

# The Costs & Pitfalls of Moving Overseas

---

To give a general idea of the costs and pitfalls that can be associated with moving overseas, four major cities in four countries have been used as examples. Hopefully, this will help give an idea of what a candidate will need to do and what a client will to assist. Examples used:

- The Middle East (**Dubai**)
- The UK (**London**)
- Asia (**Hong Kong**)
- The USA (**New York**)

This presentation will cover:

1. The general costs associated with moving
2. Assistance Firms Offer
3. General information
4. Visas
5. Additional Useful websites

APPENDIX : Fact Sheets on the Middle East, UK, Hong Kong and USA.

## 1. General Costs Associated with Moving Overseas

- A. Airfares
- B. Cost of Removalists
- C. Property rental prices
- D. The Mercer Index

### A. Airfares

*How much does it cost to get there?*

Quotes for a one way flight from Sydney:

Flying from Sydney to...	Price one	Price two
<b>Dubai</b>	Emirates <b>\$2970.64</b>	Singapore Air <b>\$1417.41</b>
<b>London</b>	British Airways <b>\$1525</b>	Singapore Air <b>\$1661.61</b>
<b>Hong Kong</b>	Cathay Pacific <b>\$1492</b>	Qantas <b>\$1379</b>
<b>New York</b>	United Airways <b>\$2424.40</b>	British Air <b>\$2958</b>

As at 16/09/2008

### B. Cost of Removalists

*How much does it cost to move?*

Quotes based on moving a typical two bedroom, one bathroom apartment from Sydney:

From Sydney to ...	Company 1 (Grace Removals)	Company 2 (OSS W/W Removals)	Company 3 (Wridgeways)	Time to ship
Dubai	\$10-12,000	\$4,000-5,000	\$6,500	5-6 weeks
London	\$10,000	\$4,000-5,000	\$6,000	7-8 weeks
Hong Kong	\$7-8,000	\$2,700-36,000	\$5,500	4 weeks
New York	\$12,000	\$4,660-6,5000	\$7,500	9-10 weeks

As at 16/09/2008

### C. Property rental prices

#### *How much does it cost to rent overseas?*

These prices are based on two bedroom one bathroom apartments and are **approximates**:

City	Area one (posh)	Area two (mi-range)	Area three (not-so-posh)	Bond policies
Dubai	AED\$235,000  (Dubai Marina)	AED\$ 135,000  (Dubai International City)	AED\$ 125,000  (Dubailand)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: Prices are per year.</li> <li>The general process is to pay one year rent up front. Often, firms will give you a payment to help cover this and then subtract it from your monthly salary.</li> <li>Useful Website: <a href="http://www.grapeshisha.com/rent-in-Dubai.html">http://www.grapeshisha.com/rent-in-Dubai.html</a> <a href="http://www.bayut.com/">http://www.bayut.com/</a></li> </ul>
London	£657  (Kensington)	£589  (Earls Court)	£535  (Notting Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: Prices are per week</li> <li>Using a relocation company is recommended. There are hundreds of Estate Agents and no multiple listing service. The Relocation Agency calls around to all the Agents in the areas you specify and set up all the appointments to see flats. This is a huge time and cost saver.</li> <li>Useful Websites: <a href="http://eng.ashtonrose.ru/Analytics/Rentprice/">http://eng.ashtonrose.ru/Analytics/Rentprice/</a> <a href="http://www.primelocation.com">www.primelocation.com</a> and <a href="http://www.findaproperty.com">www.findaproperty.com</a></li> </ul>
Hong Kong	HK\$75,000  (Repulse Bay)	HK\$60,500  (Midlevel's Central)	HK\$30,000  (Happy Valley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: Prices are per year</li> <li>Useful Website: <a href="http://www.hongkonghomes.com">www.hongkonghomes.com</a></li> </ul>
New York	US\$2,820 – 5,300  (Upper East Side – Park)	US\$2,550 – 4,400)  (Upper West Side)	US\$1,375-3,300  (Brooklyn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: Prices are per month</li> <li>There are buyers and sellers agents. The buyer's agent works for the buyer and the sellers agent works for the</li> </ul>

	Avenue)			<p>seller. This can make it difficult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful Websites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://newyork.condo.com/ForRent?view=list-map&amp;beds=2&amp;baths=1&amp;loc=76451#view=list-map&amp;beds=2&amp;baths=1&amp;loc=61413">http://newyork.condo.com/ForRent?view=list-map&amp;beds=2&amp;baths=1&amp;loc=76451#view=list-map&amp;beds=2&amp;baths=1&amp;loc=61413</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.nytimes.com/pages/realestate/">www.nytimes.com/pages/realestate/</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
--	---------	--	--	--

As at 16/09/2008

Also, something to note was that in a survey of the world's 20 most expensive locations to rent a 3 bedroom apartment, all four cities ranked in the top 20.

Location	Global Ranking
Hong Kong	1
New York	3
London	5
Dubai	13

Source: <http://www.eca-international.com/ASP/ViewArticle2.asp?ArticleID=216>

#### D. Mercer index

Rank March 2008	Rank March 2007	City	Cost of living index March 2008	Cost of living index march 2007
3	2	London	125.0	126.3
6	5	Hong Kong	117.6	119.4
22	15	New York	100.00	100.0

Note: **Dubai** didn't get a mention – it dropped out of the list for the present 6 months.

As at 16/09/2008

Price of a Pint (AU\$):

City	Cost of Beer (\$AU)
Dubai	\$8.49
London	\$6.51
Hong Kong	\$7.15
New York	\$6.37
Sydney	\$6.48

Source: [www.pintprice.com/region](http://www.pintprice.com/region)

## 2. Firm Assistance

A couple of general examples provided by Cam and Jen and NCR:

#### Dubai:

Examples vary as to what firms will do for you as far as relocation.

**Al Tamimi** do not pay any relocation or even put you up for a period of time. They have a staff "share house" but you have to pay to stay there.

**Pinsent Masons** are more kind, recently paying:

- the cost of an ordinary economy class airfare;
- the cost of shipping any personal effects from non-Dubai location;
- the reasonable cost of temporary accommodation while finding somewhere to live for about 7-10 days;
- a flight home once a year except for the first and final year, when they will pay for the first flight to and the final flight back to Australia;
- a loan to make an upfront lease payment in the first year of residence in Dubai;
- an orientation trip of up to 5 days to find a home or suitable school; and
- a settlement allowance of Stg1000 for all incidentals of transitioning to a new location and setting up a new home to cover things such as food, travel expenses while in temp accommodation, re decoration of your new home, school uniforms etc.

**Generally**, most firms will fly you home once a year and in the UAE they will often pay a lump sum amount at the start time to cover rent , this is then taken out of your pay as the year goes on.

### London

**Barlow Lyde & Gilbert** offered £2000 for relocation and that was all.

**Generally** UK firms are fairly tight when it comes to relocation.

### Hong Kong

**Clifford Chance** offered a recent move to Hong Kong:

- HK\$30,000 to be used to move or buy new furniture, flights there, temporary accommodation in a hotel/services apartment and furniture, reimbursed on presentation of receipts.

**Freshfields** offered to pay:

- hotel accommodation costs and reasonable expenses while looking for accommodation for 2 weeks after arrival in HK;.
- an interest free loan to cover the tenancy deposit;
- a cash furniture allowance of HK\$45,000;
- economy flights there and a return flight home for all family members.

**Linklaters** offered:

- spouse and children a holiday passage every 12 months (HK\$16,720 for adults and kids between 12 and 18, HK\$12,540 for kids between 2 and 11 and HK \$1,672 for kids under 2);
- They also provided a one way economy ticket to HK and all visa associated costs for the candidate and family;
- one month's accommodation and a relocation allowance of HK\$20,000 to cover anything related to relocation e.g., shipping, deposits on housing etc reimbursed on presentation of receipts; and
- the firm wanted the whole lot back if you leave earlier than 2 years into the contract.

## New York

### Millbank Tweed Hadley & McCloy:

- paid up to \$US12,000 for the move including air fares;
- HR co-ordinates all the details which make it easier; and
- short term housing for up to 4 weeks after arrival in NY.

## 3. General info

### Schooling

One road that many who send their children overseas go down is to send children to an 'international school'. In all of the cities used for example, there are schools that base their curriculum on the International Baccalaureat (IB) program. This means that the school systems are quite reliable.

Some general points to note include that (these are general observations from talking to people rather than hard facts):

- in **Dubai** you cannot change your child's school during the academic year without approval by the Ministry of Education and if the circumstances are 'special';
- In **London** it can be hard to get into the private schools as they require families to sign up incredibly early (i.e. at the time of birth);
- In **New York** an "Independent Education Consultant" is often the best resource for providing an objective overview of all the schooling options available; and.
- In **Hong Kong**, the schooling system has a reputation for being really intense, some Australian kids have issues coping unless they are quite academic.

The best **rule of thumb** is to advise candidates that as soon as they are thinking of making the move to start looking into signing kids up to schools as it can often be the 'getting in' process that can be lengthy.

A good website for this is <http://www.expatexchange.com>

### Cars

To drive overseas, an **International Driving Permit (IDP)** is needed. This is proof that you hold a valid driver's licence in your home country and must be carried with a valid Australian drivers licence. In Australia, the IDP's are issued by the Australian Automobile Association. Contact details are on [www.smarttraveller.gov.au](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au) .

Whilst an international driver's licence is an option in all of the cities reviewed, in the cities used for examples, public transport is readily available so cars aren't entirely necessary.

## 4. Visas

### Dubai

- To move to Dubai a candidate requires a sponsor (usually the firm you are working for).

- All foreign workers require a “labour card” and a residence visa. To obtain these, there is a medical exam. The labour card is like an ID card and must be carried at all times, the candidate’s passport having been surrendered to their employer.
- Residence visas are valid for 3 years and are easy to renew.
- The age limit is 50 but this is flexible
- New residents have to stay in the emirates for the first 6 months of their stay.

Useful websites that go through the process (including outlining the forms and giving a “how to fill them in” guide) are:

- <http://www.the-dubaicity.com/jobs-in-dubai/dubai-work-visa.htm>
- <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/uae/index.html>

### London

In March 2006 the UK Government announced an overhaul of its immigration system. The changes include moving to a five tier, points-based system of immigration by 2009. Changes already implemented include:

- A new structure for the Highly Skilled Migrant Program; and
- changes to visa requirements for Australians wanting to enter the UK to work or study.

More changes can be expected as roll-out of the planned immigration changes continues. The most up-to-date information on UK immigration changes can be found on the website

[Http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) . This website is fantastic and completely sets out what to do, with a “how to” guide.

- All applicants for a UK visa, including Australians, must now have their fingerscan and a digital photograph taken as part of the visa application process.
- Applicants for a UK visa need to complete an application online at [www.britaus.net](http://www.britaus.net) The candidate will then have to make an online appointment to visit a British Consulate so they can take a fingerscans and a digital photograph.
- To go to the UK as a **sponsored skilled worker** (which the majority of our candidates will fall under, after November 2008, will mean a new tiered system will apply. This more affects the sponsor as they will have to meet all the steps. The aim of the policy is to crack down on illegal workers. Sponsors must register with the agency as a sponsor before they can bring foreign workers from outside the EEA into the UK to work and sponsors need to alert the agency if migrants do not comply with their immigration conditions.
- To get in as a skilled worker, the candidate needs to have enough points to get through, based on their qualifications and potential income, a good grasp of the English language and enough money to support themselves through the first month of their stay.
- Last week Gina went through the issues involved in getting admitted in the UK which is a huge pitfall.

Useful Websites, again with how to guides are:

- [http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zwgi/view/Advice/United\\_Kingdom#Entry\\_and\\_Exit\\_Requirements](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zwgi/view/Advice/United_Kingdom#Entry_and_Exit_Requirements)

## Hong Kong

- Visa and other entry and exit conditions (such as currency, customs and quarantine regulations) change regularly. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Immigration Department gives the most complete information on what to do.  
[www.info.dfat.gov.au/protocol](http://www.info.dfat.gov.au/protocol)

Useful website on getting the visa is:

- [http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Hong\\_Kong#Entry\\_and\\_Exit\\_Requirements](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/Hong_Kong#Entry_and_Exit_Requirements)

## New York

- As a part of the Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the US, Australian citizens with tertiary qualification and work experience can work up to 2 years in the US on the E-3 visa. There are 10,500 up for grabs for Australians each fiscal year. These are only available for specialist occupations that need a “theoretical and practical application of a body of specialist knowledge” (Lawyers fall into this).
- Australians are usually eligible for an E-3 visa, which is for Australians working in the US and their spouses and children (not for de-facto or same sex partners). A job offer from an American firm is needed to be eligible.
- Australians can travel on the Visa Waiver program to find a job and attend interviews and then apply for the E-3 once back in Australia.
- Lasts for 24 months and can be renewed.

Useful websites are:

- <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/consular/visas/niv/e3.html>
- [http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zwgi/view/Advice/United\\_States\\_of\\_America#Entry\\_and\\_Exit\\_Requirements](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zwgi/view/Advice/United_States_of_America#Entry_and_Exit_Requirements)

## 5. Additional Useful Sites

- Dubai: <http://www.uae-properties.com/Moving.aspx>
- London: <http://www.moving2london.com/index.php/Videos-Reg/visa-options.html>
- Hong Kong: [http://www.hongkonghomes.com/living\\_in\\_hk/](http://www.hongkonghomes.com/living_in_hk/)
- New York: <http://innonate.com/2006/07/28/tips-for-moving-to-new-york-city/>