

Teaching Nomad

Preparing for the UAE



Congratulations on your new job in the UAE!

Now it's time to start preparing for this new chapter of your life.

We know that you are excited about starting your new job and broadening your horizons by living overseas; however, moving abroad can be a stressful process. We would like to recommend a few pointers that will make your transition to living in the UAE more seamless.

To avoid forgetting to tie up any loose ends, here's a brief list of important things to take care of before you leave:

Arrange your visa

First off, your passport should have at least 6 months of validity left beyond the length of your visa/residence permit. Your employer will help you to arrange your visa, but remember that this process is very detail-sensitive. Read the instructions carefully and don't skip any steps.

Different cities have different work visa policies. Some may require you to arrive with your work visa already in hand, while others allow for the visa type to be changed later on without leaving the country. If you do need to arrive without your work visa, you can check the tourist visa requirements [here](#).

Citizens of most countries receive a 30-day visa on arrival. If you have family coming with you, be sure to inform your employer so they can arrange proper visa sponsorship.

Inform your family and friends of your plans

(And keep them regularly updated on your latest address in the UAE.) It may be a good idea to get Skype installed on your computer (if you haven't already) and also get Skype installed on your family's computer. It might also be good to install another video chatting software as a backup in case Skype is unavailable later on.

Don't forget to show your family how to use Skype if they're new to it. It's also useful to schedule a specific day of the week to talk with your family and friends.

Inform your bank of your upcoming move to the UAE

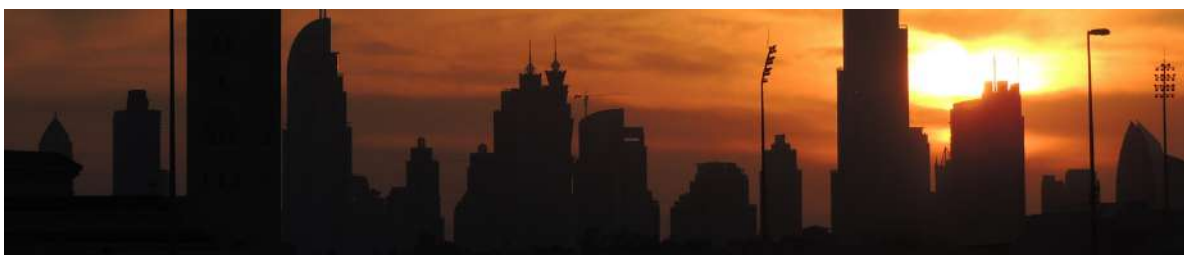
Sometimes, for your own security, banks will block your card if they detect that it has been used overseas. Although a simple phone call will unblock it, such instances can be a nuisance. Informing them beforehand will keep this from happening in most cases.

Bring a lot of passport photos

It's best to do them at home rather than hunt around looking for a place that will take them for you. Take around 12 per person to be safe.

Budget for your first month in UAE

If your employer is not providing accommodation, then you will likely need to pay your first month's rent when you arrive, plus a deposit (equal to another month's rent). You should consider living costs when budgeting, and you may want to set aside money for an emergency fund, as well. Rent and living costs vary widely by city, so ask your recruitment consultant if you need further advice on this matter.



Prepare for jet lag

The effects of jet lag will vary depending on where you're coming from. Even those coming from a country as close as Australia will feel some degree of jet lag. Be sure to drink plenty of water during your trip to help offset this.

After you arrive, immediately conform to the new time zone when you arrive, i.e. sleep at night and stay awake during the day (but don't exhaust yourself). Try not to put too much emphasis on what time it is in your home country, as this will further confuse your internal clock.

Weigh your bag

Before you set off to the airport, make sure that you know how much your bag weighs. Bathroom scales will suffice. Be aware that airlines often have very high charges for overweight luggage, even if they are only slightly overweight.

Purchase a guidebook

Example: Purchase something like Lonely Planet and read up on the new city before you leave. Most quality guidebooks also have a Chinese phrase-book toward the back.

Pack appropriate clothing

Choose the best clothing for your destination climate by either referring to your guidebook or checking Google for the latest weather updates. Temperatures in the Middle East can hit drastic highs and lows, depending on the season. We're talking +40°C in the daytime and -10°C at nighttime.

Although shorts, tank tops, and other lighter pieces of clothing would be the most appropriate for this type of weather, bear in mind that religion rules the state and plays an important role in the local lifestyle. Therefore, modest and conservative clothes are to be prioritized.



Consider any prescription medications you're on

Consult your doctor about obtaining a longer prescription that will last the duration of your trip. Although, most medications are easy to come by in UAE.

Bring your cell phone

You will be able to use it in UAE! If you have a smartphone, you will just need to make sure you unlock it before you leave home. Being able to access GPS on your phone will definitely come in handy while you are overseas!

Bring cosmetics/toiletries

The UAE is infamous for being a shopping paradise, so it won't be difficult for you to find the right beauty products, makeup, creams, shampoos, contact lenses (if necessary), etc.

This wide variety of options does come at a price though. Although tax-free, the cost of living in the UAE is quite high and therefore products can cost significantly more compared to your home country. It's recommended that you stock up on all beauty products before coming abroad.

Buy a voltage converter or transformer

While goods from Europe, South Africa, and Australia are compatible with Dubai's voltage supply, goods from the U.S. or Canada will not, so buy a converter or transformer to make up for this.

Apply for a liquor license

As a Muslim country, the UAE does not promote the use of alcohol. Do not bring alcohol with you on your trip because residents must first hold a liquor license to purchase and consume alcohol. Although alcohol can be legally consumed at licensed bars, hotels, and restaurants in Dubai, the price for a bottle of wine will be much higher due to heavy taxes.

Be respectful

Although Dubai is far more liberal and laws are not always strictly enforced there, you should still be respectful and follow the rules. About 92% of the population in Dubai is made up by expatriates, the UAE is still a Muslim country and the Emiratis are still very attached to their culture and history.

Dress conservatively because you will get called out for showing too much skin. Learn the customs and pay attention to Islamic culture to avoid any uncomfortable situations, or worse, jail time.

Best of luck on your new adventure!

