

Moving to Bahrain: Your Relocation Guide



By Appointment To
Her Majesty The Queen
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

ABELS™

THE ART OF MOVING

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Memb No: A001



FS 23942



198656



TELEPHONE:	Country code (973) +Area code
STANDARD TIME:	GMT + 3 hours
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric
ELECTRICITY:	230v AC, 50HZ
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Inoculation against Cholera and Typhoid is recommended; children must have the TB jab.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	Jan 1, May 1, Jun 6, Jul 1, Sept 12,13, Oct 3, 22, Dec 12, 16 Muslim festivals are timed according to local sightings of various phases of the moon and the dates given are approximate.
OFFICE HOURS:	0930 – 1800 Sunday – Thursday
BANK HOURS:	0730 – 1200 Saturday – Wednesday 1730 – 1100 Thursday
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	999 – Police, 998 – Fire, 997 – Ambulance
UK EMBASSY:	21 Government Avenue Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain Tel: 00 (973) 1757 4100 Fax: 00 (973) 1757 4101 Email: britemb@batelco.com.bh Web: http://ukinbahrain.fco.gov.uk/en/
TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION:	Bahrain Tourism PO Box 5831, Manama, Bahrain Tel: (17) 530 530 www.alseyaha.com
BAHRAIN EMBASSY IN LONDON:	30 Belgrave Square London SW1X 8QB Tel: 02072 019 170 Fax: 02072 019 183 Web: http://bahrain.embassyhomepage.com/

Moving to Bahrain from the UK – Information and Advice: Abels Relocation Guide

Customs

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

Household Goods

Documents required:

- Original Bill of Lading or Sea Way bill
- Copy of airway bill
- Clear copy of packing list
- Copy of the Passport with a valid Residence Permit endorsed for air shipments
- Copy of the Passport on air shipments
- Authorisation Letter
- Declaration

All shipments are subject to 100% inspection at the port/airport.

New items will attract a duty of 5%.

Whether old or new, customs duty would apply on Personal computers, piano or musical instruments (5%), videos (approx US\$0.55 per video as screening fee), foodstuff (5%).

Duty free on to CDs, DVDs, LDs, VCDs unless large quantities are imported.

Consignee's physical presence is not mandatory for Customs clearance however consignee can always be present if wish to attend the clearance process except overland shipments.

All used household goods are allowed free of duty but subject to owner having a valid Residence Permit. In the absence of a two year Residence Permit, shipment can be cleared upon issue of a guarantee letter from company sponsor stating that residence permit is in process.

Items contained in the shipment must for personal use and cannot be used for commercial purposes.

Dvds / magazines are subject to inspection by the Ministry of Interior for pornographic literature, banned books etc.

Customs and Port Authority will remain closed on Fridays and Saturdays.

Diplomatic Removals

Documents required:

- Original Bill of Lading
- Copy of the airway bill
- Clear copy of the packing list
- Duty Exemption Certificate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Copy of diplomatic passport or ID

Duty free clearance.

No physical Customs inspection only scanning.

Wines, spirits and alcohol subject to customs duty at customs discretion.

Medicines are subject to prescription by a doctor and should be in Arabic or English.

Firearms are prohibited.

Commodity Shipments

Documents required:

- Commercial invoice which must indicate currency, customs and freight value
- Amount of packages, weight/measurement manufacturer's name, country of origin
- Packing list
- Insurance Certificate (if insured)
- Certificate of Origin (legalised)

Subject to 5% customs duty on Cost, Insurance and Freight value.

All shipments are subject to the Customs inspection.

Motor Vehicles

Documents required:

- Commercial invoice on new vehicles
- Original Bill of Lading or sea way bill
- Certificate of ownership or Export certificate from country of origin
- Car condition report
- Proof of insurance
- No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (for diplomats)
- Residence Permit for at least 18 months (non-citizens)

Customs duty payable at 5% of the value assessed by the customs (CIF).

Port handling fee payable by the customer. *Consignee has to arrange for Local Insurance Prior to custom clearance and removal of car from Customs and Port.

Valid insurance is required.

The shipper must arrange to obtain the Central Population Registration (CPR) card through the employer's HR department.

Once the CPR is obtained, the shipper may obtain a temporary license plate.

Cars older than 5 years cannot be imported
<http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/702363>

Importation allowed for left hand drive vehicles only.

Consignee must be present for customs inspection.

Vehicles should not be shipped with a full gasoline tank.



Ocean freight shipment can be cleared without a residence permit with a deposit payable at clearance. The deposit amount will be refunded once the residence permit is stamped (+/- 2 weeks). (For non-citizens).

Pets

Documents required:

- Copy of the airway bill
- Vaccination certificate
- Import permit
- Veterinary Health Certificate

Import licence to be obtained prior to booking the pets.

The Veterinary Health Certificate must state that the animal is free from disease and is fully vaccinated.

Upon completion of customs formalities all pets would be sent to the government quarantine centre.

Quarantine is normally for a month.

Consignee has to make own feeding arrangements for the pet during quarantine.

Pets may only be transported as cargo; however, assistive animals may be able to travel in the aircraft cabin.

Alcoholic Beverage

Importation allowed if part of a removal. Customs duty applicable.

Customs duty will be assessed by the customs.

Prohibited Items

- Narcotics and Drugs
- Flammable Items
- Ivory
- Pornographic materials (DVDs and magazines are subject to inspection by the Ministry of Interior)
- Pirated DVDs and VCDs
- Swords
- Knives, daggers (ornamental, etc.)
- Wireless equipment
- Satellite, receivers, cordless telephones, walkie talkies
- Guns, arrows, darts
- Military Clothes
- Gambling Games

Fire Gun, Shot Gun, Sea gun, Military clothes, Swords, Two-Sided Knives, (Even those pre-packed as souvenirs) Arrows or Darts, Daggers: Customs will hold the entire shipment if necessary & if required, local police authorities will be called.

Wireless equipment like remote controlled helicopters, airplanes, boats, satellite dish antennas, and weapons of any nature – even those pre-packed as souvenirs: Customs will

hold the entire shipment if necessary & if required, local police authorities will be called in should any types of guns, ammunition, souvenir daggers and remote controlled devices be found.

Alcoholic beverage.

Importation allowed if part of a removal.

Customs duty will be assessed by the customs.

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 can not 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 **Abels form QF565** for completing.

General Information on the Kingdom of Bahrain

Background

In 1783, the Sunni Al-Khalifa family took power in Bahrain. In order to secure these holdings, it entered into a series of treaties with the UK during the 19th century that made Bahrain a British protectorate. The archipelago attained its independence in 1971. The steady decline in oil production and reserves since 1970 prompted Bahrain to take steps to diversify its economy, in the process developing successful petroleum processing and refining, aluminium production, and hospitality and retail sectors, and also to become a leading regional banking centre, especially with respect to Islamic finance. Bahrain's small size and central location among Gulf countries require it to play a delicate balancing act in foreign affairs among its larger neighbours.

The Sunni-led government has long struggled to manage

relations with its large Shia-majority population. In early 2011, amid Arab uprisings elsewhere in the region, the Bahraini Government confronted similar pro-democracy and reform protests at home with police and military action, including deploying Gulf Cooperation Council security forces to Bahrain. Political talks throughout 2014 between the government and opposition and loyalist political groups failed to reach an agreement, prompting opposition political societies to boycott parliamentary and municipal council elections in late 2014. Ongoing dissatisfaction with the political status quo continues to factor into sporadic clashes between demonstrators and security forces.

Geography

Bahrain is an archipelago in the Persian Gulf, east of Saudi Arabia and north of Qatar. Bahrain Island, the largest island is connected to Muharrag and Stroh islands by causeways. Oil production and processing are the main sectors of the economy, also fish and pearls are natural resources.

Bahrain lies close to the primary Middle Eastern petroleum sources, it has a strategic location as much of the western world's petroleum must transit to reach Open Ocean. This has environmental issues, coastal degradation and other discharges by large vegetation by the resulting oil spills and other discharges by large tankers, oil refineries and distribution stations. Groundwater and sea water are the only sources for all water needs.

Horticulture and agriculture flourishes in the north, limited only by limitations on fresh water supplies from artesian wells or de-salination plants. Gardens grow dates, almonds, pomegranates, figs, citrus fruit and a wide range of vegetables.

A noticeable feature of the Bahrain landscape is the immense quantity of man made stony tumuli or burial mounds.

Climate

The Bahrain climate can be generally described as cool winters with sparse rainfall and hot summers with high humidity. The winter season from December to February is influenced by low-pressure systems from the Mediterranean, which travel East into the Gulf and cause periods of disturbed weather. These disturbances are accompanied by occasional rainfall, which averages approximately 74 mm per annum. January is usually the coolest month when lowest temperatures are experienced, and prevailing winds are North-Westerly.

Between March and May and between October and November the weather is normally warm and dry, with pleasant breezes and many hours of sunshine.

The summer season from June to September is generally hot and completely dry, but with a noticeable increase in humidity. Temperatures average 38 to 42 degrees centigrade and average humidity ranges from 67 – 82%. Initially the weather can be influenced by low pressure over Pakistan which causes dry North-Westerly winds, known locally as AL Barah, to become established. These help keep humidity

down and can create more pleasant conditions than in later summer months.

Population

The population of Bahrain is 698,585 of which 235,108 are non nationals. Ethnic groups are Bahraini 63%, Asian 19%, other Arab 10%, Iranian 8%.

Currency

The unit of currency is the Bahrain Dinar (BDr) divided into 1000 fils. It should be noted that the dinars are always written with 3 figures after the decimal point e.g. 5 dinars is written as BDr 5.000.

The major international credit cards are accepted by leading hotels, travel agents, airline offices etc. But shops may seek to charge a higher price.

Economy

Low oil prices have generated a budget deficit of at least a \$4 billion deficit in 2015, 13% of GDP. Bahrain has few options for covering this deficit, with meagre foreign assets and a constrained borrowing ability, stemming in part from a sovereign debt rating averaging just above “junk” status.

Oil comprises 86% of Bahraini budget revenues, despite past efforts to diversify its economy and to build communication and transport facilities for multinational firms with business in the Gulf. As part of its diversification plans, Bahrain implemented a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the US in August 2006, the first FTA between the US and a Gulf state.

Other major economic activities are production of aluminium - Bahrain's second biggest export after oil - finance, and construction. Bahrain continues to seek new natural gas supplies as feedstock to support its expanding petrochemical and aluminium industries.

In 2011 Bahrain experienced economic setbacks as a result of domestic unrest driven by the majority Shia population, however, the economy recovered in 2012-15, partly as a result of improved tourism. In addition to addressing its current fiscal woes, Bahraini authorities face the long-term challenge of boosting Bahrain's regional competitiveness—especially regarding industry, finance, and tourism—and reconciling revenue constraints with popular pressure to maintain generous state subsidies and a large public sector.

Education

It is usual for expatriates to send their children to boarding school, normally back in the ‘home’ country. However, there are several privately run playgroups for the very young and a number of schools for older children. For example:

- The British School of Bahrain – Tel: (+973) 17710878
Fax: 17710875 Hamala Tel: 17613330,
web <http://www.thebsbh.com/index.htm>
- St Christopher's School Isa Town, Kingdom of Bahrain;



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Tel: +973 17 598 500, Fax: +973 17 598 492;
Web: www.st-chris.net/

- Bahrain School, Manama. Tel: 727 828
- St Christopher's School, Manama Tel: 685 621

Religion

Islam is the state religion with 82% of the population. This is broken into: Shia Muslim 70% Sunni Muslim 30% Christian 8.5% Other religions 9.5%.

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 particular care not to offend during Ramadan (the month preceding Eid-al-Fitr, beginning approximately October), when Muslims are not permitted to eat, drink or smoke between dawn and dusk.

Normal business patterns may be interrupted. Many restaurants are closed during the day and there are 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 ten days, depending on the region.

Government

Constitutional hereditary monarch.

The Al Khalifa family is a branch of the Bani Utbah tribe and has been ruling Bahrain since Ahmed Bin Mohammed Al- Khalifa, also known as Ahmed Al Faith (the conqueror), who came to the islands from the west coast of Qatar in 1783. Al Faith's successors, his sons Salman and Abdullah, signed a treaty with the British East India Company in 1820 and in 1861 the treaty of perpetual peace and friendship was signed with Britain. The treaty secured Bahrain against external threats, and the subsequent accession of Shaikh Isa Bin Ali Khalifa in 1869 marked the beginning of a period of stability and prosperity which was to last over half a century.

Since 1961, with the accession of the late Amir, SHAIKH Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Bahrain has continued to experience the peace and harmony created by his great-grandfather over a hundred years ago. The declaration of independence of 14th August 1971, and the new treaty of friendship signed with Britain the following day, began a new chapter in the island's history. Bahrain's modern image reflects a subtle blend of the tradition and culture of the past with the achievements of the twentieth century.

The chief of state is King Hamad bin Isa al-khalifa (since 6 March 1999).

The current Prime Minister since 1971 of the State of Bahrain is H.H. Shaikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa.

Electricity

The domestic electricity supply is 230V AC single phase, 50Hz, except in the oil company town of Awali where it is 110V 60Hz. Many types of plug fittings are in use, but in newly built premises the tendency is to use flat 3 pin plugs. Both screw and bayonet lamp fittings are in use, and bulbs for both types are available locally.

Health

Piped water is available, but in most areas it is brackish. Once accustomed to the high salt content, expatriates usually find it acceptable for cooking, but not for drinking or cleaning teeth. Bottled mineral waters are sold for drinking and a few areas now have sweet drinking water on tap.

A comprehensive state medical service is in existence in Bahrain, which includes general and specialised hospitals in Manama and the other towns, and clinics throughout the island.

The state medical service is available to Bahrainis and expatriates alike. Expatriates must pay for a hospital room and charges for treatment are being introduced. Private medical care is extremely expensive. Some companies insure their employees privately and intending expatriates should enquire about this provision before signing a contract to work in Bahrain.

Insurance is recommended though, for both you and your dependants, from an international insurance company such as BUPA, 'Life Scheme'. Tel: 01273 323 563.

Language

The official language is Arabic but English is widely spoken, particularly in business circles. If you are intending to remain in the area, it is useful to gain knowledge of colloquial Arabic.

Other languages are Farsi and Urdu.

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