

## Packing a Crate



If you plan on coming for more than two years, a crate may be worth your time and money. It certainly helps your house become a home and gives you an advantage in the adjustment process. If you do choose to send a crate, here is a list of ideas of what to pack. (Just a reminder, these are only ideas.)

As you get started, set for yourself a guide (i.e. price limit, size limit). Talk to your shipping company about size and weight and pick what's manageable for you. Then pare down until you have just enough to fit in that crate. Be sure the crate is lined in plastic and you can even pack Rubbermaid storage containers and set them in. The containers will then be nice for storage once you get here.

Keep a careful list as you go along. You will need a list for shipping insurance with replacement value of items, and one for customs with the lower re-sale value.

Don't pack old and worn out things. Use this move as an opportunity to get some new things. If you have room and can fit things you wouldn't need to purchase here, go ahead – it'll save you money and hassle on this end. Think through what you'll want to store and what can be sold at a rummage sale or donated to charity, then pack the rest. Never hesitate to ask questions.

(Keep in mind the high humidity here. Precious photo albums, videos, cassettes, etc. will be subject to mildew.)

### **Baby**

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- crib sheets (school will provide crib, mattresses are smaller here, but sheets are still less expensive in North America), light blanket, lap pads/changing pad, bumper pad (may need to adjust to size of crib)
- supply of wet wipes and Lil' Swimmer and/or Pull-ups as needed (not reliably available and more expensive here), heat rash powder/cream
- cool cotton onesies, sandals
- pack 'n play for traveling (may be your option instead of a crib), pack 'n play sheets
- baby swings and walkers can be purchased here but expensive
- stroller (expensive here), car seat, high chair/booster seat, snugli/back carrier for traveling
- baby monitor only if accompanied with mini-travel transformer, don't bother bringing outlet covers because outlets have different shape here (3 prong and square)
- sippy cups, bottles and liners if you're particular about a kind, baby dishes and flatware (available but sometimes hard to find what you like)

## **Young Children**

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- favorite paperback books, coloring books, crayons, board and card games (expensive and small selection here)
- favorite toys (you can get quite a selection here for moderate and comparable prices, can buy GameBoy and Playstation equipment and games cheaper)
- fun bed sheets, bedspread (even a colorful top sheet will do the trick in this heat), curtain fabric (if you have a bedroom theme, selection is different here, windows are large), plastic mattress cover – mattress thickness may vary so bring “deep pocket” sheets or bring extra flat sheets in case your fitted ones don’t fit
- underwear, socks, denim shorts/skirts
- special gifts for first birthday and Christmas in a foreign country
- bikes and scooters can be purchased here – this will have to be your decision, include helmets and kneepads, if you have a little one pack his/her tricycle

## **Older Children**

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- paperback books, board and card games
- room décor (sheets, extra fabric, etc.), unframed pictures (framing is much cheaper here and nice selection)
- sports equipment (especially tennis shoes), swimwear
- underwear, socks, jeans, denim shorts/skirts
- school children will be wearing uniforms, so a lot of school clothes aren’t necessary

## **Adults**

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- dressy shorts are okay for teaching staff because it’s 80-90° F and humid all the time, women’s shorts should be modest and not real short
- bring a few dressy clothes for special events such as the Junior Senior Banquet, it’s relatively inexpensive to buy fabric and have clothing tailor-made, it’s possible to find dressy clothes in stores depending on your size
- pack plenty of underwear, sport socks for men, and several pairs of swimwear as heat and constant washing wear on the elastic
- bring a few warmer outfits and jackets which will be helpful for trips to cooler spots like the Cameron Highlands, some rooms with air conditioning get so cool that it necessitates a light sweater

## **Kitchen**

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- baking sheets (buy small, ovens are quite small here and large sheets won’t fit), muffin tins and liners, cake pans for special occasions (i.e. heart shape, round), skillet, cookie cutters, hot pads, Tupperware containers
- vinyl tablecloths in standard size (may be useful for picnics too), nice tablecloth for entertaining, placemats, lots of shelf liner
- ice chest/cooler if you have one, pack things in it (available here but very expensive)

## **Office/Shop**

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- paper here is A4 size and not 8 ½ x 11 as in North America so don't bring binders and folders, you can purchase all that here
- you can purchase computers here, most software is available here, kids' computer games too (many games are inexpensive but pirated and the original versions can be expensive, bring what you already own)
- videocamera – you can purchase here but runs on different system, wide variety of digital and regular cameras here and film and photo processing are comparable prices to North America
- legal pads if you like to use them (haven't seen them here), post-it notes (expensive here)
- tools (screwdrivers, hammer, drill with concrete bits, etc.) if you have them and they'll fit, will be nice to have once you're here
- North American style motorcycle helmet if you plan to purchase motorcycle here (helmets available here but without chin guard)

## **Living/Dining Room**

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- photos, special decorations
- dishes you can't live without – keep in mind that there are selections of stoneware here and a Mikasa outlet store less than 1 hr. away

## **Bedrooms**

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- bedding (depending on the quality of mattresses you receive here, or choose to buy, they may be deep and require “deep pocket” fitted sheets), most couples have queen size beds, twin size bed is a little wider but deep pocket sheets should work, sheet sets here come with fitted sheet and pillow covers and bolster (long narrow pillow cover) – so you need to purchase flat sheet separately
- mattress protectors if you already have them (simple ones available cheap here)

## **Bathroom**

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- toilet cover (bring a few since elastic wears out quickly and keep in mind toilet lids are shaped differently, the larger sizes seem to work better), bath mat without rubber backing (rubber backing rots here, there is beautiful selection of small area rugs here), shower liners (bring several because of mildew), shower curtain hooks
- large thick bath towels (can buy towels here but we joke that they work about as well as a chamois!)
- you can get toothbrush holder, soap holder and even liquid soap dispensers here so only bring yours if you have room and want to save money on this end
- prescription medicines to get you through until get renewed here, chewable children's medicines (i.e. Sore Throat Bears, chewable Benadryl and Dramamine, etc.), fruit-flavored fever reducer medicine for children, Gold Bond or Benadryl for heat rash and mosquito bites, Noxzema if you use it (not available here)

- bottle of antiseptic cleaner (waterless, soapless hand cleanser) for travel, bathrooms here use squat pots and are often not equipped with toilet paper or soap

### **Special Occasions**

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- Christmas tree (available here for reasonable price, 7 ft. tree about US\$50), sentimental decorations (decorations available here but nice North American – style ones are expensive, don't bring lights unless want to use mini-travel transformer). Keep in mind this is a Muslim country which doesn't officially celebrate Christmas. However, it is becoming more popular with Chinese culture and we're finding more and more Christmas decorations available each year.
- wrapping paper (sold in individual sheets here), curling ribbon, gift bags (all available here, selection is growing, but if you have room you may be glad you packed), Christmas and birthday cards
- cake décor and sprinkles, birthday candles, birthday plates and napkins
- Easter egg dye kits, Easter baskets and "grass," chocolate egg molds (Muslim country doesn't celebrate Easter), Valentine cards for children's classmates

### **Foodstuffs**

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- flavored chips for special occasions (i.e. peanut butter, butterscotch, mint chips)
- Maple flavoring if you like making your own maple syrup, cream of wheat if you can't live without, bring Kool-aid (not available here), chocolate chips if you have the room, marshmallow cream (sometimes available here but expensive), packages Dream Whip
- some staff have brought back Velveeta cheese and canned chopped green chilies for making Mexican food at home

### **Appliances**

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If you choose to purchase and use a transformer here and bring your 110v appliances into the country, then bring the following to save yourself money:

- slow cooker/crock pot, bread maker, waffle iron, blender, mixer, salad shooter (all but the last one are available here), non-electric ice cream maker if you have one (ice cream made with palm oil here and imported brands are expensive, you'll be very popular if you can make your own ice cream! ☺)
- you can bring lamps and just use 220v lightbulbs once you're here, lamps are expensive here so bring lightweight ones and pack the shades carefully
- curling iron, blowdryer (dual voltage work fine), hot rollers if you have them (able to get here but smaller in size, less variety, worthwhile bringing if plan to have a transformer or use mini-travel transformer)

### **Miscellaneous**

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- craft paint and stencils (natural sponge if you sponge walls), scrapbooking materials (i.e. acid free paper and stickers), photo paper and iron-on transfers for your printer, fabric paints or iron-ons for special occasions

- you can buy most sewing notions and embroidery materials here, ribbon, beads, sequins, etc. – only bring yours if you have room
- specialty cleaning supplies such as Goo Gone (“sticky” remover), rust remover, dryer sheets (if you bring a dryer or plan to purchase one here), fabric stain remover here isn’t as effective as Shout or Spray’n Wash