The Teacher Insider

Free for every member

The Insider's Move Kit

The worksheets, scripts and checklists we wish we'd had before our own moves abroad. For international teachers weighing an offer, or about to pack.

Offer worksheet
Two offers, side by side

First-month planner
The money you need to land

5 email scripts
Copy, paste, send

Moving checklist
From signing to day 30

START HERE

Three rules before you trust any offer

Most teachers who regret a move didn't lack information. They didn't ask, or took a promise on trust. Keep these three in mind for everything that follows.

1

Get it in writing

If it isn't in the contract or a signed letter, it isn't part of the offer. That includes housing, flights and your children's places.

2

Talk to someone there

Ten honest minutes with a teacher who works at the school tell you more than any brochure, website or interview.

3

Compare whole packages

A higher salary with no housing can leave you with less each month. Work out what you'd keep, not what you'd earn.

IN THIS KIT

3 **The offer worksheet**
Put two offers side by side and see which one really leaves you better off.

4 **The first-month money planner**
The costs that hit before your first salary does, and how much cash to bring.

5 **5 email scripts**
Asking for time, the salary scale, a chat with a teacher, a better allowance, and saying no politely.

6 **The moving checklist**
What to do from the day you sign to your first month in the new country.

7 **Pass it on**
How to help the next teacher, once you're settled.

> Every school and every country is different. Treat this kit as a set of good questions, not as legal, tax or financial advice. For anything about visas, tax or your rights, check the official rules for the country, or ask a qualified adviser.

WORKSHEET

Two offers, side by side

Fill it in per month, in one currency. Anything the school hasn't told you yet goes on your list of questions.

	Offer A	Offer B
School and city		
PAY		
Salary per month, before tax Including any overseas allowance paid with it		
Months paid a year 12, or only the 10 or 11 you teach?		
Tax and deductions per month Or "none", or "paid by the school"		
BENEFITS		
Housing Provided, or an allowance? How much?		
Utilities and internet Who pays?		
Flights How often, and for whom?		
Medical insurance You only, or your family too?		
School places for your children How many, and is it the full fee?		
Settling-in and moving allowances At the start, and at the end		
Pension or end-of-service payment And do you lose it if you resign?		
Contract length and notice period And what you'd repay if you left early		
WHAT YOU'D KEEP		
Costs not covered, per month Rent, bills, transport, groceries, school fees		
Left each month Take-home pay minus the costs above		

Stuck on a figure? Most schools on The Teacher Insider show the package they publish, and what teachers who work there report. Search the school at theteacherinsider.com.

MONEY

The first-month money planner

Your first salary often arrives at the end of your first month. The biggest bills arrive in your first week. Plan for the gap, so the move starts with excitement, not stress.

Start-up cost	Good to know	Your estimate
Rent deposit and first rent	If housing isn't provided. In some cities landlords ask for several months up front.	
Agency or letting fees	Ask colleagues which agents the school's teachers use.	
Furniture and home basics	Even "furnished" can mean no bedding, pans or a kettle.	
Utilities and internet set-up	Connection fees and deposits, before the first bill.	
Phone and SIM	Keep your home number active for bank security codes.	
Visa, medical checks and documents	Anything the school doesn't pay for, for you and your family.	
Getting around	Transport card, taxis, or a car rental while you settle.	
Food for the first 4 to 6 weeks	Eating out costs more until your kitchen is set up.	
Children	Uniform, books, school bus, trips and activities.	
Everything you forgot	Adapters, a fan or heater, a few home comforts.	
Total start-up costs		

How much cash to bring

Start-up costs + One month's living costs + An emergency flight home = **Your buffer**

Worth checking with HR
Is the settling-in allowance paid when you arrive, or refunded later? Is there a salary advance? Will the school pay or lend the housing deposit?

Keep every receipt
Many schools refund flights, visas and settling-in costs only with receipts. A photo on your phone the same day saves arguments later.

COPY, PASTE, SEND

5 email scripts

WHEN YOU NEED MORE TIME

Thank you so much for the offer. I'm really pleased, and I'd like to give it the careful thought it deserves. Could I have until [day, date] to read the contract and come back to you?

WHEN THE SALARY IS UNCLEAR

Thank you for the offer. Could you send me the salary scale, and show me where I'd be placed on it and how my [X] years of experience were counted? It would help me compare it properly.

WHEN YOU WANT THE REAL PICTURE

Before I decide, would it be possible to have a short call with a teacher in the [subject / phase] team? I'd love to hear what day-to-day life at the school is like.

WHEN THE HOUSING ALLOWANCE LOOKS LOW

I've looked at rents for [size] flats within a reasonable commute of the school, and they're around [amount] a month, more than the allowance of [amount]. Is there any flexibility on the allowance, or help with the deposit and agency fees?

WHEN YOU SAY NO

Thank you for the offer and for your time during the process. After a lot of thought, I've decided it isn't the right move for me at the moment. I really enjoyed meeting the team, and I hope our paths cross again.

TICK AS YOU GO

The moving checklist

From the day you sign to your first month. Your school's HR team will give you its own list: this one catches what theirs often leaves out.

Once you sign
Straight away

- [ ] Keep a copy of the signed contract and every email with a promise in it
- [ ] Ask the school exactly which documents the visa needs, and in what form
- [ ] Start getting documents legalised or attested if needed: it can take weeks
- [ ] Check the notice your current job needs, and resign in writing on time

3 months before
Paperwork

- [ ] Check your passport has plenty of validity left
- [ ] Book any vaccinations the country recommends
- [ ] Get copies of medical and dental records, and prescriptions
- [ ] Ask how your flights are paid before you book anything
- [ ] Children: school records, reports and the new school's forms
- [ ] Decide what to ship, store, sell or give away

1 month before
Money and home

- [ ] Plan a cash buffer for your first month: the first salary often arrives at the end of it
- [ ] Tell your bank you're moving, and check the fees for using your card abroad
- [ ] Check your tax position at home before you leave
- [ ] Sort phone, post, subscriptions and any home you're leaving

First week
Landing

- [ ] Get a local SIM and register it if the country requires it
- [ ] Ask HR for the timeline for your residence permit and bank account
- [ ] Find the nearest clinic or hospital your insurance covers
- [ ] Learn the route to school before the first day

First 30 days
Settling in

- [ ] Check your first payslip against your contract
- [ ] Keep receipts for anything the school refunds
- [ ] Say yes to the first few invitations, even when tired
- [ ] Find one thing you love about the place and do it every week

ONE LAST THING

Somebody's deciding about your school right now.

They're reading the same vague advert you once read, wondering what "competitive package" really means. You know the answer. A few minutes of yours can save them a year of regret, or help them say yes with confidence.

Share your package

What you were offered: salary, housing, flights, medical. About 2 minutes, mostly one-tap answers. The salary is only ever shown as a rounded range.

theteacherinsider.com/contribute

Write an honest review

Not only the good, not only the bad: what it's really like, day to day. The review you wish you'd read before you signed.

theteacherinsider.com/review

✓ Your name is never shown

✓ The school never sees who wrote it

✓ Read by a person before it goes live

The Insider's Move Kit is free for everyone, and you're welcome to share it with any teacher. It's general information to help you ask good questions, not legal, tax or financial advice: rules differ by country and school.
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