

# FAMILY CHECKLIST FOR THRIVING ABROAD

## Setting the Foundation for Your International Assignment Success

Your upcoming international move isn't just about your career—it's about your entire family's journey to a new country, culture, and way of life. Research shows that family satisfaction is the single biggest factor determining whether international assignments succeed or fail.

The good news? Families that are well prepared dramatically increase their chances of not just surviving but thriving abroad. Work through practical concerns and address emotional needs upfront to build family confidence, freeing more of your focus to excel in your new role while everyone settles into their new life.

This Family Checklist provides the essential steps to ensure every family member -- from your partner to your children -- feels prepared, supported, and excited about this adventure. Because when your family succeeds, your assignment succeeds.

**Ready to set your family up for success?  
Let's begin this journey together.**





## PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING

### DOCUMENTATION & LEGAL

- ☐ Obtain/renew passports for all family members
- ☐ Apply for appropriate visas and work permits
- ☐ Gather medical records and immunization proof for all family members
- ☐ Research medication availability and import regulations
- ☐ Compile legal documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc.)
- ☐ Create copies of all important documents
- ☐ Register with your country's embassy/consulate in destination country

### HEALTH & MEDICAL

- ☐ Schedule medical checkups for all family members
- ☐ Obtain necessary vaccinations/immunizations
- ☐ Pack prescription medications in original bottles with prescriptions
- ☐ Research local healthcare system and insurance coverage
- ☐ Pack basic medical supplies (fever reducers, first aid items)

### EDUCATION & SCHOOLS

- ☐ Research school options (international, local, foreign national)
- ☐ Apply to schools early (check waiting lists)
- ☐ Visit potential schools during pre-assignment trip
- ☐ Gather academic records and transcripts
- ☐ Research special education services if needed
- ☐ Understand curriculum differences and transfer requirements

### FINANCIAL & EMPLOYMENT

- ☐ Research spouse/partner work permit requirements
- ☐ Understand tax implications in new country
- ☐ Set up international banking arrangements
- ☐ Research cost of living and housing options
- ☐ Arrange international money transfers

Notes:



## PACKING & MOVING

### WHAT TO PACK

- ☐ Climate-appropriate clothing for all seasons
- ☐ Favorite books, toys, and comfort items for children
- ☐ Electronics and adapters for local power systems
- ☐ Important medications and health supplies
- ☐ Photo albums and memory items
- ☐ School and hobby supplies
- ☐ Items representing home country/culture

### MOVING DAY

- ☐ Keep children present but safe during packing
- ☐ Pack special items separately for immediate access
- ☐ Create inventory lists for each box
- ☐ Pack essentials in carry-on luggage
- ☐ Arrange temporary accommodation if needed

### PET CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ Research pet import regulations and quarantine requirements
- ☐ Obtain veterinary health certificates
- ☐ Arrange pet transportation
- ☐ Research re-import requirements for return home
- ☐ Consider local pet care alternatives if bringing pets isn't feasible

Notes:



## PREPARING CHILDREN

### EMOTIONAL PREPARATION

- ☐ Discuss the move openly and positively
- ☐ Allow children to express concerns and emotions
- ☐ Involve children in school selection process
- ☐ Help arrange goodbye gatherings with friends
- ☐ Set up communication plans with home country friends

### SPECIAL NEEDS CONSIDERATIONS

- ☐ Research disability services and laws in destination country
- ☐ Contact schools about accommodations needed
- ☐ Arrange for continuity of therapies and treatments
- ☐ Plan for transitions and behavioral support
- ☐ Research local support organizations

### PRACTICAL PREPARATION

- ☐ Teach basic words in local language
- ☐ Help children learn new address and phone number
- ☐ Research local customs and cultural differences
- ☐ Plan age-appropriate activities for destination country
- ☐ Prepare children for potential academic adjustments

Notes:



## SAFETY & SECURITY

### PERSONAL SAFETY

- ☐ Research local crime rates and safety concerns
- ☐ Learn local emergency numbers
- ☐ Establish safe travel routes to school/work
- ☐ Create family emergency plan and meeting points
- ☐ Identify trusted neighbors and local contacts

### CHILD SAFETY

- ☐ Teach children about local traffic rules and patterns
- ☐ Establish clear boundaries and safe areas
- ☐ Research and vet childcare providers thoroughly
- ☐ Discuss cultural safety considerations
- ☐ Set up communication protocols for emergencies

## CULTURAL INTEGRATION

### LANGUAGE LEARNING

- ☐ Enroll in language classes before departure
- ☐ Download language learning apps
- ☐ Practice basic phrases with children
- ☐ Research local translation resources

### CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

- ☐ Read about local customs and etiquette
- ☐ Understand local business practices
- ☐ Research religious and cultural sensitivities
- ☐ Learn about local holidays and traditions

Notes:



## SETTLING IN

### FIRST MONTH PRIORITIES

- ☐ Register with local authorities as required
- ☐ Set up banking and financial services
- ☐ Enroll children in school
- ☐ Find local medical providers
- ☐ Locate essential services (grocery stores, pharmacy, etc.)

### MAINTAINING HOME CONNECTIONS

- ☐ Set up reliable internet and communication
- ☐ Schedule regular calls with family and friends
- ☐ Share photos and updates of new experiences
- ☐ Plan visits home during school holidays
- ☐ Invite friends/family to visit new location

### BUILDING COMMUNITY

- ☐ Join expatriate groups and clubs
- ☐ Connect with other families at children's schools
- ☐ Explore local recreational activities
- ☐ Consider volunteer opportunities
- ☐ Attend embassy or consulate events

Notes:



## ONGOING CONSIDERATIONS

### MENTAL HEALTH & ADJUSTMENT

- ☐ Monitor family members for adjustment difficulties
- ☐ Maintain open communication about challenges
- ☐ Seek professional help if needed
- ☐ Allow time for cultural adaptation phases
- ☐ Celebrate small victories and milestones

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- ☐ Plan for elderly parent care from distance
- ☐ Understand divorce/separation laws if relevant
- ☐ Research LGBTQ+ rights and protections
- ☐ Consider seasonal travel and home visits
- ☐ Prepare for eventual repatriation planning

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- ☐ Keep emergency contact lists updated
- ☐ Maintain emergency fund and evacuation insurance
- ☐ Stay informed about local security situations
- ☐ Keep important documents easily accessible
- ☐ Review and practice family emergency plans

Notes:



**LIVING ABROAD**  
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE FOR YOUR GLOBAL WORKFORCE

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Notes:

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