

SHIP AHOY!

Some people might prefer to emigrate with just a suitcase, but for **Karen Bleakley**, shipping the contents of her home to Australia will help her family to settle in better...



A I feel like I should begin with a confession: “My name is Karen and I’m a hoarder.” Being a hoarder isn’t something you associate with being a free-spirited adventurer, but after 10 years in our house, we’ve accumulated a lot of junk. Five years ago, my husband and I travelled the world with a backpack each, so I know we don’t need stuff, but getting rid of it is another matter.

Our things remind us of important times in our lives: newborn baby clothes, first shoes, travel tickets... I know some people emigrate with just a suitcase, but I feel anchored by my belongings as they have memories attached. I think that taking the contents of our home will really help us (and the kids) settle in.

THE SHIPPING PROCESS

You can ship any amount, from a few boxes to an entire container. Containers come in two sizes: full-sized (40 feet) or half-sized (20 feet). You can have a



A family packing up their belongings

few to provide quotes. We understood that it was important to make sure our shipper was a member of the British Association of Removers.

As members adhere to a code of practice it gave us financial security should the company go bust while our

“I FEEL ANCHORED BY MY BELONGINGS AS THEY HAVE MEMORIES ATTACHED”

container to yourself, or you can share one. Sharing a container means it’s likely to take longer to arrive because the shipping company will need to match the remaining space with somebody else, but it’s a way of keeping costs down. Containers are usually packed by your shippers, using their materials.

I found it useful to check out forums for advice on reliable companies and picked a

possessions are in transit.

We have been busy going through each room, writing a list of what we definitely want to take and what’s optional depending on the space available. There is also the contents of the shed and loft to consider too. Making a list really helped as it meant we wouldn’t forget to include the bike in the garden or the roof box on the car – the sort of thing which could >>



Above, a container ship in transit

PLANNING YOUR MOVE

When you are planning to move overseas it is vitally important that you receive the right information and also the right support, therefore it is important that the company you decide to go with has all the accreditations that will protect you and your household effects. Being members of FIDI Global Alliance, accredited by FAIM quality standard, financially bonded by the British Association of Removers and IMMI Advance Payment Guarantee Scheme will ensure you are fully protected.

The export packing and loading of your possessions is probably the most important part of the whole International removal process, it is important that the removal company you choose will protect your fragile household items using the correct export grade of industry-approved packing materials and it is also important that they have highly skilled and fully trained export packers.

Australia is naturally concerned about their environment and wish to protect their agricultural industries from possible contamination by foreign pests and diseases brought in through the movement of personal and household effects to Australia. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) regulate the importation of personal and household effects and your goods are subject to inspection upon arrival. It is important for you to be given the correct advice before you decide to ship certain items.

■ **John Moynes is sales and development manager for PSS International Removals. For further information visit www.pssremovals.com/removals-australia.php.**

skew up the quote comparison. When we were given a quote, we always checked what was included to help us compare like for like. You need to price up insurance through your shipping company as well as independently, as this can work out cheaper.

In our experience it's important to make sure you ask your shipper how the removal day will work, especially if you live in a narrow residential street. Will they bring in a container for a few hours, or will they remove your things in a lorry and then load the container at their depot?

Consider whether you want to take out a cancellation waiver, just in case your house sale falls through or something comes up at the last minute that changes your plans.

WHAT NOT TO TAKE

There are laws to protect the natural environment and habitats in Australia from harmful diseases and pests, which means many items are prohibited. We

researched this and went through our belongings to get rid of offending items.

It's a good idea to bear in mind that wardrobes may not be needed as many houses have walk-in wardrobes.

WHAT TO TAKE

Expat friends have told me it's worth taking bedding (known as 'Manchester' in Australia, which is worth remembering), vacuum cleaners and washing machines (make sure they are spotless before attempting to ship them) as they are all expensive to replace. Tumble dryers are also useful, apparently, as the weather is humid and the sun can damage clothes.

I'm still working my way through each room, doing tip runs, filling charity bags, selling online and giving bags of things away. This move is giving me an excuse for a huge clear out. It feels like an endless task, but I know once we've tackled this, Australia will be a huge step closer. Then, as soon as we land, we can start collecting junk all over again. 🇦🇺



It is useful to find out in advance how your removal day will work

CHOOSE AN INTERNATIONAL REMOVALS FIRM

There is some anecdotal evidence that the number of migrants who move internally within one state, or again over much larger distances in an interstate removal can be as high as 75 per cent.

While we would always suggest that you ensure that your goods are shipped to the closest port of entry to your final destination, this may not always be possible in some cases.

This is where the importance of the overseas mover at destination cannot be overstated. While it may be tempting to simply accept the cheapest quotation, you really do need to know who will be handling your goods once they arrive at their destination.

It is not unheard of that in the 6-8 week period that your goods are in transit, your personal circumstances can change dramatically. Job offers can change and areas that you had researched prior to leaving the UK may not be suitable for your needs on arrival in Australia or New Zealand. This is where your destination agent can really come into their own.

In a scenario where your goods are still on the "high seas" it's always sensible to contact your UK mover to see if the routing of the container can be altered.

In a scenario where you have had your goods delivered to you, and after a period of time, you decide that you need to plan an internal move within Australia or New Zealand, then it is a good idea to consider the people that carried out the importation of your effects. If you were happy with the service they provided, why not give them a call again? They might even offer you a discount for your valued repeat business!

■ **James Dasey is international director of UK leading removals company Doree Bonner International. For further information visit www.doreebonner.co.uk.**

USEFUL CONTACTS

- For FAIM-accredited removal companies: www.fidi.com
- British Association of Removers (BAR): www.bar.co.uk
- Australian Furniture Removers Association (AFRA): www.afra.com.au

■ **Karen is a freelance travel writer and blogger. You can read about her migration journey on her family, travel and lifestyle blog at www.talesofatwinmum.com or on Twitter @TalesofaTwinMum.**