

# Bahrain Relocation Guide



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

# ABELS™

THE ART OF MOVING

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MOVER



Memb No: A001



FS 23942



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ISO 9001 - ISO 14001  
OHSAS 18001



<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	Country code (00973) +Area code.
<b>STANDARD TIME:</b>	GMT + 3 hours.
<b>WEIGHTS &amp; MEASURES:</b>	Metric.
<b>ELECTRICITY:</b>	The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.
<b>INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:</b>	Hepatitis and Typhoid is recommended.
<b>PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:</b>	1st January – New Year’s Day, 1st May – Labour Day, Two days holiday for Eid Al Fitr (end of Ramadan) beginning of the lunar Month of Shawwal, Three days holiday for Eid Al-Adha during the lunar month of Dhul Hijja, Islamic New Year - 1st day of Muharram, Ashoora Eve – 9th day of Muharram, Ashoora – 10th day of Muharram, Prophet Muhammad’s Birthday during the lunar month of Rabi-al-awwal, 16th December - National Day (normally two days holiday).
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	Office hours are from 8.30 or 9.00 am to 5.30 or 6.00 pm Sunday to Thursday.
<b>BANK HOURS:</b>	8:30 -13:00 and 15:00-18:00. Sun-Thurs.
<b>EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:</b>	Police, Fire and Ambulance 999
<b>UK EMBASSY IN BAHRAIN:</b>	21 Government Avenue Manama 306, Tel: +973 1757 4100
<b>BAHRAIN EMBASSY IN LONDON:</b>	30 Belgrave Square London SW1X 8QB Tel: 02072 019 170

## **Part 1 – Background 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. A steady decline in oil production and reserves since 1970 prompted Bahrain to take steps to diversify its economy, in the process developing petroleum processing and refining, aluminium production, and hospitality and retail sectors. It has also endeavoured to become a leading regional banking centre, especially with respect to Islamic finance. Bahrain's small size, central location among Gulf countries, economic dependence on Saudi Arabia, and proximity to Iran require it to play a delicate balancing act in foreign affairs among its larger neighbours. Its foreign policy activities usually fall in line with Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The Sunni royal family 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 legislative 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. The country has increasing freedom of expression.

### **Geography and Climate**

Following the return of Janan to Qatar in March 2001, the state of Bahrain consists of 33 natural islands in the Bahrain Islands archipelago, lying in the Arabian Gulf of Bahrain off the north shore of Asia's Arabian Peninsula. The islands are about 24 kilometers (15 mi) off the east coast of Saudi Arabia and 28 kilometers from Qatar. The total area of the country is about 780 square kilometers.

Around most of Bahrain is a relatively shallow inlet of the Persian Gulf known as the Gulf of Bahrain. The seabed adjacent to Bahrain is rocky and, mainly off the northern part of the island, covered by extensive coral reefs. Most of the island is low-lying and barren desert. Outcroppings of limestone form low rolling hills, stubby cliffs, and shallow ravines. The limestone is covered by various densities of saline sand, capable of supporting only the hardiest desert vegetation – chiefly thorn trees and scrub. There is a fertile strip five kilometers wide along the northern coast on which date, almond, fig, and pomegranate trees grow. The interior contains an escarpment that rises to 134 meters, the highest point on the island, to form Jabal ad Dukhan (Mountain of Smoke), named for the mists that often wreath the summit.

Bahrain features an arid climate, and has two seasons: an extremely hot summer and a relatively mild winter. During the summer months, from April to October, afternoon temperatures average 40 °C (104 °F) and can reach 48 °C (118.4 °F) during June and July. A hot, dry southwest wind, known locally as the qaws, periodically blows sand clouds across the barren southern end of Bahrain toward Manama in the summer. From December to March, prevailing winds from the southeast, known as the shamal, bring damp air over the islands.

Bahrain receives little precipitation. The average annual rainfall is 72 millimeters (2.8 in), usually confined to the winter months. No permanent rivers or streams exist on any of the islands. The winter rains tend to fall in brief, torrential downpours, flooding the shallow wadis that are dry the rest of the year and impeding transportation.

### **Population**

The population as at February 2019 was estimated to be about 1,609,935.

### **Currency**

The currency of Bahrain is the Bahrain Dinar divided into files and in circulation:-

Coins:- 5, 10, 25, 50, 100 and 500 Fils

Notes:- 1/2, 1, 5, 10 and 20 Dinar

## Economy

Oil and natural gas play a dominant role in Bahrain's economy. Despite the Government's past efforts to diversify the economy, oil still comprises 85% of Bahraini budget revenues.

Other major economic activities are production of aluminium - Bahrain's second biggest export after oil and gas – finance, and construction. Bahrain continues to seek new natural gas supplies as feedstock to support its expanding petrochemical and aluminium industries. In April 2018 Bahrain announced it had found a significant oil field off the country's west coast.

## Education

The public school system was founded in 1932 and is the oldest in the Arabian Peninsula. While Bahrain has a number of private schools, public education in Bahrain is free until secondary school for both boys and girls. Education is also compulsory for children aged 6 to 14.

Education is also free for the children of Expats, however they are rarely found in Bahraini public schools. This is due to several factors such as the language barrier, transient nature of their stay in the country, and sometimes religious issues.

## Religion

Islam is the state religion of Bahrain, representing more than 80% of the population. Religious freedom is secured by the constitution, other faiths may worship publicly and establish designated places of worship.

## Healthcare

In Bahrain healthcare is available through public and private providers. It is free only for nationals. And, therefore, with the exception of emergency care in government hospitals, expats must pay for health services and medications. The majority of expats in Bahrain take out private health insurance.

In Bahrain, because of the relatively small population waiting times are fairly short. Expats report that tests and scans are usually done quickly, often during a visit to the doctor.

## Language

Arabic is the official language of Bahrain, English is widely spoken. English is used in business and is a compulsory second language in schools.

*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 – Bahrain Import Customs Regulations

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

### General Information

- All shipments are subject to 100% inspection. It is not mandatory for you to be present for clearance but you can request to attend if you wish
- Duty free entry of used effects, only for personal use and not commercial purposes, provided you have a two year valid Residence Permit. In the absence of the Residence Permit, your shipment can be cleared upon issue of a guarantee letter from your company/sponsor stating that the residence permit is in process
- Personal Computers, pianos, musical instruments, whether new or used, are subject to duty currently at 5%
- CDs, DVDs, LDs and VCDs are duty free unless large quantities are being imported
- DVDs, Videos and Magazines etc. are inspected by the Ministry of Interior for pornographic material, and there is a charge for this
- Any new items will attract duty currently at 5%

### **Documents Required**

- Clear detailed Packing List
- Copy of Passport with a valid Residence permit endorsed
- Authorisation letter to port authorities and Declaration (our partner company will assist with this)

### **Diplomatic Removals and documents required**

- Duty free entry
- Effects are not subject to physical customs inspection, only scanning
- Duty Exemption Certificate from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is required
- Copy of Diplomatic Passport or ID
- Authorisation letter to port authorities and Declaration (our partner company will assist with this)
- Alcohol is subject to customs duty at Customs discretion. Please check with your Embassy prior to shipping
- Medicines must be with prescription by a doctor in Arabic or English

### **Motor vehicles**

- Only left hand drive vehicles can be imported
- Cars over 5 years of age cannot be imported

If you do wish to take your car, please contact us for further information

### **Alcoholic Beverage**

Customs duty is applicable. Please do not include without contacting us.

### **Food**

Foodstuffs are dutiable and restricted. Please do not include without contacting us.

### **Prohibited Items**

- Narcotics and Drugs
- Flammable Items
- Pornographic materials (DVDs and magazines etc are subject to inspection by the Ministry of Interior)
- Pirated DVDs and VCDs
- Swords, knives, daggers etc and weapons of any nature (even ornamental)
- Knives, daggers (even ornamental, etc.)
- Wireless equipment, remote controlled helicopters, airplanes, boats
- Satellite dish and antennas receivers, cordless telephones, walkie talkies
- Gambling games
- Fire, Shot or Sea Gun, Military clothes, Swords, Two-Sided Knives (even souvenirs) Arrows or Darts, Daggers.  
Customs will hold the entire shipment if necessary and if required local police authorities will be called

### **Pets (dogs, cats, etc.)**

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

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>

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