

A man with a beard, wearing a green jacket and brown pants, is pushing a metal cart loaded with cardboard boxes. He is in a storage unit aisle with green doors and a ladder leaning against one of the units. The scene is brightly lit, and the man is looking down at the cart.

What to do with your stuff when relocating overseas

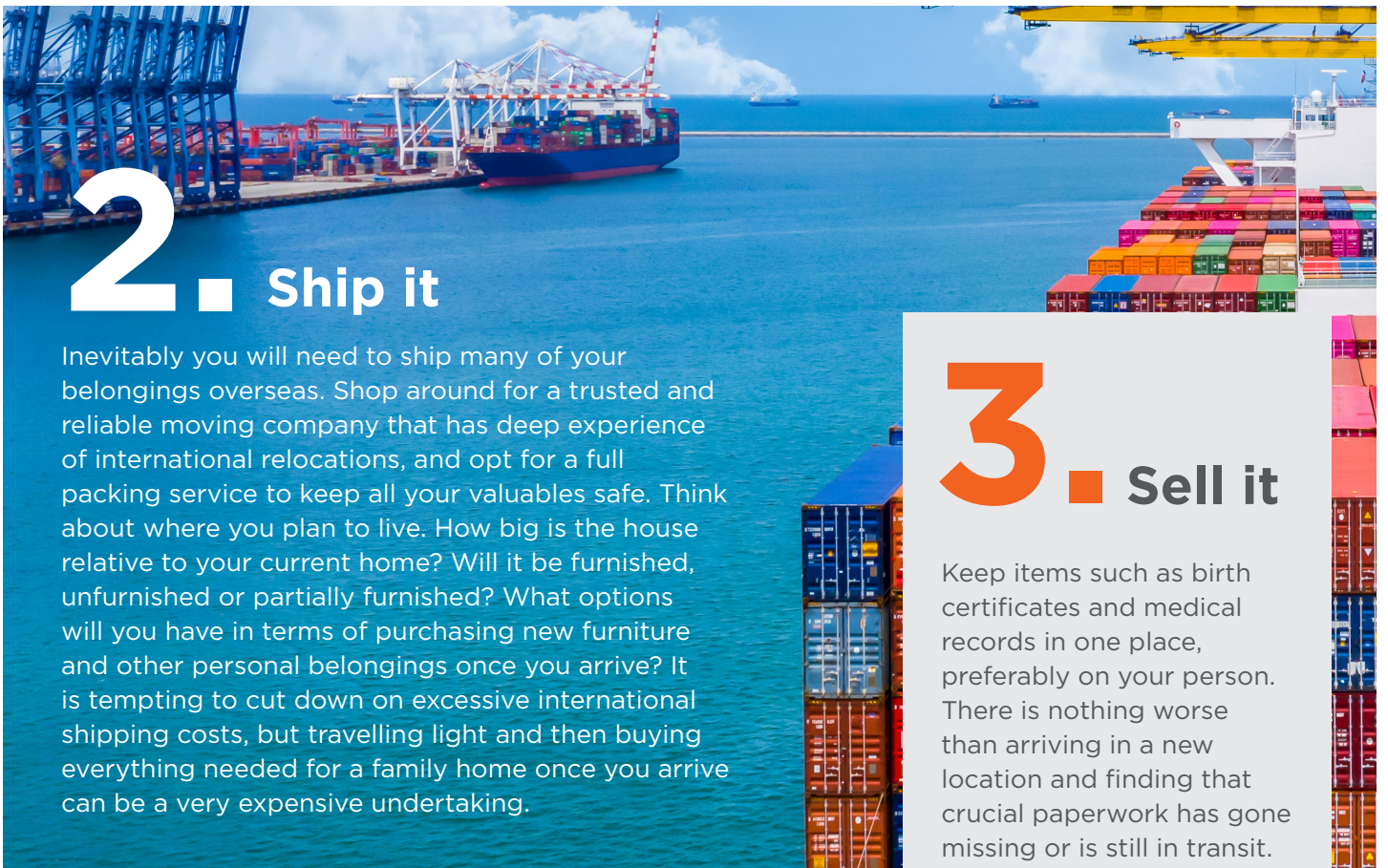
When moving overseas, deciding what to do with a lifetime's worth of furniture and other belongings can be a major headache. Chances are you can't take everything with you, so how do you work out what goes and what gets left behind? Here's some advice to help you make up your mind.



1.

Start with an inventory

Systematically go through all you have and mark down what you feel is essential to take with you and what you can either do without or renew once overseas. The eventual list of essential items will be different for everyone. Think not just about practical items such as furniture, but also those things that add to your quality of life and which cannot be replaced, such as your favourite guitar or a prized record collection. Moving overseas shouldn't mean saying goodbye to all the things you love!



2. ■

Ship it

Inevitably you will need to ship many of your belongings overseas. Shop around for a trusted and reliable moving company that has deep experience of international relocations, and opt for a full packing service to keep all your valuables safe. Think about where you plan to live. How big is the house relative to your current home? Will it be furnished, unfurnished or partially furnished? What options will you have in terms of purchasing new furniture and other personal belongings once you arrive? It is tempting to cut down on excessive international shipping costs, but travelling light and then buying everything needed for a family home once you arrive can be a very expensive undertaking.

3. ■

Sell it

Keep items such as birth certificates and medical records in one place, preferably on your person. There is nothing worse than arriving in a new location and finding that crucial paperwork has gone missing or is still in transit. Remember also to keep a digital record of all your paperwork.

4. Store it

Depending on the length of your overseas posting, it could be worth putting a certain amount of your belongings in storage. The great thing about storage is that you can avoid the emotional process of having to say goodbye to your belongings while at the same time cutting down on your shipping. Storing your possessions also allows you to quickly reset your old life when

you return back home. The downside, however, is the cost. Even modest monthly storage charges can start to add up - particularly if you are away for a lengthy period of time. Shop around for a storage company that can provide the size of unit you need, and make sure it provides good security, climate control and insurance as part of the monthly fee.



5. Give it away

The most hassle-free option is to give some of your belongings away. This takes away the cost of shipping or storage and is a much easier process than listing on an online marketplace. There is also the benefit of knowing that your belongings will likely go to somebody that needs them more than you. Check out large charity organisations such as Salvation Army or Goodwill, which may also be able to offer free pick-up services. Or opt instead for a more local charity that accepts donations, such as schools and orphanages. For older belongings, look also for recycling sites where you can drop off used clothes and furniture.

6. Mix and match

Ultimately you will end up going for a mix of ship, store, sell and give away. Most people moving overseas will ship the essentials, store what they need but can't let go of, and sell or give away the rest. This is where an inventory can come in handy. Go through all your list of items and mark down a destination for each. It will be time consuming but very much worth it in the end as it will help make the relocation process just a little less stressful.