

# China 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



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<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	Country code (0086) + City Area code.
<b>STANDARD TIME:</b>	The time in China follows a single standard time (GMT + 8) even though there are various geographical time zones. The official national standard time is called Beijing Time or Chinese: China Standard Time (CST) internationally. China does not observe daylight saving.
<b>WEIGHTS &amp; MEASURES:</b>	Metric.
<b>ELECTRICITY:</b>	220v AC, 50Hz. 2 pins with some three pin sockets in use.
<b>INOCULATIONS / VACCINATIONS:</b>	Various are recommended according to length of stay and area travelling to or residing in.
<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:</b>	1st January – Gregorian calendar New Year’s Day, Chinese New Year, also known as Spring Festival, starts 23rd day of the 12th Lunar month – usually 7 days official holiday, 4th or 5th April Qingming Festival, 1st May Labour Day, 5th day of 5th month of Chinese lunisolar calendar Dragon Boat Day, 1st October National Day – normally a 7 day Golden Holiday, 15th day of the 8th Lunar month – mid Autumn Festival, 9th day of the 9th Lunar month – Chung Yeung Festival. To the best of our knowledge the above are correct, however the Chinese Government announce the national holidays for the following year during December of each year.
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	The working hours of Chinese companies may be from 08:00 to 17:00, 08:30 to 17:30 or 09:00 to 18:00. The official organisations like the government offices usually work from 09:00 to 17:00 with a one-hour break, and they do not work on Saturdays and Sundays.
<b>BANK HOURS:</b>	Hours are similar to the UK with the exception of larger branches being open at weekends. Banks in major Chinese cities are open at least six days a week from approximately 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., although some banks close or are short-staffed between noon to 2 in the afternoon.
<b>EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:</b>	Police 110 Fire 119 Ambulance 120.
<b>BRITISH EMBASSY IN CHINA:</b>	11 Guanghai Rd Chaoyang Qu. Beijing Shi, 100600 Tel: (+86) 10 5192 4000
<b>CHINESE EMBASSY IN LONDON:</b>	49 Portland Place London W1B 1JL Tel: 0207 299 4049

## Part 1 – General Information on the People’s Republic of China

### Background

China is the world’s most populous country. It has a continuous culture stretching back nearly 4,000 years and originated many of the foundations of the modern world.

For centuries China stood as a leading civilisation, outpacing the rest of the world in the arts and sciences, but in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the country was beset by civil unrest, major famines, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the communists under MAO Zedong established an autocratic socialist system.

The People’s Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949 after the Communist Party defeated the nationalist Kuomintang, who retreated to Taiwan, creating two rival Chinese states - the Peoples Republic of China on the mainland and the Republic of China based on Taiwan.

After stagnating for decades under the rigid authoritarian socialism of founder Mao Zedong, China reformed its economy along partly capitalist lines to make it one of the world’s fastest-growing, as well its leading exporter. China is now a major overseas investor, and is pursuing an increasingly assertive foreign and defence policy, but economic change has not been matched by political reform, and the Communist Party retains a tight grip on political life and much of wider society.

### Geography

Modern China is a vast country. It is the world’s fourth largest country in the world.

It has a great variety of climates and terrains. The south is wet and tropical, with some rainforest coverage. North-west China is covered in desert. In the very far north-east, close to Russia, the temperature can drop to -50°C in the winter.

In the west of China there are the Himalayas, with some of the highest mountains in the world. China’s lowest point is in the Turfan Depression, at -154 metres below sea level. The Turfan Depression is also known as one of the ‘furnaces’ of China because of its incredible heat.

The melting snows from the mountains in the west create the headwaters for two of China’s most important rivers, the Yellow River and the Yangzi River. The Yellow River gets its name because of the yellow windborne clay dust called loess that is blown across the north of China from the steppes of Central Asia. The loess is blown into the river and gives it a yellow appearance.

The Yangzi River is the longest in China and third longest in the world. The Yangzi River irrigates the rice growing regions in the south of China.

### Population

China has the world largest population of over 1.4 billion people.

### Economy

Since the late 1970s, China has moved from a closed, centrally planned system to a more market-oriented one that plays a major global role. China has implemented reforms in a gradualist fashion, resulting in efficiency gains that have contributed to a more than tenfold increase in GDP since 1978. Reforms began with the phase out of collectivised agriculture, and expanded to include the gradual liberalisation of prices, fiscal decentralisation, increased autonomy for state enterprises, growth of the private sector, development of stock markets and a modern banking system, and opening to foreign trade and investment. China continues to pursue an industrial policy, state-support of key sectors, and a restrictive investment regime. Measured on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis that adjusts for price differences, China in 2016 stood as the largest economy in the world, surpassing the US in 2014 for the first time in modern history. China became the world’s largest exporter in 2010, and the largest trading nation in 2013. Still, China’s per capita income is below the world average.

After keeping its currency tightly linked to the US dollar for years, China in July 2005 moved to an exchange rate system that references a basket of currencies. From mid-2005 to late 2008, the renminbi appreciated more than 20% against the US dollar, but the exchange rate remained virtually pegged to the dollar from the onset of the global financial crisis until June 2010, when Beijing allowed resumption of a gradual liberalisation. In 2015, the

People's Bank of China announced it would continue to carefully push for full convertibility of the renminbi (RMB) after the currency was accepted as part of the IMF's special drawing rights basket. After engaging in one-way, large-scale intervention to resist appreciation of the RMB for a decade, China's 2016 intervention in foreign exchange markets has sought to prevent a rapid RMB depreciation that would have negative consequences for the United States, China, and the global economy.

China's economic growth has slowed since 2011. The Chinese Government faces numerous economic challenges including: (a) reducing its high domestic savings rate and correspondingly low domestic household consumption; (b) servicing its high corporate debt burdens to maintain financial stability; (c) facilitating higher-wage job opportunities for the aspiring middle class, including rural migrants and college graduates, while maintaining competitiveness; (d) dampening speculative investment in the real estate sector; (e) reducing industrial overcapacity; and (f) raising productivity growth rates through the more efficient allocation of capital. Economic development has progressed further in coastal provinces than in the interior, and by 2016 more than 169.3 million migrant workers and their dependents had relocated to urban areas to find work. One consequence of China's population control policy known as the "one-child policy" - which was relaxed in 2016 to permit all families to have two children - is that China is now one of the most rapidly aging countries in the world. Deterioration in the environment - notably air pollution, soil erosion, and the steady fall of the water table, especially in the North - is another long-term problem. China continues to lose arable land because of erosion and urbanisation. The Chinese government is seeking to add energy production capacity from sources other than coal and oil, focusing on natural gas, nuclear, and clean energy development. In 2016, China ratified the Paris Agreement, a multilateral agreement to combat climate change, and committed to peak its carbon dioxide emissions between 2025 and 2030.

The government's 13th Five-Year Plan, unveiled in March 2016, emphasises the need to increase innovation and boost domestic consumption to make the economy less dependent on government investment, exports, and heavy industry. However, China has made only marginal progress toward these rebalancing goals. Under President Xi Jinping, Beijing has signaled its understanding that China's long-term economic health depends on giving the market a more decisive role in allocating resources, but has moved slowly on market-oriented reforms because of potential negative consequences for stability and short-term economic growth. He has also increased state-control over key sectors and Party control over state-owned enterprises. Chinese leaders in 2010 pledged to double China's GDP by 2020, and the 13th Five Year Plan includes annual economic growth targets of at least 6.5% through 2020 to achieve that goal. In recent years, China has renewed its support for state-owned enterprises in sectors considered important to "economic security," explicitly looking to foster globally competitive industries. Chinese leaders also have undermined some market-oriented reforms by reaffirming the "dominant" role of the state in the economy, a stance that threatens to discourage private initiative and make the economy less efficient over time.

## **Currency**

The legal currency in China is the Renminbi (RMB).

10 Fen is 1 Jiao, 10 Jiao is 1 Yuan, and 1 Yuan is the same as 1 Renminbi RMB.

Banknotes (Frequently Used) RMB 1, RMB 5, RMB 10, RMB 20, RMB 50, RMB 100.

Banknotes (Rarely Used) RMB 0.1, RMB 0.2, RMB 0.5, RMB 2.

Coins (Frequently Used) RMB 0.1, RMB 0.5, RMB 1.

## **Language**

Standard Mandarin is the official Chinese language and is based on the Beijing Mandarin dialect. Although Mandarin is the most common language, it is often referred to as Chinese.

## **Religion**

As a Communist country, China has no official religion. Although it does recognise five religions: Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism.

In recent years there has been an increase in Christianity.

## **Education**

Education is compulsory and free for Chinese citizens age 6 to 15 though parents must pay fees for books and uniforms. Chinese children all get a primary and middle school public education. Each class averages 35 students.

After middle school, parents must pay for public high school. For the wealthy, there is a growing number of private schools in China as well as dozens of international private schools.

Unlike for Chinese citizens, local Chinese schools are not free for expatriates but tuition fees are much lower than at international schools.

## **Health**

Healthcare in China consists of both public and private medical institutions and insurance programs. About 95% of the population has at least basic health insurance coverage. Despite this, public health insurance generally only covers about half of medical costs, with the proportion lower for serious or chronic illnesses. Under the “Healthy China 2020” initiative, China is currently undertaking an effort to cut healthcare costs, and the government requires that insurance will cover 70% of costs by 2017. The Chinese government is working on providing affordable basic healthcare to all residents by 2020.

Medical care in China is offered in public hospitals, private healthcare facilities and international hospitals. Considering the vast nature of the country, the quality of healthcare and medical care costs obviously vary significantly between different cities across China. While there are some foreign workers in China who still seek treatment in various public healthcare facilities throughout the country, a good number of them opt to seek treatment at private facilities.

Public hospitals especially the ones located in bigger Chinese cities have international wings - which are meant to offer public healthcare with Westernised standards of medical care. Unlike in public healthcare facilities, international wings don't have the usual long queues and long waiting time.

Nearly all employers in China provide their employees with a health insurance plan, you can buy additional individual insurance policy that will meet your medical care needs.

## **Part 2 – Peoples Republic of China Import Customs Regulations**

**To the best of our knowledge, the following documentation is required to import household goods and personal effects into China.**

### **Foreign Passport Holders**

#### **General Information**

This applies to expatriates employed by and working for foreign representative offices, joint ventures or wholly owned companies registered in the city where you will reside. Also it is assumed you will be resident in China for at least 12 months.

It is recommended you have a multi-years visa.

An Alien Employment Permit and Chinese Residency Permit are normally issued within about 3 to 4 weeks after your arrival in China. After these have been issued, you will need to apply for an Import Permit for your household and personal effects which our partner company will assist you with, and this cannot be applied for until the effects have arrived, which then often results in delays in clearance with demurrage costs to be paid.

All items listed, and approved must be imported within six months, and all imports are subject to inspection by the Customs authorities.

Furniture, lighting fixtures, electrical appliances, bedding and other items are subject to import duty, and the serial number, model and size of all electrical appliances must be shown on your inventory. Nearly all effects are subject to duty, although it varies from City to City.



All Video Tapes/DVDs/CDs etc must be packed separately and must be clearly indicated on the Inventory with the exact quantity in each box. As these items may be subject to inspection which is estimated to take 2 – 3 weeks, it is advisable to have a list of titles or photographs. The same sometimes applies to books, so it is recommended these are also packed separately, and a list of titles provided or photographs is taken.

2nd shipments, whether air or sea, even a few years later, will be subject to 100% duty.

Please note the requirements and regulations can vary according to the city you are going to reside in.

### **Documentation Required**

- Passport with Residence Permit (valid period should be no less than one year).
- Alien Employment Permit (valid period should be no less than 1 year).
- Representative Card (required for foreign representative office).
- Application form with clients signature and company's stamp (chop).
- Inventory packing list.
- Baggage Declaration Form – 2 Copies for airfreight. To obtain the Baggage Declaration Form with customs stamp (chop) you should exit through the Red Channel. Two copies need to be completed identically and handed to the Customs official to get stamped. You must then retain this form.

### **Personnel from News Agencies**

#### **General Information**

Virtually the same as Foreign Passport Holders.

#### **Documentation Required**

- Passport with Residence Permit.
- Journalist Card.
- News Agency Certificate.
- Customs Registration Book.
- Customs Application Form with client's signature and News Agency stamp (Chop).
- Inventory packing list.

### **Returning Citizens**

#### **General Information**

Chinese passport holders need to have resided outside China with no interruption for at least one full year prior to their import application being granted. If you have been back to China within the year, even for a single day the maximum volume you will be allowed to ship is 2 cubic metres.

For Beijing, Chinese passport holders should avoid entering China more than once within 15 days immediately prior to the processing of the customs clearance.

Chinese customs are often stricter with Chinese importers than foreign importers, and usually require more documentation and impose a higher rate of duties.

#### **Documentation Required**

- Import Permit (our partner company in China will assist with this).
- Original Passport.
- Proof of stay abroad for at least one year.
- A Baggage Declaration Form is required for some Cities. To obtain the Baggage Declaration Form with customs stamp (chop) you should exit through the Red Channel. Two copies need to be completed identically and handed to the Customs official to get stamped. You must then retain this form.



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## **Diplomatic Personnel**

### **General Information**

Shipments for Diplomats are not normally subject to duty. Usually customs inspection does not take place, however, it can happen, but has to be authorised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the approval has to be given by the appropriate diplomatic mission. Quarantine inspections are more common.

### **Documentation Required**

- Import Permit (which has to be applied for by your Embassy).
- Diplomatic Card.
- Passport.
- The Bill of Lading which we arrange does need to stamped (chop) by your Embassy.
- Inventory packing list stamped (chop) by Embassy.
- Application form with authorised signature from Embassy and Embassy stamp (chop).

### **Restricted and prohibited Items**

#### **Books, CDs, DVDs etc.**

There are restrictions on the importation of these items, and different Cities have different regulations. There are also differing regulations between Returning Citizens and Foreign Passport Holders. Please contact us for clarification.

#### **Furniture**

Returning Chinese cannot import furniture. For foreign passport holders, high duties will apply.

#### **Pianos**

There are restrictions on the importation of pianos, for example, Grand pianos cannot be imported into Shanghai unless you are a musician or music teacher in a professional conservatory.

#### **Cars and Mini-vans**

Import restrictions are governed at local level, and generally importation not allowed for non-diplomatic cars and minivans.

#### **Food**

We recommend you not to include food, the regulations differ from City to City, and food items invite detailed inspection by customs/quarantine division and will delay the shipment resulting in additional costs.

#### **Weapons etc**

All weapons (including imitation weapons) ammunition, drugs, pornographic and politically subversive material. These items are strictly forbidden.

#### **Computers**

PCs with encryption capabilities require approval of software prior to importation. Import of normal PCs and laptops with simple password software for e-mail, windows, Microsoft outlook, etc. shipped as part of your household and personal effects consignment should not be a problem.

#### **Alcohol**

Import restrictions are governed at local level and vary from city to city, and apart from a couple of Cities it is strictly prohibited, except for diplomats.



## Antiques

Anyone wishing to import antiques of Chinese origin could fall under the new regulations and must register them with the authorities prior to customs release. Anyone not doing this may have great difficulty in later re-exporting these items when they leave China.

## Office Items

Import Permit is required for customs clearance.

### Documents required for Import Permit is as follows:

- Inventory packing list.
- Pro-forma invoice.
- Company's Business License.
- Company's Customs Registration book.
- Application form with company's stamp.
- Importing items list approved by customs (applicable to J-V or wholly owned company).

Importing office items into China is complicated due to the quarantine regulations, and all items are subject to inspection and are dutiable.

## Pets

We work with a number of Pet Relocation Companies who can help you import your pet to China.

Please contact us if you wish to be put in contact with our partners.

## Endangered Species

There are worldwide controls for the trade and movement of many animals, their fur, skin, bone feathers etc. In all cases a CITES certification will be required for export/import.

**Please note nearly all old pianos have ivory keys, and can only be imported after obtaining a CITES certificate.** For Information on obtaining a CITES certificate then please visit:

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/endangered-species-application-for-import-and-export-permit>

## Wood Packaging

The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People of China requires that wooden packaging material imported into China be either heat treated or fumigated with methyl bromide and properly marked.

The new measure follows ISPM-15 (International standards for Phytosanitary Measures Publication 15) Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material in International Trade (aka NIFM-15) to standardise the treatment of wood packing materials used for the transport of goods.

The wood packing material must be marked in a visible location on each article, on at least two opposite sides of the article with a legible and permanent mark in black ink. Labels and adhesives are not allowed.

*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.*