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Moving Abroad — Taking Your Belongings

International Spedition, customs regulations and checklist for moving from Germany abroad. Status: March 2026.

Deutsche Begriffe: Abmeldung | Nachsendeauftrag | Kündigung | Zollbestimmungen | Sozialversicherung | Steuererstattung

Moving Abroad — Taking Your Belongings

> Status: March 2026. All information without guarantee.

Planning (3–6 months in advance)

- Search for **Spedition** for international moving and compare quotes
- Decide: **containers** (sea freight), **air freight** or **land transport**?
- Create an **inventory list** (important for Zoll!)
- What are you selling, gifting, disposing of?
- Conclude **transport insurance**

Costs (approximate values)

Transport	Europe	Overseas
Sea freight (container)	—	2,000–8,000 €
Air freight	from 3 €/kg	from 5 €/kg
Land transport	1,000–4,000 €	—

Transport	Europe	Overseas
Beiladung (partial container)	500-1,500 €	1,000-3,000 €

Zoll – Übersiedlungsgut

Within the EU:

- **Within the EU:** No Zoll, no restrictions
- Simply take it with you

Outside the EU:

- **Übersiedlungsgut** is in most countries **duty-free** (used personal items)
- Conditions: Minimum 6-12 months residence in Germany, items in possession for at least 6 months
- **Inventory list** (bilingual) with valuations
- **Abmeldebescheinigung** as proof of change of residence

What is often not duty-free:

- New goods (originally packaged)
- Alcohol and tobacco above duty-free limits
- Vehicles (individual rules per country)
- Electrical appliances (note voltage differences!)

Taking your car

- **Within the EU:** Simply re-register in the new country
- **Outside the EU:** Vehicle must be **deregistered** at Zoll (Kfz-Brief + Abmeldebescheinigung)
- **TÜV:** Not recognized in many countries — local inspection required
- **Insurance:** German vehicle insurance ends upon deregistration

Don't forget before departure

- **Abmeldung** at the Bürgeramt

- Clarify **bank accounts** (may keep for pension)
- Cancel **insurance policies** (liability, household, vehicle)
- Cancel **electricity/gas/internet** (special cancellation right for moving abroad!)
- Set up **Nachsendeauftrag** (international: 44.90 € for 6 months)
- Deregister from **GEZ**
- Prepare **tax return** for the year of departure

Tips

- **Compare offers:** Umzugsauktion.de, Movinga.de — request quotes from multiple Spedition
- **Insurance:** Transport insurance with new value coverage recommended
- **Take photos** of all valuable items before packing
- **Important documents** in carry-on (passport, contracts, certificates, Abmeldebescheinigung)