

# *Moving To The Philippines Checklist*



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### About US

HELPING EXPATS Just a regular guy and a regular girl, a regular daughter working together along with new friends, trying to make it easier to find the right information on the Philippines. Travel, Living, Health, Government, Transportation, Eating, and of course drinking lots of coffee. If you know of anything that would help others share the website with them and also let us know so we can add it to the website and hope to make it a place we can all use for a Reference Book about all things Philippines!

### Preparation For Moving To The Philippines



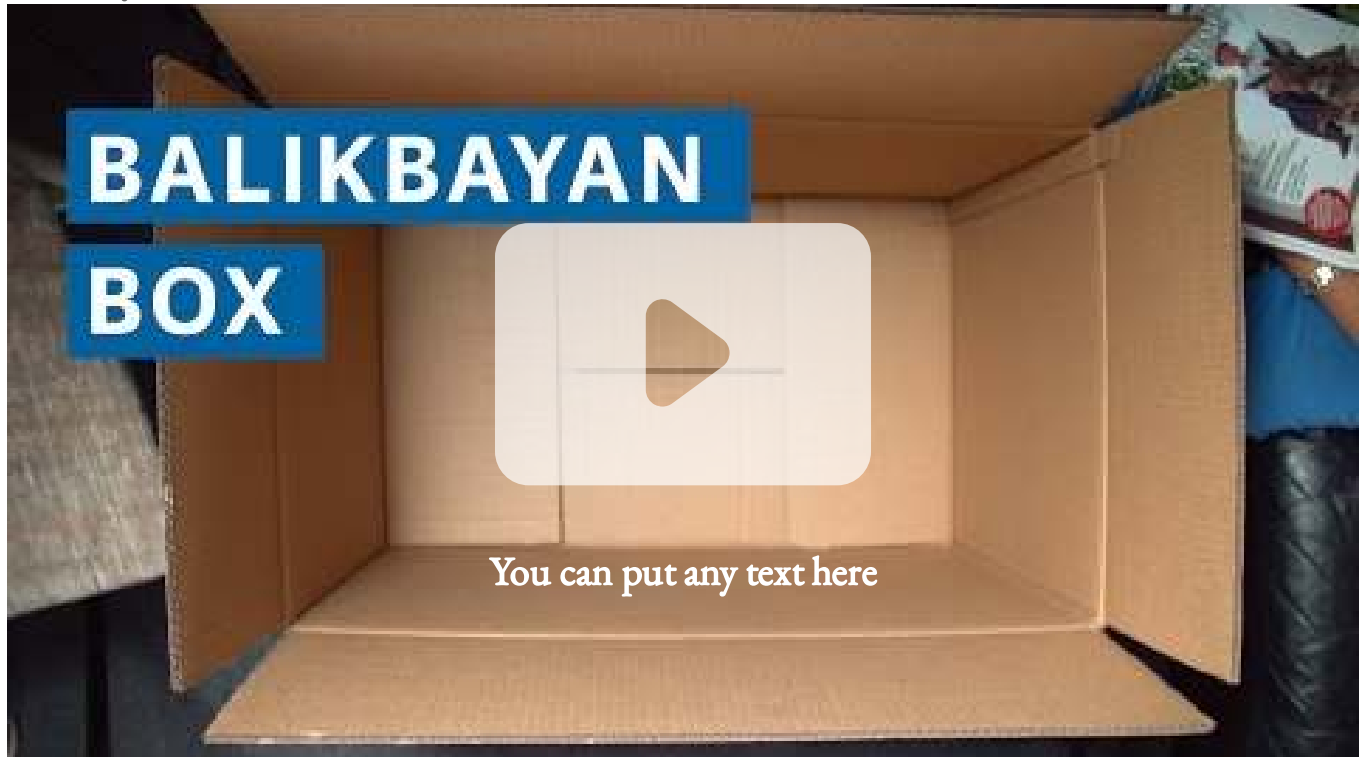
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1. **Get rid of stuff:** if you have no plans on returning, or alternatively put it in storage if you only plan on staying one or two years. Take your time selling your stuff to maximize your profits. Use Facebook marketplace this is an awesome and easy-to-use tool, very easy to use on a smartphone.
2. **Make sure that your passport** has at least 12 months left on it, I would consider applying for a new one if you have less than 24 months on it as it is much more of a hassle to renew here in the Philippines, ALSO, AND THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT-YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST 6 MONTHS LEFT FOR EXPIRATION DATE FROM THE DATE YOU ARRIVAL ARE LEAVING ON YOUR PASSPORT OTHER WISE THEY WON'T LET YOU LEAVE TO THE PHILIPPINES.
3. **Drivers License:** Make sure your home country driver's license is renewed before you leave home, The Philippines allows you to drive for 90 days on your license from your home country, After that, you must change it to a Filipino driver's license. If you plan to drive a motorcycle get a license in your country so it can be converted into the Philippines motorcycle license.
4. **Medication:** If you are on ANY type of medication start getting extra so you can take at least 6 months with your supply, preferably more (As much as you can) Bring the RX and meds in original bottles. I recommend [travel](#) insurance as it covers more things than a traditional insurance plan and follows you if you plan on visiting other countries. [Travel Insurance](#) for short term and for longer stay get [medical insurance](#) (Make sure and tell Michael, Glen sent you.)



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## 5. Balikbayan:



Consider sending a Balikbayan box (Back To The Country if you have a place to send it), what is a Balikbayan box? It is a box that is sent via shipping at approx. 120-150 USD and takes about 90 days to get to the Philippines, now with Covid it's hard to say how much longer it takes. The size of these boxes differs from vendor to vendor, call around and get the best deal. Remember these boxes have to be tapped VERY well and anything inside has to be protected these boxes and NOT MEANT for fragile items (I have sent a few BOXES in my time and several items have broken) so pack things with a lot of padding [What's a balikbayan box?](#)

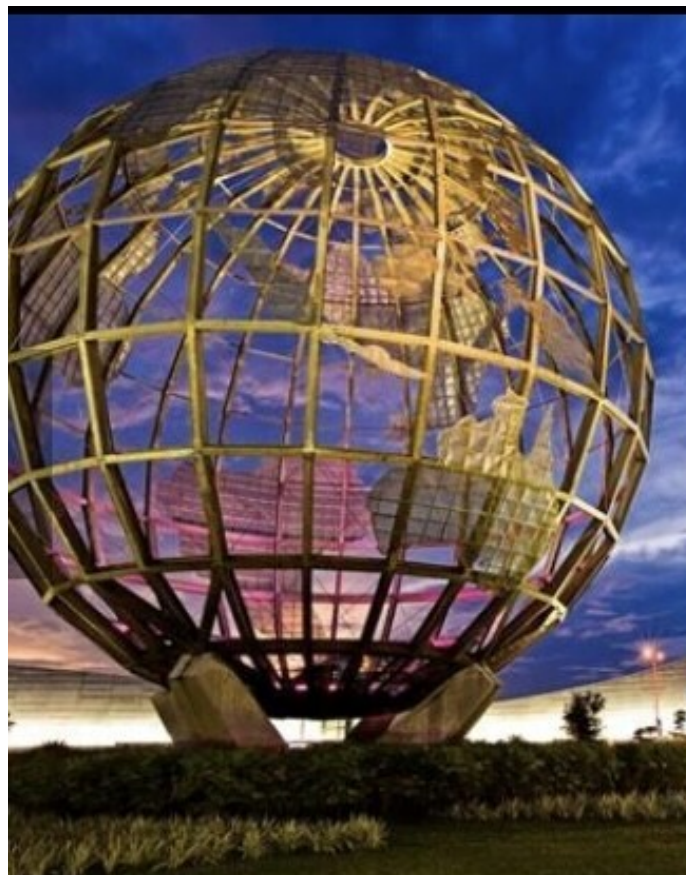


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6. **Tickets To fly:** Get [The Ultimate Guide To Travel Hacking Cheap Flights For Just \\$7](#) Start looking at tickets and understand what are the cheapest rates you can get, as an example don't travel in December as this is VERY expensive. Use [Skyscanner](#) to find the months that are cheapest to Travel, be flexible on your travel date, you are now retired so you can travel any day of the week, typically cheapest days are Tuesday to Thursday. Do your research before traveling. Make sure you book your flight at least 30 days ahead of time for the best rate. VERY IMPORTANT: book a [throwaway ticket](#) out of the country within 30 days of arrival to the Philippines. A [Throwaway ticket](#) is a valid ticket OUT of the Philippines to show that you are leaving the Philippines, The company I recommend charges 10-16 USD. You will never use this ticket therefore it's called a [throwaway ticket](#).
7. **Have a good scale:** at home to weigh your luggage before you go, even if it's just 0.5 to 1 lb. over they will give you a hefty "Fine" so make sure all your [luggage](#) is within the limits. Any valuables such as [laptops](#), [cameras](#) (basically any electronics) take with you in your carry-on.
8. **Remember PHILIPPINES is 220V:** @ 60 Hz so anything you bring that you will work on an electric grid make sure it can take 220V-almost all Laptops Phones Cameras auto-adjust voltage to 110/220V, you can also look at the label on the plug sometimes it will tell you, get a [power converter](#) anyway there cheap and you will need it for something. Ways to check If you have no equipment to test, I suggest that you plug it in at 110 volts and verify if it is working properly. If the device works at 220 and you use a 110 power source it will only work under the power required and you will know the device is not working as it should and it offers no risk of damaging your equipment. If you do the other way around you will risk burning the device by supplying higher voltage. I have done this test a few times and it always work

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9. **Finding a place to live:** Initially, I would book a hotel for 3 nights to get an idea of the area and if it is a place you would like to stay longer. I prefer using AGODA for booking hotels as they have the best rates FB Marketplace for finding rentals, or also ask other expats you meet there. (apartments or condos), look at my website for more ideas [philippinexpatrefbook.com](http://philippinexpatrefbook.com) you can also rent a place for a month or two on Airbnb which is a good way to go, don't forget to negotiate don't take price give at face value offer 30% lower and put bids on several places, a lot of empty places right now. If you feel uncomfortable negotiating have a friend, do it for you. [Realtors In The Philippines](#)
10. **Open a mailbox forwarding:** account, there are many out there, currently, I use [TravelingMailbox](#) and they have been amazing. This is a good idea to keep your address in the USA unless you have a friend who you trust that will do this for you. If you live in a state that has high state Tax, consider an address change to a state such as **Texas, Tennessee, or Florida** so that you will not pay state Tax on any income. Talk to your **tax advisor** about this specific point.



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13. **VPN:** I have found some websites in the USA that need an IP address from the USA not sure what I'm talking about send me an email anytime I'll help you with this. [glen@philippinesexpatrefbook.com](mailto:glen@philippinesexpatrefbook.com) otherwise you cannot use it & other countries as well, so a **VPN** might be a useful tool for you once you get to the Philippines. I use **Surfshark**. I have been happy with them so far and they enable you to get my American TV programs on **Amazon Prime**, and Netflix, IPTV is another option **Chappie TV** Low-Cost TV.





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14. **Money:** I would recommend multiple ways to access your money including a 2nd bank account and ways to transfer money here. The following are my recommendations, get more than one ATM card as you may lose the one you have. when you first go make sure to have like new money as they will not change dirty or torn bills and bring \$100 and get p1000 and p500 and some smaller bills for tips and short transport fees, no one has change.
15. **Ways to Send Money:** Need to Send your Filipina girlfriend money or yourself? [Wise](#), [Pangea](#), [Remitly](#), [Pomelo](#), and [Sendwave](#).
16. **Phones:** Set up a phone in your home country through [Magicjack](#), Skype, Google, or even a local phone carrier in able to get texts from your bank or credit cards also check with the bank and see if you can also get email codes as I do with Bank of America another way is to set up your bank with a trusted person in the USA or your country to get the codes then they can email or send in a Facebook messenger or other means. I recommend [Mint Mobile](#) by T-Mobile as they seem to be the least expensive and have the best service here.
17. **Documents:** bring hard copies two of each store in two different bags in case one is lost. Everything with an expiration date, extend out as far as you can. Contact your banks let them know your going out of country and where, Driver's License, and Credit Cards, debit card get more then one and extend out everything that you can. You might be gone for a few years and it is easier to deal with this stuff later in your home country.
18. **Pack light** I recommend packing as light as possible, remember 90% of the things you are bringing can just be purchased here. Things I do recommend can be found on my website [philippinesexpatrefbook.com](http://philippinesexpatrefbook.com) If you are a bigger guy, you may want to bring extra clothes and shoes as Filipinos are much smaller. If you fall within the normal range no need, just purchase here. Have a day shopping here at an inexpensive department store, you may even meet a nice sales clerk while you're at it.



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19. **Visit my website:** for the list and scroll down to SHOP on the front page. [Philippinesexpatrefbook.com](http://Philippinesexpatrefbook.com) Traveling List of things you should buy. The number one item and number two items are something you will want to have with you at all times [baby wipes](#), [hand sanitizer](#) the CRs Do not have paper or soap one other item is a good [flashlight](#) as there are lots of brownouts. [Order today!](#)
20. **CR's or Bathrooms** When out and about anywhere in the Philippines always have [baby wipes](#) and [hand sanitizer](#) wipes or [spray](#) as CR's do not have paper or soap.
21. **If you are a bigger person** make sure to take clothes with you as Filipinos are small it happened to me so I do know it not easy to find [yes I'm telling you again, Baby wipe](#) always have them with you. [Hand sanitizer](#) same as baby wipes, [Laptop](#) and, [Phone extra plugs](#). **Bring like new money no torn or dirty money.**

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