



Your  
relocation  
guide  
to  
UAE



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Professional  
Cooperation  
Guidelines



**MOVING LIVES** *Not just boxes*



TELEPHONE:	Country code (971) + Areacode
STANDARD TIME:	GMT +4 hours
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric
ELECTRICITY:	220/240 v AC, 50Hz
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	No health certificates are required for entry into UAE, although it is advisable to contact your doctor prior to travelling.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	Jan 1, 24, Jun 6, Jul 9, Aug 8, Oct 15, Nov 4, Dec 2
OFFICE HOURS:	08.00-17.00 Sunday – Thursday
BANK HOURS:	08.00-13.00 Sunday – Wednesday 08.00-12.00 Thursday
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Vary throughout the country: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Merbeh 998 Ambulance / 999 Police / 997 Fire Dubai, Sharjan, Munai 999 Ambulance / 999 Police / 997 Fire
UK EMBASSY IN UAE:	British Embassy British Embassy Abu Dhabi PO Box 65 08.00-13.00 Saturday – Wednesday Dubai, UAE Tel: 00971 2610 1100 Tel: 009714 309 4444 Fax: 00971 2610 1586 Fax: 00971 4309 4257 Web: <a href="http://ukinuae.fco.gov.uk/en/">http://ukinuae.fco.gov.uk/en/</a>
TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION:	Ahel Amaan Travel & Tourism Box 25454 Tel: 03 655777
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES EMBASSY IN LONDON:	30 Princes Gate London SW7 1PT Tel: 0207581 1281 Fax: 02075819616 Web: <a href="http://unitedarabemirates.embassyhomepage.com/">http://unitedarabemirates.embassyhomepage.com/</a>
CONSULAR / VISA SECTION:	48 Princes Gate London SW7 Tel: 0870 005 6984



## **Moving to UAE from the UK – Information and Advice: Relocation Guide**

### **Customs**

**To the best of our knowledge, the following documentation is required to import household and personal effects into the United Arab Emirates. However, it is advisable to check with the authorities that documentation is in order, prior to despatch.**

### **Household Goods and Personal Effects**

#### **Required Documentation**

Documents required:

- Inventory copy
- Express or Original Bill of Lading
- Passport copy, with valid UAE residence visa stamped on the passport
- Authorisation letter

Importation is allowed provided the shipment consists of personal effects and used household goods.

All used personal effects and household goods are exempt of duty. Brand new items will attract Custom duty at 5% and if the invoice is not provided for the same items, Custom Inspectors will assess a value for the same and on the assessed value 5% will be levied as Customs duty.

UAE residence visa stamped on the passport is compulsory for Customs Clearance and to get delivery order from the shipping line.

Mostly all shipments will go through a 100% physical inspection and X-Ray and therefore it is necessary to pack all books, CDs, videos, DVD, magazines in separate cartons and marked clearly so that they can be easily identified by customs and released if in order quickly.

### **Diplomats Removals**

Documents required:

Same documents as Household Goods plus:

- Original letter from Ministry of foreign affairs for exemption of customs duty with Importer code
- Bill of lading should mention that it is Diplomatic Cargo Free of national and local duties

Marine police and customs authorities may inspect cargo.

Import of alcohol is allowed for diplomats but limited to annual quota agreed by the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs i.e. 4 litres for an individual.

### **Commodity Shipments**

Documents required:

- Legalised Cost Insurance and Freight invoice (CIF)
- Certificate of origin
- Inventory / packing list
- Bill of lading / airway bill

- Importers Code with UAE customs

Subject to 5% duties on the Cost Insurance and Freight (CIF).

### **Motor Vehicles**

Documents Required:

- Commercial invoice / original purchase invoice
- Express or original Bill of Lading
- Proof of ownership
- Passport copy
- Residence Visa on passport

Importation is allowed provided the vehicle meets UAE specifications.

Vehicles new or used are subject to 5% duties on CIF / FOB Discretion at Government Authorities.

Bill of lading should specify engine number, chassis number, make, model and colour.

Should have ownership proof from origin country.

After the vehicle is Customs cleared in the UAE, the Customs Authorities will issue a vehicle clearance certificate which should be submitted to the Local Traffic Authority to register the car in the name of the Owner / Consignee only.

Only one car is allowed for each consignee per shipment in a year.

Prior to exportation, the registration of the car should be deregistered near the local traffic authority.

### **Pets**

Documents Required:

- Original Health Certificate
- Original Vaccination card
- Original Certificate for Rabies Serum Neutralisation

(The certificate is not required from the mentioned countries – Australia, Austria, Andorra, Ascension Island, Antigua & Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Bahrain, Bermuda, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Fiji, French Polynesia, Falkland Islands, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Hong Kong, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jamaica, KSA, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Malta, Montserrat, Mauritius, Mayotte, Netherlands, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Saint Kitts & Nevis, San Marino, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, U.S.A, Vatican City, Vanuatu, Wallis & Futuna).

- Airway Bill

If part of a removal duty free entry.

A valid passport for pet with name, breed, colour, date of birth, age, sex, microchip or tattoo for identification. You are not allowed to import dogs or cats under the age of 4 months into UAE.



The Health Certificate, certificate for Rabies Serum Neutralization, vaccination card is to be obtained at the originating station. This certificate should be sent to the destination agent at least two to three weeks prior to the actual sending of the pet to the UAE. Your destination agent should take the same certificate to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in UAE who will issue an Import Licence for the same pet and that will be sent to the origin agent to be handed over to the owner of the pet. The import permit is valid only for one month. This original Import Licence along with a copy of the Health Certificate should be attached to the Airway Bill accompanying the pet.

Prior to the export of a pet, a Health Certificate should be obtained from a qualified and registered Veterinary Doctor in UAE, which needs to be presented to the airlines.

Each person allowed to import only two pets.

### **Prohibited Items**

Weapons, firearms (real or ornamental), ammunition, fire crackers, swords, daggers, spears etc, military uniform or equipment, alcohol, spirits, narcotics of all kinds, even poppy seeds and flowers, leaves etc, banned drugs and medicines, medicines in large quantities even obtained under prescription and for the consignees' own use, radio transmitter or communication equipment, statues and figures of animals with religious undertone, carvings and statues of humans especially in nude, pornographic materials, foodstuff in large quantities, religious books other than dealing with Islamic beliefs, controversial political literature and materials contrary to an Islamic State's principles. Port products.

If any of these items are found in the shipment during the inspection by the UAE Customs, the same will be confiscated and in some cases, explanation will be asked from the consignees and severe punishment will be imposed including fine or imprisonment.

Import of alcohol is allowed for diplomats but limited to annual quota agreed by the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs ie 4 litres for an individual.

### **Restricted Items**

Records, tapes, films, photographs, books, magazines, periodicals etc.

Live plants, seeds, fresh fruits and flowers are coming under restricted items, if found objectionable, they will destroy the same and never return these to the consignee.

These items will be subject to review and censorship by the UAE Ministry of Information. These items will be released if nothing abnormal is found. This procedure will take from 10 to 15 days.

### **Dangerous Items**

Combustible liquids, corrosives, explosives, flammable, compressed gases.

Please contact your destination agent should you have any questions concerning these dangerous items. If any of these items were shipped, this would put you and your company liable for damages and compensation under international law, which is also applicable in UAE.

### **Food**

We strongly recommend that shippers be advised not to ship any commercially prepared and purchased food product with your unaccompanied personal goods.

This includes: wines, spirits, beer, cider, spices, herbs, canned packed or wrapped foods, pet food, pastas, rice, food supplements, vitamins, fruit juices, carbonated / non-carbonated drinks, milk, perishable foods, dry foods and any other item intended for human or animal consumption.

If the shipper insists on shipping food items, the specified information below must be gathered and provided for each food item imported. If the information is not provided, the food items may face refusal of entry, requiring segregation / manipulation of the shipment under customs supervision at a bonded facility, at substantial additional cost. Costs could be in the thousands of dollars and cannot be anticipated. These costs will be the responsibility of the client.

- Product brand name
- Product classification
- Country of production
- Country of packaging
- Type of product (canned, bottled, packaged)
- Quantity

Ask for **Atlantic form QF565** for completing.

### **Wood**

It is advisable that all wood packaging is heat treated and a certificate is sent with the consignment. All shipments being imported will be inspected by the Agricultural department and if needed, fumigation will be performed at destination.

## **General Information on the United Arab Emirates**

### **Background**

The Trucial States of the Persian Gulf coast granted the UK control of their defence and foreign affairs in 19th century treaties. In 1971, six of these states - Abu Dhabi, 'Ajman, Al Fujayrah, Ash Shariqah, Dubayy, and Umm al Qaywayn - merged to form the United Arab Emirates (UAE). They were joined in 1972 by Ra's al Khaymah. The UAE's per capita GDP is on par with those of leading West European nations. Its high oil revenues and its moderate foreign policy stance have allowed the UAE to play a vital role in the affairs of the region. For more than three decades, oil and global finance drove the UAE's economy. However, in 2008-09, the confluence of falling oil prices,





collapsing real estate prices, and the international banking crisis hit the UAE especially hard. The UAE has essentially avoided the “Arab Spring” unrest seen elsewhere in the Middle East, though in March 2011, political activists and intellectuals signed a petition calling for greater public participation in governance that was widely circulated on the Internet. To stem potential further unrest, the government announced a multi-year, \$1.6-billion infrastructure investment plan for the poorer northern emirates and aggressively pursued advocates of political reform.

## Geography

In the south and west of the country, the land is mainly sand dunes and salt flats with the occasional traditional desert oasis. The largest oases are in Al Ain, 160 kilometres east of Abu Dhabi, and Liwa in the southwest. In the northern part of the country, the sand dunes yield to gravel plains formed by the Hajar Mountain range, dating back about 200 million years. The mountains themselves rise to a height of over 3000 meters and extend from the UAE south into Oman. The east coast is essentially a fertile plain where rainfall and subterranean water have allowed agriculture to be practiced for thousands of years. Along the coast, there are long, unspoiled beaches stretching for kilometres. On the Arabian Gulf, over 100 islands and numerous shallow inlets add to the scenery, mangrove trees are common as well as spawning fish and birds.

International Disputes are; the United Arab Emirate 2006 Yearbook published a map and text rescinding the 1974 boundary with Saudi Arabia, as stipulated in a treaty filed with the UN in 1993, on the grounds that the agreement was not formally ratified, boundary agreement was signed and ratified with Oman in 2003 for entire border, including Oman’s Musandam Peninsula and Al Madhah enclaves, but contents of the agreement and maps showing the alignment have not been published, Iran and UAE dispute Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island, which Iran occupies.

## Climate

Desert, it is cooler in the eastern mountains.

Moderate climate is found between: October and March, days are Sunny and Pleasant (Average Temperature – 26°C). Nights are Cool (Average Temperature – 15°C).

Summer is between: April and September temperatures peaking at 50°C and high humidity levels. In the Southerly and Northerly winds blow over the UAE with occasional sand storms.

## Population

It is estimated at 2.6 million.

## Environmental Issues

There is a lack of natural freshwater resources compensated by desalination plants, desertification and beach pollution from oil spills.

## Currency

The currency unit to the Emirates is the Dirham (Dhm) which is divided into 100 fils. The following denominations are in circulation:

**Notes:** 1, 5, 10, 100, 500 and 1,000 Dhm

**Coins:** 1, 5, 10, 25 and 50 fils, and 1 Dhm

All major credit cards are widely accepted and most of the world’s leading banks have branches in the UAE.

## Economy

The UAE has an open economy with a high per capita income and a sizable annual trade surplus. Successful efforts at economic diversification have reduced the portion of GDP based on oil and gas output to 25%. Since the discovery of oil in the UAE more than 30 years ago, the UAE has undergone a profound transformation from an impoverished region of small desert principalities to a modern state with a high standard of living. The government has increased spending on job creation and infrastructure expansion and is opening utilities to greater private sector involvement. In April 2004, the UAE signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with Washington and in November 2004 agreed to undertake negotiations toward a Free Trade Agreement with the US. The country’s Free Trade Zones - offering 100% foreign ownership and zero taxes – are helping to attract foreign investors. Higher oil revenue, strong liquidity, housing shortages, and cheap credit in 2005-07 led to a surge in asset prices (shares and real estate) and consumer inflation. The global financial crisis and the resulting tight international credit market and falling oil prices have already begun to deflate asset prices and will result in slower economic growth for 2009. Dependence on oil and a large expatriate workforce are significant long-term challenges. The UAE’s strategic plan for the next few years focuses on diversification and creating more opportunities for nationals through improved education and increased private sector employment.

## Registering with the British Embassy

The British Embassy strongly urge all British Citizens to register with the Embassy on arrival in the UAE, and to reregister each year. When you register they will give you contact details of your ‘warden’. Wardens are volunteers from the community who have offered to help the Embassy quickly cascade important information to those registered. You can register in person or by phone, contact details at the front of this guide.

## Security

You should be aware of the threat from terrorism. Terrorists continue to issue statements threatening to carry out attacks in the Gulf region. These include references to attacks on Western interest, including residential compounds, military, oil, transport and aviation interests.



You should review your security arrangements carefully, and remain vigilant, particularly in public places, avoiding any public demonstrations. Follow news reports and be alert to local and regional developments which might trigger local disturbances.

### **Laws**

The UAE is a Muslim country in which Islamic law is enforced. Women should dress modestly particularly in Sharjah and Ajman emirates where Islamic law is rigorously enforced. Public displays of affection are frowned upon and you can be arrested for kissing in public. Sex outside of marriage is illegal as is cohabitation, adultery and homosexual behaviour. Swearing or making rude gestures is considered an obscene act and offenders can be prosecuted. You can obtain liquor license to consume alcohol in your private home, and alcoholic drinks are served in licensed hotels and clubs. It is a punishable offence to drink or to be drunk in public.

Some UK prescriptions / over the counter medicines are illegal in UAE. Penalties for drug trafficking, smuggling, possession including in the body are severe and carries a minimum sentence of four years imprisonment.

### **Religion**

Muslim 96% (Shi'a 16%), Christian, Hindu and 4% other.

### **Social Customs**

Muslims are forbidden by their religion to drink alcohol or eat pork products, hence these items should not be offered or eaten in their presence. Expatriates should also take care not to offend during Ramadan (the month preceding Eid-al-Fitr, beginning approx. 17 March), when Muslims are not permitted to eat, drink or smoke between dawn and dusk.

Muslim festivals are timed according to local sightings of various phases of the moon and the dates given here are approximations. During the lunar month of Ramadan that precedes Eid al-Fitr, Muslims fast during the day and feast at night and normal business patterns may be interrupted. Many restaurants are closed during the day and there may be restrictions on smoking and drinking. Some disruption may continue into Eid al-Fitr itself. Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha may last anything from two to 10 days, depending on the region.

### **Education**

As there is a large and varied expatriate community in the UAE, there is a long-established system of community schools, where pupils are prepared for entry into secondary school within their own national system. British children generally follow a syllabus for the Common Entrance Examination. All the schools are well subscribed and expatriates seeking places in them need to contact the school's board well in advance. The contact details of the schools are listed in the Directory of the European Council of International Schools, available for ECIS Inc.

### **Health**

All visitors to the UAE are advised to obtain the following protection:

- Typhoid
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A

There are government run hospitals and clinics in all the major centres of the population in the UAE. Private care is also widely available at private clinics as well as at all hospitals. Standards of care are excellent, with modern equipment and well-trained specialists, doctors and nurses. However, for highly specialised or prolonged treatment, most expatriates would opt to return home.

Medical treatment is free at government hospitals for nationals of the UAE, but expatriates will need to obtain a health care card to receive treatment. The card is supplied only on production of a residence permit and proof of sponsorship and entitles the holder to free or reduced cost treatment and free dental care but has to be renewed annually.

Insurance is recommended though, for both you and your dependants, from an International insurance company such as BUPA, "Life Scheme" Tel: 01273 323563.

### **Language**

The official languages are Arabic and English; Urdu, Hindi and Farsi are also in use. Most of the business is conducted in English.

### **Electricity**

In Abu Dhabi the supply is 240/415 volts, AC 50 cycles. Plug fittings are either of the British 13-amp square pin or of the 3-pin round type. Bayonet type lamp fittings are used throughout the Emirates.

*Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date we cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.*