

# Your First 30 Days *in a* New Country

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A Practical Checklist for Settling In

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From the author of the Know the Rules series

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This checklist provides a starting point. For detailed guidance about everyday systems, see the Know the Rules books.

# Introduction

Understanding how things work is often the first step to feeling at home in a new place.

Moving to a new country can be exciting but also confusing. Many systems may be unfamiliar, and everyday tasks may work differently from what you are used to.

During the first few weeks it helps to focus on a few important steps that make daily life easier and help you settle more smoothly.

This checklist highlights practical things people often need to organise during their first 30 days in a new country. It focuses on common areas of everyday life that newcomers often need to understand early on.

The steps are general and apply to many countries. However, each country has its own systems, rules and expectations. Taking time to understand these can make daily life easier and help you avoid common misunderstandings.

For clearer guidance on how everyday systems work in specific countries, you may find the **Know the Rules** books helpful.

# Week 1: Getting the Essentials in Place

Your first week is about understanding your surroundings and putting a few basic arrangements in place.



## **CONFIRM WHERE YOU WILL BE STAYING INITIALLY**

Make sure you understand the address and arrangements for your first accommodation, whether it is temporary or long term.



## **CONFIRM YOUR ADDRESS**

Make sure you understand how addresses are written locally and keep a record of where you are staying. You may need this information for registrations and official forms.



## **GET A LOCAL PHONE NUMBER**

Having a local phone number makes it easier to communicate, complete registrations, and receive important messages.



## **START THE PROCESS OF OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT**

Many everyday payments require a local bank account. Banks may ask for identification or proof of address, so it can help to begin the process early.



## **UNDERSTAND EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Learn the number to call in case of emergency and find out how emergency services operate in your area.



## **LEARN BASIC TRANSPORT OPTIONS**

Identify how public transport works locally. This may include buses, trains, taxis, or other transport services that help you move around easily.

# Week 2: Understanding Local Systems

During the second week, begin learning how important systems operate in your new country. This will help you avoid confusion later..



## **FIND OUT HOW HEALTHCARE SERVICES WORK**

Learn how people access healthcare in your area. Some countries require registration before you can use certain services.



## **UNDERSTAND BASIC LOCAL LAWS AND RULES**

Every country has rules that may differ from what you are used to. Take time to understand key expectations that affect everyday life.



## **LEARN WHAT IDENTIFICATION ARE COMMONLY REQUIRED**

Identification is often required for services such as opening a bank account, accessing healthcare, or completing official registrations. Learn which documents are commonly accepted in your new country.



## **PAY ATTENTION TO OFFICIAL LETTERS OR NOTICES**

In many countries important information is sent by post or email. Make sure you check messages regularly so you do not miss anything important.

# Week 3: Work, Housing and Daily Life

By the third week you may begin dealing with practical matters related to work and everyday living.



## LEARN ABOUT EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

If you plan to work, take time to understand how employment arrangements usually operate.



## LEARN HOW LONGER-TERM HOUSING AND RENTING WORK

Housing systems differ between countries. It helps to understand deposits, rental agreements and tenant responsibilities before arranging longer-term accommodation.



## UNDERSTAND PAYMENT SYSTEMS

Some places rely heavily on digital payments or bank transfers, while others still use cash frequently.



## IDENTIFY USEFUL LOCAL SERVICES

Libraries, community centres and public services can provide helpful information and support.

# Week 4: Settling Into the Community

During the later part of your first month, you may begin to feel more familiar with your surroundings and start building connections in your new environment.



## EXPLORE YOUR LOCAL AREA

Take time to learn where important places are located such as shops, transport stations and community facilities.



## UNDERSTAND CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS

Social customs and everyday behaviour may differ from what you are used to. Observing how things are done locally can help you adapt more easily.



## LEARN ABOUT COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Local groups, events or volunteering opportunities can help you meet people and feel more connected.



## START BUILDING YOUR LOCAL NETWORK

Friends, neighbours and professional contacts can make settling into a new country much easier.

# Common Challenges in the First Month

Many people experience similar challenges during their first few weeks in a new country. These situations are normal and often happen simply because systems and expectations may be unfamiliar.

Some examples include:

- Not being aware of important local rules
- Missing official letters or messages
- Delaying essential registrations or appointments
- Assuming systems work the same way as in your home country

Taking time to understand how everyday systems operate can help you avoid unnecessary difficulties and feel more confident as you settle into your new environment.

# Want Clearer Guidance for Your New Country?

This checklist highlights some helpful steps to organise your first month in a new country.

However, each country has its own systems, rules and everyday expectations. Understanding how these work can make daily life easier and help you avoid common misunderstandings.

The Know the Rules series provides straightforward guidance to help readers understand everyday systems in different countries.

These guides explain practical areas such as:

- work and employment
- housing and renting
- driving and transport
- consumer protection
- everyday responsibilities

Each book focuses on helping readers understand how things work in a particular country so they can approach daily life with greater confidence.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bukky Okunade writes practical books that help readers understand systems, contribute to their communities and take on meaningful public roles.

Her books include The Act of Service, the Know the Rules series, and the Guide to Public Roles series.

TO EXPLORE THE BOOKS IN THE SERIES AND LEARN MORE,  
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