

Russia Relocation Guide



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

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THE ART OF MOVING

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TELEPHONE:	Country code (007) + Area code.
STANDARD TIME:	GMT +3 hours.
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric.
ELECTRICITY:	220v AC, 50Hz.
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Depends upon area visited.
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	Russians have an extended New Year starting either the end of December or January 1st. The number of days vary from year to year, depending on Government announcements. 7th January Russian Orthodox Christmas Day. 23rd February Defender of the Fatherland Day. 8th March (or weekday closest to) International Women's Day. May 1st Labour Day, May 9th Victory Day, June 12th National Day, November 4th Day of Unity. If a holiday day falls at the weekend an additional days holiday is declared. Also a number of bridge days are declared holidays e.g. if the holiday is a Tuesday then Monday is often declared a holiday.
OFFICE HOURS:	Usually 0900 – 1800 Mon – Fri.
BANK HOURS:	Normally 09.00 to 18.00 hours and a number of Banks open on Saturday for limited hours.
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Fire: 01 Police: 02 Ambulance: 03
BRITISH EMBASSY:	Smolenskaya Naberezhnaya 10 Moscow Russia 121099 Tel: +7 495 956 7200
RUSSIAN EMBASSY IN LONDON:	6 – 7 Kensington Palace Gardens London W8 4QH Tel: 0207 229 6412

Part 1 – Background Information on Russia

Background

Founded in the 12th century, the Principality of Muscovy was able to emerge from over 200 years of Mongol domination (13th to 15th centuries) and to gradually conquer and absorb surrounding principalities. In the early 17th century, a new Romanov Dynasty continued this policy of expansion across Siberia to the Pacific. Under Peter I (ruled 1682 - 1725) hegemony was extended to the Baltic Sea and the country was renamed the Russian Empire. During the 19th century, more territorial acquisitions were made in Europe and Asia. Defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 – 1905 contributed to the Revolution of 1905, which resulted in the formation of parliament and other reforms. Repeated devastating defeats of the Russian army in World War I led to widespread rioting in the major cities of the Russian Empire and to the overthrow in 1917 of the imperial household.

The Communists under Vladimir Lenin seized power soon after and formed the USSR. The brutal rule of Iosif Stalin (1928 - 1953) strengthened Communist rule and Russian dominance of the Soviet Union at a cost of tens of millions of lives. The Soviet economy and society stagnated in the following decades until General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev (1985 - 1991) introduced glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring) in an attempt to modernize Communism, but his initiatives inadvertently released forces that by December 1991 splintered the USSR into Russia and 14 other independent republics. Since then, Russia has struggled in its efforts to build a democratic political system and market economy to replace the social, political, and economic controls of the Communist period.

In tandem with its prudent management of Russia's windfall energy wealth, which has helped the country rebound from the economic collapse of the 1990's, the Kremlin in recent years has overseen a recentralization of power that has undermined democratic institutions. Russia has severely disabled the Chechen rebel movement, although sporadic violence still occurs throughout the North Caucasus.

Geography

Russia is in Northern Asia (the area west of the Ural Mountains is considered part of Europe) bordering the Arctic Ocean, between Europe and the North Pacific Ocean.

The terrain is a series of broad plains broken only with gentle rolling low hills west of the Urals; there are vast coniferous forest and tundra in Siberia; uplands and mountains along the southern border regions.

Russia has a wide natural resource base including major deposits of oil, natural gas, coal many strategic minerals and timber; however, formidable obstacles of climate, terrain and distance hinder exploitation of natural resources.

Natural hazards; permafrost over much of Siberia is a major impediment to development; Volcanic activity in the Kuril Islands; volcanoes and earthquakes on the Kamchatka Peninsula and spring floods and summer / autumn forest fires throughout Siberia and parts of European Russia.

Russia is the largest country in the world in terms of area but unfavorably located in relation to the major sea lanes of the world. Despite its size much of the country lacks proper soils and climates (either too cold or too dry) for agriculture. Mount El'brus is the highest mountain in Europe and can be found in the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia.

Climate

It ranges from steppes in the south through humid continental in much of European Russia. Sub-arctic in Siberia to tundra climate in the polar north.

Winters vary from cool along the Black Sea coast to frigid in Siberia. Summers vary from warm in the steppes to cool along the Arctic coast.

Population

As at July 2017 the population was recorded as 142,257,519. The population has declined over the last few years.

Religion

Russia is a multi-ethnic and multi-faith nation. Orthodox Christianity is Russia's official and largest religion with 75% of the population belonging to the Orthodox Christian denomination.

Language

The official language is Russian, although there are a considerable number of other languages spoken.

English is not always taught in Russian schools, although a number of people in the main Cities do speak English.

Economy

Russia has undergone significant changes since the collapse of the Soviet Union, moving from a centrally planned economy towards a more market-based system. Both economic growth and reform have stalled in recent years, however, and Russia remains a predominantly statist economy with a high concentration of wealth in officials' hands. Economic reforms in the 1990s privatised most industry, with notable exceptions in the energy, transportation, banking, and defense-related sectors. The protection of property rights is still weak, and the state continues to interfere in the free operation of the private sector.

Russia is one of the world's leading producers of oil and natural gas, and is also a top exporter of metals such as steel and primary aluminum. Russia's reliance on commodity exports makes it vulnerable to boom and bust cycles that follow the volatile swings in global prices.

The economy, which had averaged 7% growth during 1998-2008 as oil prices rose rapidly, has seen diminishing growth rates since then due to the exhaustion of Russia's commodity-based growth model.

A combination of falling oil prices, international sanctions, and structural limitations pushed Russia into a deep recession in 2015, with the GDP falling by close to 4%. Most economists expect this downturn will continue through 2016. Government support for import substitution has increased recently in an effort to diversify the economy away from extractive industries. Although the Russian Ministry of Economic Development is forecasting a modest growth of 0.7% for 2016 as a whole, the Central Bank of Russia (CBR) is more pessimistic and expects the recovery to begin later in the year and a decline of 0.5% to 1.0% for the full year. Russia is heavily dependent on the movement of world commodity prices and the CBR estimates that if oil prices remain below \$40 per barrel beyond 2016, the resulting shock would cause GDP to fall by up to 5%.

Currency

The currency is the Ruble (Rbl), divided into 100 Kopecks. The following denominations are in circulation:

Notes: 50, 100, 500 1000, and 5000 Rubles.

Coins: 5, 10, 50 Kopecks and 1, 2, 5, 10 Rubles.

Although the Russian economy is rapidly modernising and credit cards are widely accepted, in many situations you will need cash.

Until recently, the US Dollar was the currency of choice to take and still is accepted everywhere, though in recent years the Euros also has become equally as well accepted.

British pounds and travellers cheques may be taken, but outside of Moscow and St. Petersburg you may find them difficult to change and even then the rates will not be so advantageous.

Education

Education in Russia is organised and coordinated by the state, which ensures that general education is free and available for everyone. Most schools are state schools but private schools have also been established in recent years.

Children of resident foreign citizens can enjoy a free education at Russian schools under the same conditions as Russian citizens, but only after they establish their official residential status in the country.

The majority of expatriates send their children to the international schools, although some send their children to Russian schools. Russian educational standards are high, but all teaching is in Russian.



Health

Every Russian citizen and resident is entitled to free public healthcare under the Russian healthcare system via Obligatory Medical Insurance (OMI). OMI is financed by contributions from employers. Once you begin working in Russia, your employer will pay around 2–3 percent of your salary into a social tax, a percentage of which is paid into a national Russian healthcare fund. Once an employer pays this compulsory medical insurance, you have the right to free medical assistance from public Russian healthcare clinics.

Unemployed foreign citizens with a residence permit may be entitled to an OMI policy under certain conditions; check via a medical insurance company which is subscribed to the Russian healthcare system.

When you move to Russia, you'll also need to take out voluntary healthcare insurance (VHI). VHI is voluntary in name only and covers the minimum level of medical coverage required by law. At its most basic level, VHI might not be suitable for your medical needs, so it's highly recommended to consider if private medical insurance is required to receive the comprehensive nature and standard of care you are accustomed to back home.

As of January 2016, the previous reciprocal healthcare agreement between the UK and Russia is no longer in effect, so while you were once able to access Russian healthcare with your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), you must now consider travel insurance for Russia or private medical insurance before travelling.

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.

Part 2 – Russia Import Customs Regulations

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

All inbound shipments are subject to import customs duties (unless exempt) charged at 30% of the value of the effects and not less than 4 Euro/1 kg gross. Plus 15% handling charge.

Removal Goods – Russian Citizens

Documents required:

Power of attorney (issued by notary office in Russia) and two notarised copies of the power of attorney authorising our agent to act on your behalf at customs.

- Copy of National Passport.
- Copy of Russian registration (page from national passport).
- Detailed Inventory.
- Copy of International Passport including pages with recent immigration stamps of entry into Russia.
- Copy of Visa from Foreign Country.

Russian citizens can import duty free with following additional documentation

- An original stamped and correctly filled in T6 form (sample available if needed). The form must be obtained at the airport upon arrival into Russia in the red corridor. **Do not leave the T6 form with the Customs Officer.** To obtain a T6 form, you will need to provide a copy of your Detailed Inventory, and a copy of the CMR.
- Original letter from the Russian Consulate confirming the owner of the goods has been registered at the Consulate for more than 1 year.
- The customs value of the goods must not exceed the sum of Euro 5,000.



Foreign Citizens / Employees

Documents required:

- Copy of Passport including copies of pages with most recent immigration stamps for entry into Russia.
- Copy of Russian visa.
- Copy of registration in Moscow.
- Detailed Inventory.
- Migration Card, obtained on entry into Russia.
- Power of attorney (issued by notary office in Russia) and two notarised copies of the power of attorney authorising our agent to act on your behalf at customs. This must be issued in Moscow and notarised by a Russian notary. If the effects are being shipped into Russia via St Petersburg an additional notarised copy of the Power of attorney is required. If a Moscow registration cannot be obtained, please let us know well in advance of the effects being moved, when other options can be discussed.

Diplomats and staff of Embassies with diplomatic status

Documents required:

- Copy of Passport stamped by the Embassy, first page.
- Copy of Russian visa stamped by the Embassy.
- Copy of registration in Moscow stamped by the Embassy.
- Copy of diplomatic card stamped by the Embassy.
- Inventory.
- 2 Power of attorneys stamped by the Embassy.
- 2 letters to Russian customs with the Embassy seal.
- Consult the list of prohibited items for more information about alcohol (the same rule applies to all, diplomats included).
- Objects of art have to be authorised by the ministry of cultural affairs.
- Sometimes, customs requires presence of the Customer during customs clearance process.
- Drafts of the letter to the Customs, PoA will be provided by the agent in Russia.

Vehicles owned by Diplomats and staff of Embassies

Documents required:

- Copy of passport stamped by Embassy, 1st page plus the page with the registration stamp of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.
- Copy of Russian visa stamped by the Embassy.
- Copy of diplomatic card stamped by the Embassy.
- 2 copies of Power of attorney stamped by Embassy.
- 2 letters to Russian customs with Embassy seal.
- Document confirming ownership of the car.



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Vehicles owned by non Diplomats or Embassy staff

Documents required:

- Copy of first page of passport.
- Copy of Visa (for non residents).
- Copy of registration in the Russian Federation.
- Power of Attorney legalised by a Russian notary.
- Document confirming the right of ownership.

Duties and taxes are payable if the vehicle is imported on a permanent basis. The amount of duty and tax payable depends on engine capacity and year of production of the car.

- Non-residents of the Russian Federation can import their vehicle on a temporary basis for a period of 1 year. After this period exporting the vehicle is compulsory.
- Sometimes, customs requires presence of the Customer during customs clearance process.
- Templates of documents required can be supplied.
- All cars being imported permanently must comply with the emission environmental class EURO 5 and be equipped with a GLONASS system. If the GLONASS system is not installed by manufacturer, it is possible to install it in the Russian Federation during customs clearance. For temporary importation the emission regulation EURO 5 and GLONASS are not required.

Works of Art

For all items older than 100 years, a certificate from the Ministry of Culture has to be obtained. Modern items of art (not older than 100 years) except paintings made with oil paint on canvas, can be imported without the certificate from the Ministry of Culture.

Works of art include paintings, icons, musical instruments, collections, books older than 100 years.

Prohibited Items

- Food products of any kind, including but not limited to, any type of fish or fish products, dried fish or prawns, caviar, fungus or fungi, powdered or canned milk, canned fruits, vegetables or meat, oil, sauces etc.
- Alcohol.
- Bills, deeds, letters of credit.
- Jewelry, precious stones, bullion, and other precious metal, watches.
- Currency, money, bank notes, securities or evidence of debt.
- Weapons, guns (including hunting and pneumatics), ammunition, flammable items and liquids (which includes bleach and other household cleaners), firearms, knives.
- Building materials, such as wood, stone, tile, cabinetry etc.
- Liquids cannot be included for air-shipments except shampoo and shower gel.
- Plants and flowers etc.
- Medical drugs or personal-care products (perfume, colognes, aerosols).
- Dry Ice.
- Explosives, pyrotechnic substances or goods.
- Mercurial barometers or thermometers.



- Some batteries and accumulators.
- Bottles with compressed or liquefied gas.
- Infectious substances or intoxicants.
- Radioactive materials.
- Combustion engines.
- Chemicals and other dangerous substances.
- Tyres.

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>

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