



# *Overseas (OCONUS) Planning Guide*

We hope you find this useful.

We've included our thoughts on everything from Non-Temporary storage to what to do the day before packers arrive and everything in between. Every OCONUS move has its own unique needs and challenges, but this should get you started.

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## UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE (UB)

*Unaccompanied Baggage (UB) is your express shipment. These items travel via air rather than sea and can arrive weeks, and sometimes months, before your House Hold Goods (HHG) arrive. UB can even be delivered to you while you are still in a hotel.*

### Moving CONUS to OCONUS

Many OCONUS locations provide beds, dressers, couches, chairs, dining sets, and more for use while you await delivery of your HHG.

Many OCONUS ACS offices have a Lending Closet, where you can borrow essentials such as pots, pans, dishes, a broom, and a vacuum until your shipments arrive.

Thrift stores, where available, provide an inexpensive way to buy essentials including local-voltage small kitchen and household appliances.

Some OCONUS locations have a Self-Help office, where you can borrow drills, yard hoses, lawn mowers, carpet cleaners, snow shovels and other items to help you maintain your home and yard throughout the duration of your tour.

Before shipping UB, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I want to ship my UB before or after HHG?
- What items do I want to have on hand at my current location after my HHG have shipped.
- What items are provided at my losing or gaining duty station?
- Do I intend to receive my UB shipment in the hotel?
- What items will I want on hand when I arrive at my new location?

### Moving OCONUS to CONUS

Few CONUS locations offer an extensive lending closet. Also, CONUS locations do not provide temporary furniture. Plan on fending for yourself completely. Consider including a card table, folding chairs, air mattresses, and all essential items with your UB.

With so many resources available to support you OCONUS, consider shipping UB (and HHG) shipments as early as possible. Living with government issued furniture and Lending Closet items for a few months certainly beats sleeping and eating on the floor when you're back in the states.

Remember, you are not required to schedule a UB shipment. If you expect to travel or wait 2-3 months for a house at your new location, you can ship all of your belongings with HHG.

**TIP:** IF CONCERNED ABOUT WEIGHT ALLOWANCE, CONSIDER WEIGHING YOUR ITEMS ON A SIMPLE HOUSEHOLD SCALE TO DETERMINE AN ESTIMATE.

## Kitchen

- Plates, bowls, cups, silverware
- Essential pots and pans
- Slow cooker (consider voltage)
- Mixing spoon, whisk, spatula
- Strainer
- Mixing bowls
- Knife and cutting board
- Can opener
- Vegetable peeler
- Wine opener
- Pitcher
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Trash can
- 3-4 Kitchen towels

## Bedrooms

- Air mattresses (for CONUS)
- Sheets and pillowcases
- Blankets and pillows
- Hangers

## Bathroom

- Towels and washcloths
- Shower curtain, rod, rings
- Bath mat

## Clothing

- Extra clothing for each family member (plan for next season)
- Jackets, gloves, hats, rain gear
- Extra shoes and boots
- Special event clothing

## For The Kids

- Favorite indoor toys (Legos, dolls, race cars, stuffed animals, etc.)
- Favorite outdoor toys (balls, gloves, bat, scooter, helmet, etc.)
- A few favorite books
- Paper, crayons, scissors, markers

## For the Baby

- Portable crib
- Extra car seat
- Sippy cups and snack cups
- Jogging stroller
- Baby-proofing items

## Other Household Items

- Laundry basket
- Mini ironing board
- Iron (consider purchasing local voltage iron from thrift store)
- Folding camp chairs
- Card table and chairs (for CONUS)
- Vacuum (consider voltage)
- Broom and dustpan
- Mop and bucket
- Computer
- Printer
- Surge protector
- Small TV (confirm size limit)
- DVD player and movies
- Game console and games
- Power adapters and transformer (for different voltage items)
- Board games

## Tools

- Drill and drill bits
- Hammer
- Tape measure
- Pliers
- Hex
- Level
- Sharpie
- Packing tape

## Miscellaneous Items

- Bikes (for each family member, but especially for Soldier to get around before vehicle arrives.)
- Helmets
- Pet items (bed, toy, extra leash, food)

## Army Gear\*

- Uniforms
- PTs
- Dress uniform (w/medals), dress shoes, tie, shirt, socks
- Ruck
- Misc. field gear

\*Check with sponsor to identify upcoming training or event needs.

## Other

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# NON-TEMPORARY STORAGE (NTS)

*Non-temporary storage (NTS) is long-term storage of items you choose not to ship OCONUS. Typically, your NTS is stored in a facility near the pickup location, where it will remain throughout the duration of your tour. These facilities are not climate controlled, but typically they are air-conditioned. When you return to the states and have established a new address, you can request retrieval and shipment of your stored belongings.*

When deciding what to store stateside and what to bring OCONUS, ask yourself these questions:

- Am I moving to a smaller or larger house? (Keep in mind that some apartments are still quite large in some OCONUS locations.)
- Is there ample storage provided in the OCONUS homes?
- Are the voltages and frequencies of my electronics and appliances compatible with those at my new location?
- Is there a risk of water damage to my shipment during transit? (Consider time of year, route, amount of time on sea.)
- Is there risk of damage to fabrics, furniture, photos, or papers from high humidity at NTS location?
- Are there items of significant sentimental value that I'd prefer to leave with family members during the duration of my OCONUS tour?
- Are there items of significant value that I believe will fare okay in a warehouse environment?
- What might be helpful to have on hand immediately upon returning to CONUS? (For example, is there extra bedroom furniture you don't need? When you return to the states, you can have access to this shipment immediately, limiting the days in a hotel or on an air mattress.)

## NTS CHECKLIST

### Kitchen

- Refrigerator
- 110 Volt small appliances (if not compatible in OCONUS location)

### Garage/Basement

- Deep Freezer
- Pool table/large game table
- Riding or electric lawn mower
- Table saw
- Electric 110 Volt tools (if not compatible in OCONUS location)
- Other large tools/equipment not needed at OCONUS location

### Furniture

- Special pieces/heirlooms (assess risk of storing)
- Extra beds, dressers, etc.
- Outgrown baby furniture if you do not plan to have a baby during your tour

### Clothing

- Children's hand-me-downs for 4+ years away
- Regionally specific clothing not needed at OCONUS location

### Miscellaneous

- Washer
- Dryer
- Collectibles
- Photo albums
- Keepsakes such as old yearbooks, childhood mementos
- Heirlooms that won't be used during tour such as wedding dress, christening gowns, etc.
- Excess or non-favorite toys
- Extra towels/washcloths
- Extra blankets/sheets
- Anything that you won't need at your OCONUS location

## Three/Four Months Before Move

- Create PCS binder including the following:
  - Orders
  - Powers of Attorney
  - Auto insurance cards
  - Auto title/lien holder and loan documents
  - Copies of passports
  - Shipment inventories
  - Packing checklists
  - Birth certificates
  - Marriage certificate
  - Kids school records
  - Kids shot records
  - Kids health records/physicals
  - Critical documents
  - Pet health certificate
- Research housing situation (size, storage, proximity to base, etc.)
- Pick up and complete EFMP packet
- If needed, schedule physicals for EFMP
- Schedule EFMP review
- Request copies of any off-post health records (medical, dental, specialists, ophthalmology, etc.)
- Schedule move with transportation office
- Once a moving company is assigned, inquire about restrictions for HHG (non-perishable foods, spices, essential oils, etc)
- Budget for moving expenses/rental deposits, etc.
- Apply for/renew tourist passports
- Apply for no-fee passports
- Verify lease terms of current home
- Determine UB weight limit and start listing/sorting items between NTS, UB, and HHG

## Two Months Before Move

- Create a household video inventory showing condition (including pre-existing damage) of furniture and belongings
- Verify renters and auto insurance coverage
- Complete all recalls on auto (POV). Vehicle Processing Center (VPC) will not ship POVs with any open recalls.
- Make arrangements to ship POV:
  - Set POV drop-off appointment
  - Request POV Shipment Authorization Form from lienholder
  - Arrange lodging at POV drop-off location
  - Set start date for new auto insurance to cover POV while in transit overseas
  - Inquire about a bridge policy to prevent a steep rate hike when POV is returned to CONUS
  - Arrange for shipping a second POV at your own expense, if needed
- Monitor Command Sponsorship to determine if you will have concurrent or deferred travel
- Make flight arrangements (including flight for pet, if needed)
- Make arrangements for pet (confirm crate regulations, get vaccines, health certificates, etc.)
- Book lodging at losing location, if needed
- Book lodging at gaining location
- Request a Soldier sponsor. If sponsor is not married, request a local spouse contact.
- Ask sponsor to secure a CMR mailbox for you (this allows you to ship items to yourself within a month of arrival)
- Contact the Housing Office at gaining location to determine wait list process and options for housing
- Update eye exam and order new glasses or contacts
- Start selling items not being moved or stored (including a second POV)
- Give notice to landlord, property manager, or base housing office
- Confirm expiration dates for all forms of identification and renew if necessary (drivers license, passport, military ID, etc.)

## One Month Before Move

- Use up food, cleaning supplies, and toiletries
- Contact utilities to disconnect
- Confirm CMR address with local sponsor (contact Post Office directly, if needed)
- File Change of Address forms with Post Office or arrange to have mail held/forwarded
- Confirm lodging at gaining location
- Service and detail POV/s
- Complete all POV recalls (if not done)
- Research utilities at new housing, if possible
- Ask Soldier sponsor what events/exercises will occur during the first 30-60 days at new location
- Conduct walk-thru with movers
- Take pet to veterinarian - get health certificates, required vaccines, and vet records
- Update renters and auto insurance
- Separate shipments. Designate NTS and UB items and place each into central separate areas
- Rearrange kitchen items and designate UB, NTS, and HHG cabinets. Label each cabinet
- Organize house - Put stuff away where it's supposed to go! This helps with unpacking later
- Ensure UB and NTS items are clean before packing
- Study for driving test in new location, if necessary

## Two Weeks Before Move

- Remove and bundle curtain rods
- Remove photos from walls
- Patch holes and touch up walls, if required
- Defrost deep freezer
- Take pet to groomer
- Separate professional gear including books, shoes, Army gear, awards, etc
- Make sure property manager has all required/completed paperwork
- Schedule move-out inspection with property manager
- Continue separating NTS, UB, and HHG shipments

## One Week Before UB Pickup

- Vacuum and clean all items being packed
- Wash rugs and linens
- Estimate your weight giving some wiggle room
- Identify and separate UB items, designating a specific room or area of the house

## Day of UB Pickup

- Ensure all items are separated and clearly identified for the movers
- Make sure all items have inventory tags
- Make sure all boxes are properly labeled
- Make sure plastic storage tubs are unpacked and boxed properly or packed with paper and wrapped
- Minimize loose items. If it fits in a box, make sure it is put into one
- Make sure all boxes and loose items are written on the inventory list
- Make sure descriptions of major items are completed and accurate
- Check damage notations as the movers complete inventory and before any furniture is wrapped
- If your inventory is inaccurate, tell the carrier's representative and write down why you disagree at the bottom of the inventory in the space marked for exceptions
- If there is a major dispute, don't be afraid to call for a JPPSO Inspector
- Review inventory (checking all of the above items on this list) prior to signing
- Do a final check to make sure they haven't missed anything



## Before NTS Pickup

- Ensure NTS items are separated from other HHGs and clearly marked (Mix-ups are costly mistakes!)
- Ensure all items are clean
- Disconnect, defrost, and clean freezer, if not done already. Add coffee grounds or baking soda package inside
- Disconnect and clean refrigerator. Add deodorizer
- Clean, disconnect, air out, and stabilize washer and dryer. Add deodorizer
- Polish and protect furniture with wood oil. Identify chips and scratches on wood items. Touch up with marker

## Day of NTS Pickup

- Ensure all NTS items are separated and clearly identified for the movers
- Make sure all items have inventory tags
- Make sure all boxes are properly labeled
- Make sure plastic storage tubs are unpacked and boxed properly or packed with paper and wrapped
- Minimize loose items. If it fits in a box, make sure it is put into one
- Make sure all boxes and loose items are listed on the inventory
- Make sure descriptions of major items are completed and accurate
- Check damage notations as the movers complete inventory and before any furniture is wrapped
- If your inventory is inaccurate, tell the carrier's representative and write down why you disagree at the bottom of the inventory in the space marked for exceptions
- If there is a major dispute, don't be afraid to call for a JPPSO Inspector
- Review inventory (checking all of the above items on this list) prior to signing
- Do a final check to make sure they haven't missed anything and haven't taken anything that should not go in storage!

## One Week Before HHG Pickup

- Use up food!
- Toss or give away packaged food, liquids, toiletries, candles, etc.
- Clean out sugar bowl, salt and pepper shakers, toaster, coffee pot, toaster oven, trash cans, high chair, etc.
- Vacuum couches and rugs
- Polish furniture with wood oil. Identify chips and scratches on wood furniture. Touch up with marker
- Wash rugs, bed linens, towels, etc.
- Remove light bulbs from lamps
- Remove remaining batteries from toys, remote controls, flashlights, etc.
- Make a list of all High Value Items (electronics, collectibles, antiques, art, and anything valued at over \$60 per pound)
- Unplug and disassemble televisions, computers, etc
- Ensure that remote controls are taped to item or clearly marked for packing
- Gather original boxes and packaging of appliances, computers, televisions, etc. and set them next to item for movers to use in packing
- Set aside the cable box to return to cable company
- Buy snacks and beverages for the movers
- Clearly identify DO-NOT-PACK items such as NTS, UB, items that remain with the house,\* and items to be hand-carried with luggage.\*\* Consider keeping DO-NOT-PACK items in a closet, a roped off corner of the house, a specific room that won't be packed, or a car, if possible

## \*Items That Remain With the House

- Large appliances
- Broiler pan
- House keys and mailbox key
- Garage remote controls
- Recycling cans (depending on location)
- Cleaning supplies (until after final check out, then give away or toss)
- Cable box (return it to cable company)

## \*\*Items To Be Hand-carried

- Suitcases
- Papers (Powers of Attorney, passports, birth certificates, orders, Will, school papers, etc.)
- GPS (make sure it's loaded with maps of new destination)
- Toiletries, medicines, and essential oils
- Valuable jewelry
- Personal electronics and cords
- Small tools (in checked bag)
- Car seats
- Stroller
- Animal crate, leash, food, etc.

## Day of HHG Pickup

- Empty trash cans
- Put paper towels and plastic trash bags in bathrooms
- Disassemble shoe rack/laundry caddy
- Make sure all DO-NOT-PACK items are set aside and clearly marked
- Make sure Pro-Gear (PBPE) is identified on boxes and inventory
- Ask movers to allow you to watch while they disassemble furniture
- Make sure hardware is packed in "hardware box" or hand-carry it yourself
- Locate keys to china-hutch, wardrobes, etc. and hand-carry them or add them to "hardware box"
- Make sure mattresses are boxed
- Make sure all items have inventory tags
- Make sure boxes are labeled appropriately (ex. "crystal" not "kitchen items")
- Make sure plastic storage tubs are unpacked and boxed properly or packed with paper and wrapped
- Minimize loose items. If it fits in a box, make sure it is put into one
- Make sure all boxes and loose items are listed on the inventory
- Make sure descriptions of major items are completed and accurate
- Check damage notations as the movers complete inventory and before any furniture is wrapped
- Make sure furniture is properly wrapped in blankets
- If your inventory is inaccurate, tell the carrier's representative and write down why you disagree at the bottom of the inventory in the space marked for exceptions
- If there is a major dispute, don't be afraid to call for a JPPSO Inspector
- Double check all cabinets, attic, garage, closets, etc.
- Review inventory (checking all of the above items on this list) prior to signing
- Ensure crates are sealed in your presence. If necessary, accompany crates to warehouse to be sealed prior to signing

## Before Leaving Town

- Clean, patch, and paint walls as needed
- Clean carpets
- Clean the house
- Return cable box
- Verify POV paperwork for shipping
- Update auto/renters insurance
- Do final walk through with property manager
- Make sure mail has been held or forwarded
- Wash, wax, detail POV, and take pictures

## En Route and Immediately Upon Arrival OCONUS

- Drop POV off with 1/4 tank of gas at VPC (bring copies of orders, lienholder letter or title, and insurance paperwork)
- Keep in touch with transportation office, update contact info if needed
- Follow up with Housing Office at new location for status of wait list for housing and start housing search if possible
- Make sure mail is being held or forwarded to new CMR
- Study for local drivers license if necessary (a USAREUR drivers license is required in Germany)
- Register with Tricare
- Update DEERS
- FOR DEFERRED FAMILY TRAVEL:
  - Request Family Travel Orders once housing is secured
  - Release shipment of HHG
  - Schedule family air travel

## Before Delivery of HHG

- File Change of Address with Post Office, if not done already
- Change address with banks, credit card companies, websites, etc.
- Check utilities at new residence
- Check appliances at new residence
- Request government-issued wardrobes, cabinets, etc. as needed
- Check for damage at new residence
- Designate purposes of each room at new residence
- Clean kitchen, bathrooms, etc
- Lay shelf paper in kitchen and bathroom drawers and cabinets
- Purchase necessities such as toilet paper, paper towels, hand soap, snacks and beverages, etc.

## Day of HHG Delivery

- Check items off of inventory list as they come off of the truck
- Have movers unpack and haul away large boxes such as wardrobe, bike, and mattress boxes
- Make sure the movers put everything back together
- List and photograph damaged items
- Check house walls for damage from movers, especially doors and stairways. If damaged, tell foreman and get contact info for repair coordinator
- Make arrangements to have boxes picked up when you're done packing

## After Delivery

- Verify renters/POV insurance
- Arrange to have boxes picked up
- Update auto registration
- Service POV
- File travel reimbursement paperwork
- File damage paperwork (within 60 days)