

# Moving to Iran: Your Relocation Guide



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

## ABELS™

THE ART OF MOVING

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STANDARD TIME:	+3.30 GMT
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric
ELECTRICITY:	220v
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Polio, Hepatitis B, Rabies
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	11, 19 Jan, 8, 9, 11 Feb, 20, 21, 22, 23, 29, 30 Mar, 1, 2, 16 Apr, 4, 5, 29 Jun, 8, 22 Aug, 9 Sept, 15, 24 Oct, 18 Nov, 31 Dec
OFFICE HOURS:	07.30-12.00 12.30-15.30 Sunday – Wednesday 07.30-12.00 12.30-14.45 Thursday
BANK HOURS: 0	7.30-13.30 Saturday – Wednesday
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	110
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TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION:	11 Dameshq Street Valine Asr Ave Tehran Tel: 02189 22125



## Customs

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

### Household Goods

By Iranian Customs Regulations import of household effects is prohibited, except by certain parties and subject to conditions stipulated below.

All goods must be used and a reasonable amount, new items are subject to duties and commercial taxes which are very high, they may also be subjected to re-exporting out of Iran.

### Foreign Diplomatic Missions

Household goods are permitted to be imported and reexported by foreign diplomats free of duties. However, regardless of point of entry (POE) all Diplomatic goods must be carried in Bond to Tehran South Customs for Final Clearance.

Documents Required:

- Exemption letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran
- Translated and certified packing list

Presence of owner not required.

### Foreigners with working visa

Used household goods are duty free if you hold a valid work and resident permit.

Documents required:

- Valid passport
- Work and Residence permits
- Letter from employer
- Packing list

Presence of owner not required if Notarized Power of Attorney is signed, but the presence will help to facilitate the clearance.

### Returning Iranian Citizens

If your family has resided abroad for a minimum period of six months then you can import a reasonable amount of used household and personal effects duty free.

Documents Required:

- Passport
- Proof of residency abroad for a minimum of six months prior to return
- Packing list

Your presence is not necessary if power of attorney is signing on your behalf.

The passport the domicile should be changed to Iran.

## Time limitation

Surface shipments must arrive to an Iranian port no later than six months after the your arrival.

Air shipments must arrive to an Iranian airport no later than three months after your arrival.

## Prohibited & Restricted Articles

Firearms, ammunition, alcoholic beverages including wine and beer, pork, narcotics, pornographic materials (magazines, films, video cassettes, dvds) all strictly prohibited.

The Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance release audio and video tapes, films, books and magazines after inspection and clearance. All goods are inspected, it is recommended to place your boxes of magazines, books and tapes at the front of the container near the door in order to facilitate and expedite the customs clearance and restrict the inspection.

## Automobiles

Only diplomats and Embassies can import cars on a duty free basis.

Import of cars by individuals (non diplomats) require special permit from Ministry of Commerce. Owner of vehicle must make the application directly.

Temporary entrances of passenger cars are possible if you receive the carnet de passage or triplicate booklets from the motoring centres in the original country. The vehicle should be exited from Iran when the permitted period of three months is over. If you could not get a carnet de passage or triplicate booklet in the origin country you should get a temporary admission license in the entrance frontier by putting a deposit or a bank bond on security.

Iranian residents who are out of the country can enter their personal vehicle by carnet de passage booklet provided that their residence abroad shall not be less than six months.

## Iranian Nationals Residing Abroad

Iranian nationals abroad at least over one year, the last six months uninterrupted, are allowed to import all their used household articles and release them without paying customs duties and taxes.

All used household articles of Iranian passengers returning to Iran are allowed free of duty entry provided that:

- The listed articles arrive one month early
- Effects are in your possession within nine months of arrival into Iran, so that you do not benefit from such exemptions within the past five years
- Last six months of your residence should be uninterrupted

Government officers sent abroad on missions for a year period or over but return before the termination of their mission are not subject to the aforementioned privilege.

The above mentioned exemption is not included in importing automobiles, motorcycles or motor boats.



Manual tools related to the professions of the Iranian nationals and expatriates arriving in Iran are exempt from customs duties.

### General prohibition of import and export of goods

On the basis of rules and regulations of Iran, entrance of some goods and or its export is totally prohibited, some of those goods are as follows:

- Alcoholic drinks
- Gambling tools
- Weapons, ammunition and explosive goods
- Narcotic drugs
- Magazines, photos, film and snaps
- Goods against religious and national dignity of the country
- Writings against the official region of the country or discipline disturbance and public purity and national dignity

### Harmonized System of Commodity Goods and Coding

Customs duties and taxes belongs to imported goods whose amount is determined on the basis of import and export regulations, based on paying customs duties and taxes (Customs Valuation) of goods. Customs value is CIF rate (rate of purchase of goods at destination, insurance expenditures, transport and warehousing) and all expenditures related to the opening of credit or payment bill of exchange private and exclusive use of map, commercial model and sign and various similar duties related to goods and other expenditures of those goods which belongs to yourself until its entry to first customs office other submitting documents of goods owner is determined and would be given to the declaration from the basis of rate of currency and announced from central Bank of Iran on the day of it being submitted.

### 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 Islamic Republic of Iran

### Background

Known as Persia until 1935, Iran became an Islamic republic in 1979 after the ruling monarchy was overthrown and the shah was forced into exile. Conservative clerical forces established a theocratic system of government with ultimate political authority nominally vested in a learned religious scholar. Iranian-US relations have been strained since a group of Iranian students seized the US Embassy in Tehran on 4 November 1979 and held it until 20 January 1981. During 1980-88 Iran fought a bloody, indecisive war with Iraq that eventually expanded into the Persian Gulf and led to clashed between US Navy and Iranian military forces between 1987-88. Iran has been designated a state sponsor of terrorism for its activities in Lebanon and elsewhere in the world and remains subject to US economic sanctions and export controls because of its continued involvement. Following the elections of a reformist president and Majlis in the late 1990s, attempts to foster political reform in response to popular dissatisfaction floundered as conservative politicians prevented reform measures from being enacted, increased repressive measures, and made electoral gains against reformers. Parliamentary elections in 2004 and the August 2005 inauguration of a conservative stalwart as president, completed the reconsolidation of conservative power in Iran's government.

### Geography

Iran is located in the Middle East, bordering the Gulf of Oman, Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea between Iraq and Pakistan.

Iran is one of the world's most mountainous countries. Its mountains have helped to shape both the political and economic history of the country for several centuries. The mountains enclose several broad basins, or plateaus on which major agricultural and urban settlements are located. There are no major river systems in the country and historically transportation was by means of caravans that followed routes traversing gaps and passes in the mountains.

Iran is about 1 fifth of the size of USA.

There are some international disputes. Iran protests Afghanistan's limiting flow of dammed tributaries to the Helmand River in periods of drought. Iraq's lack of a maritime boundary with Iran prompts jurisdiction disputes beyond the mouth of the Shatt al Arab in the Persian Gulf. Iran and UAE engage in direct talks and solicit Arab League support to resolve disputes over Iran's occupation of Tunb Islands and Abu Musa Island. Iran stands alone among littoral



states in insisting upon a division of the Caspian Sea into five equal sectors.

### **Climate**

Mostly arid or semiarid, subtropical along the Caspian coast.

### **Language**

Persian (Farsi) is the national language. Azeri is the next most widely spoken language, most Azeri's speakers living in the northwest around Tabriz. Other minority languages include Kurdish, Arabic, Luri and Baluchi.

### **Population**

It is estimated at 68,017,860.

### **Environmental Current Issues**

Iran suffers with air pollution especially in urban areas from vehicle emissions, refinery operations and industrial effluents, deforestation, overgrazing, desertification, oil pollution in the Persian Gulf, urbanization, wetland losses from droughts, soil degradation (salination) inadequate supplies of potable water, water pollution from raw sewage and industrial waste.

### **Currency**

Iranian Rial (IRR)

Notes are in denominations of RL 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000

Coins are in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 250.

### **Economy**

Iran's economy is marked by a bloated, inefficient state sector, over reliance on the oil sector, and statist policies that create major distortions throughout. Most economic activity is controlled by the state. Private sector activity is typically small-scale – workshops, farming and services. President Khatami has continued to follow the market reform plans of former President Rafsanjani, with limited progress. Relatively high oil prices in recent years have enabled Iran to amass some \$40 billion in foreign exchange reserves, but have not eased economic hardships such as high unemployment and inflation. The proportion of the economy devoted to the development of weapons of mass destruction remains a contentious issue with leading Western nations.

### **Education**

The schooling system of Iran is working moderately well, but many children are not attending school. This is often to do with priorities made by the parents, as schools are easy to attend, and found in even small villages. Iran has around 100 institutions on university level, of which some are of very high standards. Despite the Islamization process, most secular subjects still have a secular approach.

Primary education in Iran is compulsory under the Iranian constitution. As a general rule, primary, secondary and higher education is free, although private schools and universities

do exist and are permitted to charge tuition fees. According to government figures, over 95% of Iranian children currently receive primary and secondary education. All schools are single-sex. There are over 113,000 throughout Iran, teaching over 18 million children. It is estimated that there are almost one million teachers within the education system.

The academic year runs for 10 months (200 active days) from September to June. There are three terms: September – December, January – March and April – June.

Secondary education is divided into two branches: 'theoretical' studies and technical & vocational studies. The academic or 'theoretical' branch comprises four subject areas: literature and culture, socio-economic studies, maths and physics, experimental sciences. The technical branch is more vocational in structure and is divided into the following three sectors: technical, business and vocational, agriculture. National exams are conducted at the end of each academic year during this secondary cycle. Students complete a number of units during their three years of secondary education, and must obtain 96 units within this time in order to be awarded the High School diploma.

Pre-University education. Students wishing to enter Higher Education must take a one year pre-university course, at the end of which they may obtain a 'Pre-University Certificate'. This certificate then qualifies students to sit for the highly competitive National Entrance Exam (Konkur), success in which is imperative in order to gain a place at university.

### **Religion**

Shi'a Muslim 89%, Sunni Muslim 9%, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian and Baha'i 2%.

### **Health**

Iran has good health care in cities, whilst it is generally insufficient in rural areas. Today only 80% of the Iranians have access to health services. One doctor for each 3,100 individuals is quite low. There is one hospital bed for each 800 individuals, which is also fairly bad, as many of these hospital beds are attended by inadequate personnel. Programs started by the governments have in some cases proven to be very successful.

### **Post Information**

Clearance of goods imported by post, except religiously prohibited goods and only in a limited number, up to 5,000 Rials per person is free from duties annually without the need to get any permission.

Dispatch of domestic products except forbidden ones, is allowed and there is no limitation. Each person shall be allowed to send foreign goods up to 80 dollars by post. Hand knitted carpet is not allowed to be sent by post. The postage of antiques, art works, inscriptions and any kinds of precious stones, coins and medical drugs and food is prohibited.

Posting alcohol, gambling tools, weapons, ammunition, drugs, magazines, photos, film and pornography is prohibited.



Clearance of some apparatus, equipment and articles such as radio receivers, communication instruments, books and publications, tapes, computers and their parts and accessories, plant seeds are subject to getting licenses from the relevant organisations.

Dispatching of sample goods whether made in Iran or abroad as a sample or in order to test, analyze or repair in a limited number is permitted, provided that they are not religious or antique.

Posting musical instruments of any kind which are made in Iran is exempt from depositing foreign exchange guarantee cases confirmed by the ministry of Islamic guidance and culture. Dispatching cds or tapes needs permission from the ministry of Islamic guidance and culture, for duplication by post is permitted.

### **Important Information**

Any kind of goods concealed from sight of the customs officials is considered illicit and will be subject to the laws of punishment.

Discrepancy between accompanied goods of the passengers and what has been declared in the customs declaration will be considered as a crime and subject to the relevant rules. You can contact directly with the head of the customs administration to make any suggestion by the following telephone number: 8805394-5.

### **Travel Advice**

The foreign and common wealth office strongly advice against all travel to the border areas with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

There is a threat from terrorism in Iran. Explosions have killed a number of people in 2005 and 2006. Attacks could be directed at Western, including British, interests. You should be extra vigilant and prudent if you intend to travel to the Ahwaz / Khuzestan region.

You should avoid demonstrations and similar large public gatherings. In the last three years, there have been several violent attacks on, and violent demonstrations outside, British Embassy compounds in Tehran. If you plan to visit the British Embassy, you may wish to telephone first.

### **Local laws and Customs**

As a general rule men should dress conservatively with long trousers and sleeves. Women should cover their heads whenever they are in public, at least by wearing a plaincoloured headscarf, and wear loose fitting clothing with their arms and legs covered and a knee length coat or tunic.

The import, sale, manufacture and consumption of alcohol in Iran is strictly forbidden on religious grounds. Penalties can be severe.

Photography near military and other government installations is strictly prohibited.

If you are arrested you may be detained and face serious criminal charges, including espionage, which can carry the death penalty.

Behaviour regarded as inoffensive elsewhere can lead to serious trouble in Iran, particularly with regard to sexual relations, alcohol and drugs. In general it is best to err on the side of caution.

During the month of Ramadan, you should observe the Muslim tradition of not eating, drinking, or smoking in public from sunrise to sunset each day.

Homosexual behaviour, adultery and sex outside of marriage are illegal under Iranian law and can carry the death penalty.

Penalties for importing and possessing drugs are severe and enforced. Large numbers of convicted drug traffickers have been executed in recent years.

The importation of all alcohol and pork products are banned because of religious prohibition.

Women's magazines and dvds or videos depicting sexual relations are also forbidden. Although cultural restrictions have loosened, there are periodic clampdowns, including on satellite dishes, Western cds and films. You should be aware that many of these things though mostly tolerated are still illegal.

### **Mobile Phone Tips**

To ensure you can still make and receive calls and messages abroad on your UK mobile, you need to change the network service to International roaming before you travel. Contact your UK mobile network provider to ensure your mobile phone is enabled for International Roaming. Do this well in advance as it can take up to 14 days and you can't do it from overseas. Check your existing handset will also work in the countries you are travelling to as this may not be the case particularly outside Europe. Check with your network provider for the current charges as they can be a lot higher.

*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.*