

The Master Checklist

The whole journey on one spread — decide, prepare, arrive, settle, thrive. Everything from the five part checklists in a single document. Print it, pin it, work down it.

Decide

Part 1 — before you spend a dollar on the move.

- ☐ Both partners answer Chapter 1's ten questions, **separately**, then compare
- ☐ Wet Tuesday test honestly passed (Q10)
- ☐ Budget built from Chapter 2's tables at your tier, +10%, ×12, plus setup months
- ☐ Shortlist of two cities (Chapter 3): favourite + most different plausible alternative
- ☐ Visa reality understood and accepted: no retirement visa; the ninety-day rhythm or an official path (Chapter 4)
- ☐ Plan B named and costed: another country, or home

Prepare — 90 days out

- ☐ Passport audit: 2+ years validity, 12+ blank pages; renew if short
- ☐ Solicitor booked: enduring POA + will
- ☐ Degree into legalisation pipeline (if any chance of working)
- ☐ Accountant hour booked; Chapter 6's eight questions printed
- ☐ Insurance decision made, applications started
- ☐ Travel clinic booked (8 weeks before departure)
- ☐ Re-buy test run room by room; big items selling

Prepare — 60 days out

- ☐ Certificates gathered + certified copies; everything scanned to cloud + USB
- ☐ Home-front dossier drafted (POA, will location, findability kit)
- ☐ Mail redirection arranged; multi-currency account(s) opened and verified
- ☐ Second bank account live; banking apps tested without mailed codes
- ☐ Vaccination course underway; GP check + records export; dental + skin checks
- ☐ Medication transition plan agreed with GP (30-day / 7-day / 10-day import limits understood)
- ☐ Emotional inventory conversation done; one-box selection made

Prepare — 30 days out

- ☐ Police check ordered (if working), timed fresh
- ☐ Passport photos ×12 each; document folder printed and assembled
- ☐ Banks notified of long-term travel; bills on auto-pay; cards expiry-checked
- ☐ Australian mobile ported to keep-alive plan; 2FA lifeline tested
- ☐ Scripts + GP letter finalised; medicines packed in original packaging
- ☐ Suitcase list bought: shoes in your size, real sunscreen, antiperspirant
- ☐ One box sealed and delivered to its keeper

- ☐ First 1–2 weeks' accommodation booked (no more); arrival cash arranged
- ☐ Trusted person briefed over a long dinner you pay for

Arrive — first 30 days

- ☐ E-visa + bookings + insurance printed in carry-on folder
- ☐ Airport: ATM (in VND), SIM (passport registration), Grab from designated pick-up
- ☐ Address declaration confirmed with accommodation, and after **every** re-entry
- ☐ Coffee flag planted; mornings walked; hospital located and saved
- ☐ Grab on Vietnamese number; Zalo installed; neighbourhood groups joined
- ☐ Ten days: nothing irreversible decided
- ☐ Housing two-step begun: short-term base, unhurried search, 9 pm Saturday second viewing
- ☐ Viewing checklist run (electricity rate in writing!); deposit protected with day-one video
- ☐ Transport decision made as a decision (Grab-only is fully viable)
- ☐ Bank account attempted once, properly — life built as if the answer is no
- ☐ Fibre installed or verified; VPN tested; monthly SIM plan from a city store

Settle — months 2–6 (the systems test)

- ☐ Default hospital/clinic chosen; direct emergency number saved in both phones
- ☐ Emergency drill done: numbers saved in both phones, card filled in
- ☐ Prescribing moved onshore with one regular doctor
- ☐ First fifty phrases deployed (out loud, same day, to strangers)
- ☐ Culture basics running: temper kept, face understood, altar respected
- ☐ Scam ladder read; phone habits set (back from kerb, bag traffic-away)
- ☐ Market/supermarket hybrid found; cleaner + laundry systems running
- ☐ Aircon serviced; wet season kit ready (dehumidifier, poncho, power banks)
- ☐ Tet plan made in advance (lean in, or travel; decided, not improvised)

Thrive — the one-year review

- ☐ Three weekly anchors in the calendar (one expat, one local-facing, one purposeful)
- ☐ You've organised at least one table, dinner or group yourself
- ☐ Separate activities per partner; the closed-unit trap checked
- ☐ Visitors hosted on *your* Vietnam, not TripAdvisor's
- ☐ Work status: legal path taken, or grey zone priced with eyes open (income offshore, never local cash work)
- ☐ 183-day tax question answered by a professional, not a forum
- ☐ Formalisation reviewed annually: does an anchor (TRC, marriage, property) now serve a proven life?
- ☐ Wills current in both directions; the ten-minute wishes conversation had
- ☐ Plan B still funded, still current
- ☐ The two lists, if it's wobbling: what would have to change / could it change here?
- ☐ And if it's home: first-dinner departure, never the second kind

These checklists are drawn from *Vietnam from Day One — An Honest Relocation Guide*. Facts behind them were verified July 2026 and are maintained at mylifestyle.au/vietnam/updates. General information only — not legal, tax, medical or financial advice.