cost \$400+</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Remove lithium-ion batteries from all devices and do not pack them	<i>Batteries are a fire hazard in transit and are prohibited in most shipments</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Place any approved liquids in sealed plastic bins (Sterilite or equivalent)	<i>Prevents leaks from damaging the rest of your shipment in transit</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm your destination partner/agent contact information with your moving company	<i>Building a relationship with the destination team early reduces stress on arrival</i>
<b>1 to 2 Weeks Before: Final Preparations</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do a final walkthrough of your home and confirm your inventory with your coordinator	<i>Added items not on the original survey can change your price</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set aside items you are NOT shipping and clearly mark them	<i>Prevents the crew from accidentally packing things you want to keep</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pack an essentials bag: medications, phone chargers, toiletries, change of clothes, important documents	<i>You will not see your shipment for weeks or months</i>

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm your pack and load dates with your moving company	<i>Last-minute date changes can cause cascading scheduling issues</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify your bank, insurance, and subscription services of your international address change	<i>Prevents service interruptions and ensures mail forwarding is set up</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Arrange for child and pet care on move day	<i>Keeps the home clear and safe for the moving crew</i>
<b>Move Day</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Be present and available for questions from the crew	<i>The team leader will walk through paperwork and inventory with you</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Verify the inventory checklist before the crew completes loading	<i>This is your last chance to confirm everything is accounted for</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confirm that no prohibited items have been packed	<i>Your freight forwarder is liable, but delays and fees come back to you</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get your shipment tracking information and destination contact details	<i>So you can follow your shipment and know who to contact on the other end</i>
<b>After Pickup: In Transit</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Expect documentation requests from your moving company or destination agent	<i>Customs clearance requires paperwork; respond promptly to avoid delays</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Be aware of realistic transit times (ocean: 3 to 11+ weeks depending on destination; air: 1 to 10 days)	<i>Nothing is overnight; multiple carriers and customs checkpoints are involved</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monitor for communications about port congestion, political events, or routing changes	<i>These can cause delays outside anyone's control; your freight forwarder will keep you informed</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare your new home for delivery: confirm the address, access, and any building requirements	<i>Some destinations require advance coordination for delivery access</i>
<b>Delivery and Settlement</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Be present for delivery and inspect all items against your inventory	<i>Document any damage immediately with photos</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	File any claims within the required window (typically 30 to 90 days)	<i>Delays in reporting can affect your ability to recover costs</i>

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Settle any remaining balance with your moving company	<i>Final payment is typically due before or at delivery</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep all moving documentation for your records (and potential tax purposes)	<i>Some international relocations qualify for tax deductions</i>

Questions? Call 1-800-745-6683 or visit [moveinterstate.com](http://moveinterstate.com) to speak with our international relocation team.