



HAMILTONS  
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An essential guide to relocating in

# South Africa



If you are moving house to South Africa, there is a lot more to consider than choosing an international service. Our relocation guide below provides additional information on choosing schools, working abroad, healthcare and more. Please note this information is believed to be accurate at the time of writing, but please check with our international removals department prior to your moving date.

## Visas

In order to live in South Africa you will require a visa, of which there are a number of different options available to you. Which you choose will depend on your personal circumstances.

A South African work permit will allow foreign nationals to immigrate to South Africa on a temporary basis to carry out work there. These are valid for twelve months but can be extended.

The employer most commonly carries out the work permit application, after they have offered the candidate a job. In these cases, the employer must demonstrate that they have tried to fill the position with a local citizen first.

Where an applicant possesses skills that are deemed to be in short supply it is possible for them to apply for a work permit without an offer of employment in place. In this case, the applicant must have five years of relevant experience, and on arrival in South Africa, must secure an offer of employment within ninety days.

Individuals with exceptional skills may also apply for a work permit. With these applications, the migrant must be able to prove their abilities and each case is assessed individually. Another route to obtaining a work permit is the Intra Company Transfer or ICT. The ICT allows employees to transfer to South African branch or sister company and take up a specific, temporary position.

Applicants that have been in possession of a work permit for more than five years may apply for a permanent residence permit.

It is possible for foreign nationals to retire to South Africa, with a retirement visa or permit. This is allocated providing that the applicant can prove that their income is in excess of a certain amount. Retirement permits are valid for up to four years but can be renewed. In addition, permanent residency can be obtained if the candidate can demonstrate a net worth over a specific amount.

Immediate relatives of a South African permanent resident or citizen can apply for a family visa, which entitles them to emigrate, based entirely upon their family connections.



## Finances

It is important to organise your finances before you move to South Africa. Check whether your current bank has a dedicated expatriate division, or considering opening a new account with a South African bank such as the South African Reserve Bank, ABSA, Standard Bank, Nedbank or First National Bank.

## Schools

The quality of schooling in South Africa varies widely. The range of schools available includes fully subsidised public schools, fee-charging public schools, private schools and boarding schools. Although a large amount of funding is made available by the government, more money is always needed to address the backlog left by 40 years of apartheid education. Schools differ in the amount of funding they receive and as a result, some state schools experience problems with overcrowding, low teacher to student ratios and inadequately trained staff.

Children can start school in grade 0 - the reception year, and attend through to grade 12, which is the year of matriculation. The compulsory grades are from 1 (at age seven) through to grade 9 (aged fifteen). Following grade 12, students can continue studying at higher education level, to obtain certificates, diplomas or degrees.

## Health care

Health care in South Africa is expensive, and treatment must be paid for immediately. It is therefore highly advisable to set in place adequate health insurance prior to your departure to ensure that you are covered from day one. Medibroker is an independent insurance broker that can provide you with free quotes and advice to assist you in finding a policy that suits your needs. You may be best off with a policy that has been designed specifically for expatriate use.

In general the standard of health care is high, particularly in urban areas such as Johannesburg with a good number of private and public hospitals.

Whilst living in South Africa it is important to take precautions against Malaria and infectious diseases such as yellow fever, hepatitis A and B. Your doctor or pharmacist in the UK can advise you on anti-malarials and vaccines before you depart.

## Moving your pet

It is possible to take your dog or cat with you when you move to South Africa from the UK. You will need to obtain an import permit, and ensure that the animal meets a number of strict requirements. These include having the animal micro chipped and vaccinated against rabies, and possibly checked for other diseases. If other checks are required, then the results of these must be noted on the Import Permit Veterinary Health Certificate with negative results. The animal must also have remained within the country of origin for at least six months prior to departure.



## South African Customs Information

International removals to South Africa and other overseas destinations are more complicated than moving house within the UK due to the Customs & Excise regulations applied to importing your belongings.

Below is a guide to current South African Customs & Excise regulations. Please note that information is correct at time of publishing but may change at any time. Hamilton's South African removals department will guide you through all relevant Customs & Excise regulations prior to your overseas move.

Duty free entry for used household and personal items is granted to all new residents. South African citizens who are returning need to have been out of the country for a continuous period of at least 6 months to gain duty free entry. In both cases you need to be in South Africa before the arrival of the consignment in order to clear your goods through customs and produce your original passport.

Customs checks maybe made on consignments, the cost of which will need to be paid to the local customs authorities. Cargo dues will also be payable.

### Restrictions

- Skins, feathers, furs and tusks from endangered species are all prohibited
- Walkie-talkie radios

### Prior Authorisation Required

- Wines, spirit and beer require an import permit from the Director of Imports and Exports in Pretoria and this must be in place prior to shipping. Duty & tax will be payable and is based on the alcohol content.
- Firearms require a South African Police Firearm Registrar Certificate and import permit to be issued by the local police authority at destination. We would recommend that they are contacted prior to shipping
- All motor vehicles must have a Letter of Authority for import from the South African Bureau of Standards, this must be issued prior to the vehicle being shipped. First time residents can import vehicles duty free providing it has been used by you for at least one year before your arrival and is for your own personal use. VAT will be payable at the current rate and will be based on the value of the vehicle. Returning residents will need to pay full duties and tax.

We will require the following documentation to clear your goods through customs:

- Photocopy of passport, photo page
- Copy of permanent residence form or temporary residence permit and work Permit
- Inventory list (this will be completed by our removal crew)

You will need to complete a South African Customs Form DA304 & P1.160 on arrival (both supplied at destination)

**Documentation required for motor vehicles:**

- Customs form DA 304/A
- Vehicle registration form (V5)
- Proof of ownership for 1 year previous to shipment
- Letter of Authority form South African Bureau of Standards, this must be issued prior to the vehicle being shipped

## Useful Information

Currency	South African Rand (ZAR)
Electrical Supply	220/ 230 volts, 250 volts Pretoria- Most appliances from the UK should operate with an adapter (round three pin plug), although televisions do not operate without alterations
Time	GMT +2 hours
Dialling codes	International dialing code 00 27 followed by local code - 12 for Pretoria, - 11 for Johannesburg, - 21 for Cape Town, - 31 for Durban



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