

◆ Preparation for Moving to The Philippines Checklist ◆



A) Get rid of stuff if you have no plans on going back, or alternatively put it in storage if you're only planning on staying one or two years. Take your time selling your stuff as to maximize your profits. Use Facebook marketplace this is an awesome and easy to use tool, very easy to use on a smart phone.

B) 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 ARE LEAVING ON YOUR PASSPORT OTHERWISE THEY WON'T LET YOU LEAVE TO THE PHILIPPINES.**

C) 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.

D) If you are on ANY type of medication start getting extra so you can take at least a 6-month supply, preferably more (As much as you can) As medicine here is more expensive than the USA, 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 & Medical Insurance & Covers: Covid-19

[Travel Insurance](#)

To avoid any incident, pack any medications that you bring with you in their original containers. Check that all their labels are easy to read. Bring a signed and dated letter from your personal physician, confirming your current medication needs, particularly if you have reason to carry any syringes or needles. Avoid buying any items that you suspect are counterfeit. While you are unlikely to face any penalties while in the Philippines, it is possible that customs officials will take the counterfeit items away upon departure from the country.

Declare all your medication when you enter the Philippines.

E) Consider sending a Balikbayan box, 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 taped VERY well and anything inside has to be protected these boxes and NOT MEANT for fragile items (I have sent a few BBB in my time and several items have broken) so pack things with a lot of padding. I recommend [Johnny Air Cargo](#).

F) 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 prior to travel. 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 basically a valid ticket OUT of the Philippines to show that you are leaving the Philippines, The company I recommend charges 16USD. You will never use this ticket therefore it's called a throwaway ticket.

[Onward Ticket \(throw away ticket\)](#)

G) The 3 main airports that you will land in are in Manila, Clark and Cebu city, which city you chose to land in depends on your final destination, but if you can I would choose Cebu or Clark as the airport is smaller and it's easier to get through than Manila, again this will depend on your final destination.

H) 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.

I) Remember PH is 220V @ 60 Hz so anything you bring that you have to run on an electric grid make sure it can take 220V- almost all Laptops/Phones/Cameras auto-adjust voltage to 110/220V.

K) 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 I find they have the best rates

FB Market place for finding rent apartment/condo, you can also rent a place for a month or two on Airbnb which is actually 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.

L) It's very important that you print all your documents (I typically do two copies and put them in different places, in case I should lose one), such as airline tickets, hotel stays and so on. If you use smartphone or tablet you can also put it in an app like OneNote (Remember to save to your phone not just to the cloud in case, there is no internet)

M) Open a bank account that has no foreign ATM fees or that will reimburse you any fees charged by the local banks in the Philippines – one such bank Charles Schwab, I use them and have been extremely happy with the service and website. Other banks Fidelity, & USAA.

N) Open a mailbox forwarding account, there are many out there, currently I use [Traveling Mailbox](#) 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 can 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 or Tennessee so that you will not pay state Tax on any income. Talk to your tax advisor about this specific point.

O) I have found some websites in the USA need an IP address from USA 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 VPN](#); I have been happy with them so far and it enables to get my American TV programs on Amazon Prime, Netflix, etc...

P) 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.

Need to Send your Filipina girlfriend money or yourself?

Wise get your first transfer for free: [Open a Wise Account](#)

Q) Set up a phone in your home country though Skype or Google or even a local phone carrier in able to get texts from your bank or credit cards. I recommend T-Mobile as they seem to be the least expensive and have the best service here.

R) Anything and everything with an expiration date, extend out as far as you can. Contact your banks, Driver's License, Credit Cards 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.

S) Dating and Relationships in the Philippines: Best way of course are boots on the ground and out and about meeting people. However, some people don't have the confidence, time or skill set for this. You can do online dating in combination of boots on the ground or just one or the other. If you are to meet using dating apps, these are the ones I recommend.

#1 Dating Site to meet quality Filipina girls: Christian Filipina Meet Beautiful Christian Singles Today! They check every profile. Best overall results of any dating site in the Philippines. [Join ChristianFilipina](#)

PinaLove has over 500 new members sign up daily and has a great layout and is free for basic services. [Join PinaLove](#)

T) I recommend packing as light as possible, remember 90% of the things you are bringing can just be purchased here. Things I do recommend bring can be found in my Gio's Essential Travel List below. If you are a bigger guy, you may want to bring extra clothes and shoes. 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.

Gio's Essentials Traveling List

[Order today!](#)

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WELCOME TO THE PHILIPPINES – it's more fun here, it really is 😊

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