

Israel Relocation Guide



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

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| TELEPHONE: | Country code (00972) + Area code. |
| STANDARD TIME: | GMT + 2 hours. |
| WEIGHTS & MEASURES: | Metric. |
| ELECTRICITY: | 220v. |
| INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS: | Recommended Hepatitis A, Typhoid. |
| PUBLIC HOLIDAYS: | Purim – celebrated on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar, normally February/March in the Gregorian Calendar, Passover – the 15th to 22nd of the Hebrew month of Nissan – only the first day and last day are public holidays, March/April in the Gregorian Calendar, Yom HaAtzmaut/ Independence Day 5th day of the Hebrew month of Iyar, April/May in the Gregorian Calendar, Yom Yerushalayim/ Jerusalem Day – 28th day of Iyar, Pentecost/Shavuot 6th day of Hebrew month of Sivan May/June in the Gregorian Calendar, Fast of the 9th of Av (Hebrew Calendar) – July/ August Gregorian Calendar, Rosh HaShana/New Year 1st and 2nd days of the month of Tishrei, September/October in the Gregorian Calendar, Yom Kippur/Day of Atonement 10th day of month of Tishrei, Feast of Tabernacles/Sukkot 15th day of the month of Tishrei, Simchat Torah 23rd day of the month of Tishrei. |
| OFFICE HOURS: | 08.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs Sunday to Thursday, sometimes Friday morning. |
| BANK HOURS: | Varies but usually Sunday to Thursday 08.30 hrs to about 16.30 hrs and 08.30 hrs to 12.30 hrs Friday. |
| EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS: | 100 – Police: 101 Ambulance: 102 Fire. |
| BRITISH EMBASSY: | Ha Yarkon Street 192 Tel Aviv – Yafo 6340503 Tel: +972 3 725 1222 |
| ISRAELI EMBASSY IN LONDON: | 2 Palace Green Kensington London W8 4QB Tel: 0207 957 9500 |

Part 1 – Background Information on the State of Israel

Background

Following World War II, Britain withdrew from its mandate of Palestine, and the UN proposed partitioning the area into Arab and Jewish states, an arrangement rejected by the Arabs. Nonetheless, an Israeli state was declared in 1948, and Israel subsequently defeated the Arab armies in a series of wars that did not end deep tensions between the two sides. (The territories Israel has occupied since the 1967 war are not included in the Israel country profile, unless otherwise noted.) On 25 April 1982, Israel withdrew from the Sinai Peninsula pursuant to the 1979 Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty. In keeping with the framework established at the Madrid Conference in October 1991, Israel conducted bilateral negotiations with Palestinian representatives and Syria to achieve a permanent settlement with each. Israel and Palestinian officials on 13 September 1993 signed a Declaration of Principles (also known as the “Oslo Accords”), enshrining the idea of a two-state solution to their conflict and guiding an interim period of Palestinian self-rule. The parties achieved six additional significant interim agreements between 1994 and 1999 aimed at creating the conditions for a two-state solution, but most were never fully realised. Outstanding territorial and other disputes with Jordan were resolved in the 26 October 1994 Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty.

Progress toward a final status agreement with the Palestinians was undermined by Israeli-Palestinian violence between 2001 and February 2005. Israel in 2005 unilaterally disengaged from the Gaza Strip, evacuating settlers and its military while retaining control over most points of entry into the Gaza Strip. The election of HAMAS to head the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2006 temporarily froze relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA). Israel engaged in a 34-day conflict with Hizballah in Lebanon from July-August 2006 and a 23-day conflict with HAMAS in the Gaza Strip from December 2008-January 2009. In November 2012, Israel engaged in a seven-day conflict with HAMAS in the Gaza Strip. Direct talks with the Palestinians launched in July 2013 but were suspended in April 2014. The talks represented the fourth concerted effort to resolve final status issues between the sides since they were first discussed at Camp David in 2000. Three months later HAMAS and other militant groups launched rockets into Israel, which led to a 51-day conflict between Israel and militants in Gaza.

Both Israelis and Palestinians still claim the holy city of Jerusalem as their undivided capital. Under the 1993 Oslo peace accords, the final status of Jerusalem is to be decided at an advanced level of peace talks.

Geography

Israel is situated in the Middle East, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Lebanon. The climate is temperate; hot and dry in southern and eastern desert areas, with the Negev desert in the south; low coastal plains, central mountains, and the Jordan Rift Valley. The lowest point being the Dead Sea and the highest being Har Meron. Israel’s natural resources are timber, potash, copper ore, natural gas, phosphate rock, magnesium bromide, clays, sand.

The main population of Israel is concentrated in and around Tel-Aviv, as well as around the Sea of Galilee; the south remains sparsely populated with the exception of the shore of the Gulf of Aqaba.

There is limited arable land and restricted natural freshwater resources; desertification; air pollution from industrial and vehicle emissions; groundwater pollution from industrial and domestic waste, chemical fertilisers, and pesticides.

Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee) is an important freshwater source; the Dead Sea is the second saltiest body of water in the world (after Lake Assal in Djibouti); in 2017, there were 422 settlements in the Israeli-occupied territories – 42 settlements in the Golan Heights, 380 sites in the occupied Palestinian territories to include 213 settlements and 132 outposts in the West Bank, and 35 settlements in East Jerusalem; there are no Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, as all were evacuated in 2005.

Population

The population as at November 2017 is estimated to be over 8 million (8,379,000).

Currency

The new Israeli shekel (ILS), note is NIS is the currency abbreviation, ILS is the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) code for the NIS.

Coins: 5, 10 and 50 agurot, 5 & 10 shequel

Notes: 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 shequel

The major international credit cards are accepted by leading hotels, travel agents, airline office etc.

Economy

Israel has a technologically advanced free market economy. Cut diamonds, high-technology equipment, and pharmaceuticals are among its leading exports. Its major imports include crude oil, grains, raw materials, and military equipment. Israel usually posts sizable trade deficits, which are offset by tourism and other service exports, as well as significant foreign investment inflows.

Between 2004 and 2013, growth averaged nearly 5% per year, led by exports. The global financial crisis of 2008-09 spurred a brief recession in Israel, but the country entered the crisis with solid fundamentals, following years of prudent fiscal policy and a resilient banking sector. Israel's economy also weathered the 2011 Arab Spring because strong trade ties outside the Middle East insulated the economy from spillover effects.

Slowing domestic and international demand and decreased investment resulting from Israel's uncertain security situation reduced GDP growth to an average of roughly 2.6% per year during the period 2014-16. Natural gas fields discovered off Israel's coast since 2009 have brightened Israel's energy security outlook. The Tamar and Leviathan fields were some of the world's largest offshore natural gas finds in the last decade. Political and regulatory issues have delayed the development of the massive Leviathan field, but production from Tamar provided a 0.8% boost to Israel's GDP in 2013 and a 0.3% boost in 2014. One of the most carbon intense OECD countries, Israel generates about 57% of its power from coal and only 2.6% from renewable sources.

Income inequality and high housing and commodity prices continue to be a concern for many Israelis. Israel's income inequality and poverty rates are among the highest of OECD countries, and there is a broad perception among the public that a small number of "tycoons" have a cartel-like grip over the major parts of the economy. Government officials have called for reforms to boost the housing supply and to increase competition in the banking sector to address these public grievances. Despite calls for reforms, the restricted housing supply continues to impact the well-being of younger Israelis seeking to purchase homes. Tariffs and non-tariff barriers, coupled with guaranteed prices and customs tariffs for farmers kept food prices high in 2016. Private consumption is expected to drive growth through 2017 with consumers benefitting from low inflation and a strong currency.

In the long term, Israel faces structural issues, including low labor participation rates for its fastest growing social segments - the ultraorthodox and Arab-Israeli communities. Also, Israel's progressive, globally competitive, knowledge-based technology sector employs only about 8% of the workforce, with the rest mostly employed in manufacturing and services - sectors which face downward wage pressures from global competition. Expenditures on educational institutions remain low compared to most other OECD countries with similar GDP per capita.

Education

Israel provides free and compulsory elementary education for all children aged between 5 and 15 years old. Tuition is free; however, textbooks and school supplies usually need to be purchased.

Israel also has an established national system of public secondary schools (high schools). Most high schools have independent and recognised legal status and are run by public bodies and local committees. Funding is received from the Ministry of Education.

Private schools can be very expensive the quality of education is much better than that of a public school. Private schools are also highly competitive and many require rigorous testing before admitting a student.

There are also a number of international schools in Israel that expat parents can send their children to. The benefit of an international school is not only the high quality of education available, but also that it offers continuity with the curricula of international schools in other countries.



Language

Israel's national language is Modern Hebrew and the formal languages are Hebrew and Arabic. English is the main language for foreign communication, spoken and understood by most.

Religion

Religion in Israel is a central feature of the country and plays a major role in shaping Israeli culture and lifestyle, Israel is also the only country in the world where the majority of citizens are Jewish.

Healthcare

Healthcare in Israel is of an exceptionally high. Most doctors and nurses in Israel are highly trained and speak English.

Israel has an extensive public healthcare system, which is compulsory for all Israeli residents regardless of income or pre-existing conditions. Israeli residents are legally required to join one of four health maintenance organisations, which provide coverage for the Israeli public healthcare system.

Expat eligibility for public healthcare in Israel depends on whether or not they have residency and are earning a salary in Israel. Those earning money in Israel are required to pay a health insurance tax, which is the primary source of funding for the public healthcare system in Israel.

The public healthcare system in Israel includes all basic and essential healthcare services, but additional services and treatments can be accessed through 'supplementary insurance'.

There are also numerous private healthcare options in Israel.

Part 2 – State of Israel Import Customs Regulations

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

Immigrants

General Information

New Immigrants are entitled to duty and tax free importation of their household and personal effects. In order to utilise this privilege you must have the new immigrant booklet (Teudat Oleh). You can immigrate from country A and import from country B, but you are limited to three shipments within three years of date of arrival as marked on your Teudat Oleh. Cars and professional tools are not counted as one of the three shipments.

Some communication equipment, sporting equipment and outdoor furniture may be subject to duties and taxes.

You are only allowed one of each household electrical appliance, plus two televisions and two computers per family, and a note must be made of the manufacturer, make and serial number of each item, and whether new or old.

Carpets are permitted duty free but there are restrictions on size (please contact us for further information).

Documents required:

- Original passport of consignee (and spouse)
- Inventory (Packing List) in English without values
- Power of Attorney authorising our partner company to act on your behalf to clear your consignment through customs. A copy of this will be provided by our partners
- Our partner company will assist with providing the valued Declaration for customs which will need to be signed by yourself at their office
- Invoices for any items less than 12 months old



- Rental contract or other proof of residence in Israel for a 1-year minimum
- New immigrant booklet “Teudat Oleh” of consignee (and spouse)

Israeli Citizens who lived abroad less than 2 years

General Information

If you have lived abroad for less than two years generally you do not qualify for tax and duty free entry of your household and personal effects, unless you have formal proof all the returning effects were exported from Israel for your own use whilst living overseas.

For any electrical items you must make a note of the manufacturer, make and serial number of each item whether new or old.

Duties and tax will be as per the Customs Tariff.

Documents Required:

- Clear copy of picture page of Israeli Passport
- Inventory (Packing List) in English without values
- Power of Attorney authorizing our partner company to act on your behalf to clear your consignment through customs. A copy of this will be provided by our partners
- Our partner company will assist with providing the valued Declaration for customs which will need to be signed by yourself at their office
- Optional: EUR-1 or Certificate of Origin for newly purchased items

Israelis who have lived abroad for more than 2 years

General Information

If you have lived abroad for more than two years, and your visits back to Israel have not exceeded a total of 120 days, you are eligible to import your effects tax free under the Returning Citizens status, but the effects must arrive no later than nine months from your date of return.

You have to visit the customs house nearest to your residence with your Israeli passport (and spouse passport) your Teudat Zehut, and proof of residence i.e. rental contract, city tax etc. The Israeli Customs office should then stamp your passport “Returning Israeli” which will allow you to import your household and personal effects tax free. You are only allowed one of each household electrical appliance, plus two televisions and two computers per family, and a note must be made of the manufacturer, make and serial number of each item, and whether new or old.

Some items are not tax exempt i.e. communication equipment (phones, fax machines etc.)

Documents Required

- Inventory (Packing List) in English without values
- Clear copy of picture page of passport (and Spouse)
- Clear copy of “returning Israeli” stamp page of passport (and Spouse)
- Proof of Residence in Israel
- Invoices for newly purchased items (less than 12 months old)
- Power of Attorney authorising our partner company to act on your behalf to clear your consignment through customs. A copy of this will be provided by our partners
- Our partner company will assist with providing the valued Declaration for customs which will need to be signed by yourself at their office



Foreign workers (B-1 Visa) Work Visa

General Information

In order for your effects to be imported into Israel tax free your Company will have to provide a bank guarantee for the amount of duties levied by Israeli Customs. This guarantee will have to be renewed each year and will be revoked only when the effects are re-exported.

Documents Required

- All as per Immigrants plus
- Original Passport stamped with B-1 Visa)
- Letter from your employer, confirming you will be working in Israel
- ORIGINAL Bank Guarantee documents signed by the issuing bank

Religious individual (A-3 status) (Minister, Priest, Theological Student)

General Information

You will need to either pay a deposit or provide a bank guarantee to cover customs taxes, which will be paid back or released when the effects are re-exported.

Documents Required

- All as per immigrants plus
- Passport to show A-3 Visa Stamp
- Letter from your place of service
- Bank guarantee or deposit

Tourists (B-2)

No duty free rights. All goods imported are subject to Customs duty.

Diplomats removals

General Information

Diplomats are entitled to import their effects tax free (including some alcohol) once a tax exemption franchise is obtained by your Embassy, Consulate etc.

Your Embassy/Consulate must also apply to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jerusalem for a diplomatic ID card for you.

Diplomats can import alcohol into Israel duty free, but it is recommended not to import more than 30 or 40 bottles to avoid complicated customs clearance.

Documents Required

- English Packing List, without values
- Clear copy of passport
- Clear copy of diplomat's ID card
- Original tax exemption papers (Form 380)
- Letter of Authorisation from governing diplomatic body



Restricted Items

Inheritances

Taxes will apply.

Please contact us in your wish to ship inherited items.

Tools for professional purposes

You must be able to prove the tools are essential for your profession.

Alcohol, Cigarettes and Food

All subject to duties and taxes, and we ask that you do not include in your shipment.

Motorcars, other motor vehicles, caravans and trailers

Importing vehicles into Israel is a complicated process, and before shipping, full details of the car will have to be sent to the Authorities to see if the vehicle complies with the regulations set down by the Israeli Institute of Standards. There are also age restrictions set for the importation of vehicles, and new immigrants will have to pay tax at 77% of the shipping value of the car. Only one car can be imported within 3 years of date of arrival.

Firearms, ammunitions, explosives, dangerous chemicals, drugs

All prohibited.

Pets

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

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

Endangered Species

A CITES certificate is normally required. There is a worldwide ban on the movement of Ivory without a CITES Certificate. **Please note old pianos usually have ivory keys and a CITES certification will be required.**

For information on obtaining a CITES certificate please visit:-

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

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.