

## Tips for Living Overseas



Photo courtesy the German National Tourist Board  
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The U.S. State Department offers some tips for American citizens planning to move and live abroad.

### Marriage Abroad

U.S. consular officers abroad cannot perform marriages. Depending on the law of the foreign country, local civil or religious officials generally perform marriages.

Procedures vary from country to country, and some require lengthy preparation.

Many countries have requirements that the parties have resided in that country for a specified period of time before a marriage may be performed there. There may be requirements for blood tests, etc. There may be requirements for parental consent. In many countries, a requirement that documents certifying the end of a previous relationship (such as a death or divorce certificate) be submitted, translated into the local language and authenticated. Some countries require an affidavit by the parties as proof of legal capacity to enter into a marriage contract. (This affidavit can be executed at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.)

The process can be time-consuming and expensive—and, therefore, persons planning to marry in a foreign country should find out the requirements of that particular country before beginning travel. Contact

the embassy or tourist information bureau of the country where you plan to marry to learn the specific requirements. A listing of foreign embassies and consulates in the U.S. is available on the Department of State's website at [www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm](http://www.state.gov/s/cpr/rls/dpl/32122.htm). Foreign embassy and consulate contact information can also be found in the Country Specific Information for each country. If you are already abroad, consult with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Once your marriage has taken place abroad, U.S. consular officers can authenticate your foreign marriage document.

Note that this authentication simply signifies that your foreign marriage documents are real. It does not necessarily mean that your marriage will be recognized by your home state in the U.S. If you are married abroad and need confirmation that your marriage will be recognized in the United States, consult the Attorney General of your state of residence in the United States.

For further information, visit the Department of State website at [www.travel.state.gov/law/info/mariage/marriage\\_644.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/law/info/mariage/marriage_644.html).



Photo courtesy German National Tourist Board



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## Birth Abroad by a U.S. Citizen

Most children born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents acquire U.S. citizenship at birth. As soon as possible after the birth, the U.S. citizen parent should contact the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. If the consul determines that the child has acquired U.S. citizenship, a consular officer prepares a Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States of America (Form FS-240).

This document is recognized in the United States as proof of acquisition of U.S. citizenship, and it is acceptable evidence of citizenship for obtaining a passport, entering school, and most other purposes. Failure to document a child promptly as a U.S. citizen may cause hardship for the parents or child later on when attempting to obtain a passport or register for school. For further information, visit the Department of State website at [www.travel.state.gov/law](http://www.travel.state.gov/law).

## Be Prepared for Emergencies

The following link contains materials about being prepared for emergencies while residing abroad. It was written for persons assigned to American Embassies or Consulates abroad, but most of it is practical advice that would be useful to anyone living outside of their own country: [www.state.gov/www/flo/paper10.html](http://www.state.gov/www/flo/paper10.html). ●

## Moving Your Vehicle Overseas

One Personally Owned Vehicle (POV) belonging to you or your family member may be shipped at government expense overseas. It must, however, be for you or your family member's personal use only. If you desire to make your own arrangements and ship an additional POV, consult your Transportation Office for any restrictions which may apply. You may be required to pay an import duty on a second POV. At the option of the member shipping a vehicle overseas, a motorcycle or moped may be considered a POV if the member does not ship a vehicle with four or more wheels under the same set of military orders. A vehicle under a long-term lease (12 months or longer) may be shipped if you obtain written permission from the leasing company.

The POV should be delivered to the port prior to the departure of the member on whose orders the shipment is to be made. This includes dependent travel authorizations when no POV has been previously shipped on the sponsor's orders. The member must have a minimum of 12 months remaining on their overseas tour at the time the vehicle is delivered to the loading port. If a military spouse delivers the vehicle to the loading port, he or she must have a Special Power of Attorney.

For more information, visit [www.transcom.mil/j5/pt/dtrpart4/dtr\\_part\\_iv\\_app\\_k\\_3.pdf](http://www.transcom.mil/j5/pt/dtrpart4/dtr_part_iv_app_k_3.pdf). ●