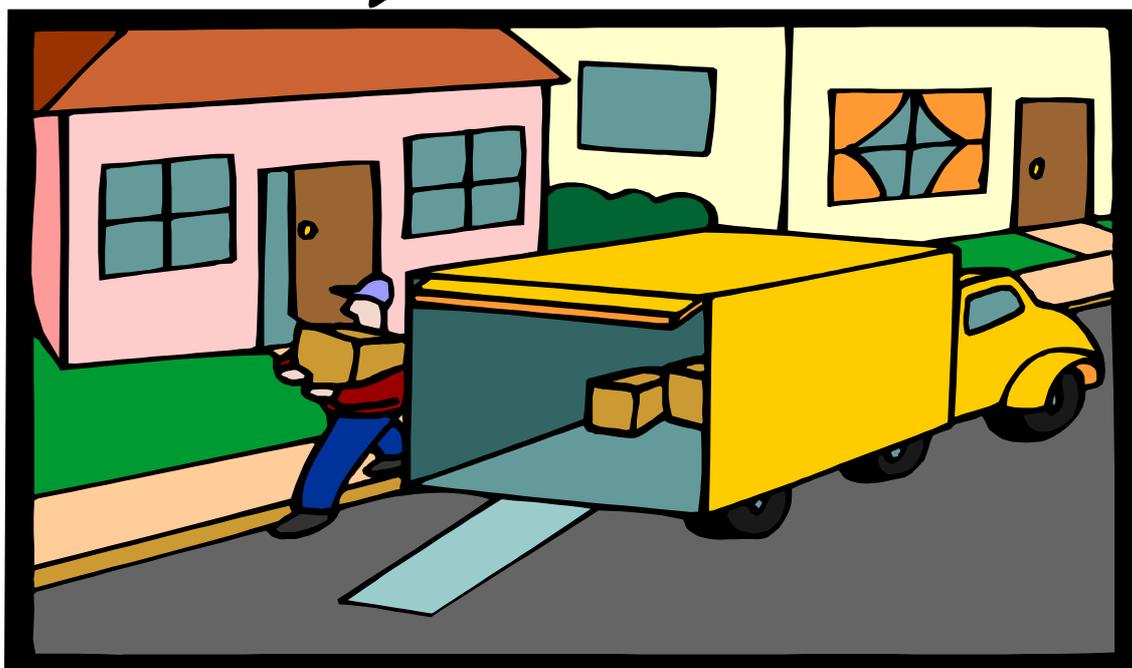


# HOUSING INFORMATION



**It should be noted that this information sheet in no way constitutes any sort of recommendation by the Consulate.** Housing in Western France is difficult to find and is expensive by American standards.

As in the United States, houses, apartments and rooms can be found by consulting the classified advertisements ("Locations Offres Vides") or by placing advertisements. Local newspapers in the area are :

- Ouest-France (covers the whole area)
- Télégramme de Brest (departments 29, 22, 56)
- Presse-Océan (departments 44, 85)
- Le Maine-Libre (departments 72, 61)
- Le Courrier de l'Ouest (departments 49)

For more information on this subject, you may wish to contact a real estate agency, an attorney or a "notaire" who can render legal advice on estate and property laws.

### **A. If you rent an apartment**

The landlord will normally ask to be paid a rental guarantee or deposit ("Caution" in French), equivalent to one or two months' rent, plus a months' rent in advance. This will be specified in the lease or contract ("Bail" in French), which is often standard and which should be carefully read to ascertain the responsibilities of the parties. It is also possible that the landlord may ask for the lease either to be taken out, or guaranteed, directly by the employer.

In addition to the rent, each tenant has to pay utilities ("charges" in French) which usually cover miscellaneous expenses of the building.

### **Taxes payable by the tenant**

If you have resided in the apartment or house since the 1st of January of a given year, you will have to pay local taxes, "Taxe d'habitation" in French. This tax varies from one city to another. It depends on several criteria (surface, number of inhabitants) and the amount is fixed by the city hall. This tax is payable every year. For more information on this subject, you may contact a real estate agency, or a lawyer.

### **B. Real estate agencies**

Real estate agencies are known as "Agences de Location". They appear in the yellow pages (Professions) under "Agences de Location d'appartements et de propriétés" and "Location d'appartements".

### **C. Relocation companies**

Relocation companies provide a range of services ranging from arranging housing, auto registration, and immigration formalities, to school enrollment, home decorating, and cross-cultural training.

## **D. Household effects (import/export):**

### ➤ **EXPORT FROM FRANCE** (as applicable to a returning U.S. citizen)

The following documents are required for the shipment of personal effects & furniture by someone moving from France. (Effects qualify as used household & personal effects when they have been owned & used for six months or more & are intended for personal use in the new place of residence).

#### **1. Inventory Declaration (Inventaire-Declaration):**

Three copies on plain paper (plus copies preferably in English for U.S. Customs). This Inventory is a list of all personal effects & furniture, including automobiles, which comprises all household effects being exported. It must also include a sworn statement declaring that the articles listed on the Inventory have been owned & used by the exporter for more than six months. (U.S. Customs request that this Inventory be as complete as possible, indicating the value & a description of all articles).

#### **2. A Change of Residence Certification (Certificat de changement de domicile)**

Can be obtained upon presentation of the "laissez-passer" from the Income Tax office (III) & one copy of the Inventory Declaration (I). An American obtains this document from the Prefecture of Police, Services des Etrangers, 1, rue de Lutèce, 75004 Paris if he lives in Paris --or-- from the Prefecture of Police, or Mairie, if he lives in the suburbs of Paris or in the provinces.

#### **3. Pass from the Income Tax Office (Laissez-passer des Contributions Directes):**

To be obtained from the office of the "Contributions Directes" of the place of residence in France. This pass, in effect, should state that no outstanding tax payment is due in France. There are two types of passes:

- "Certificat de Non-Imposition, Form No. P234" (or a statement from the tax inspector) for a non-taxpayer - stating that the said party owes nothing in taxes.

- "Bordereau de Situation, Form No. P237" for a tax-payer - stating that there is no outstanding tax to be paid in France.

#### **4. For someone who has been employed in France**

It is recommended that he obtain a letter from his employer stating that he is leaving France after so many months or years of residence.

## **RESTRICTIONS**

*1. For the exportation of collection items or items more than 100 years old there are long & expensive formalities including a "Permis d'Exportation" (Export Permit) which can be obtained from the Banque de France or the French Customs office.*

2. In order to export a quantity of alcoholic beverages a permit is required from the Tax office.

3. A certificate of origin is needed to export Champagnes & Cognacs.

**KEYS** should be attached to all trunks &/or pieces of furniture & labeled.

**AUTOMOBILES** If exporting a car, it should be listed on the Inventory Declaration for the U.S. Customs, stating the year of manufacture, the original cost, the make the model, & whether it meets U.S. specifications.

➤ **IMPORT INTO FRANCE:** (as applicable for a change of residence)

The documents listed below are required for the duty-free shipment of personal effects & furniture by someone moving to France. (Effects & furniture are considered as personal when they have been owned & used for six months or more – one year for an automobile - & are intended for personal use in the new place of residence). French regulations require that the effects be shipped within a period of one year from the declared date on the stamped Change of Residence Certification.

**1. A Change of Residence Certification (Certificat de Changement de Domicile):**

Can be obtained at the French consular post nearest the place of departure. This certification states the date of the change of residence & MUST be stamped at the French consular post.

**2. Detailed Inventory (Inventaire Détaillé):**

List of all personal effects & furniture, including automobiles, which comprises all household effects being imported; to be dated & signed by the importer. This Inventory should be as complete as possible, indicating the value in dollars & giving a description of all valuable properties, such as antiques, collection items, & cars. The Inventory must also include a sworn statement declaring that the articles listed on the Inventory have been owned & used by the importer (a) for at least six months for all personal effects, & furniture, & (b) for at least one year for automobiles, & that there are no outstanding U.S. taxes owed on the vehicle. This Inventory should be in French.

**WARNING:** The Change of Residence Certification and the Detailed Inventory must be stamped at a French consular post. Failure to do so results in considerable complications for the traveler once he has reached his destination in France.

**Included as Duty-Free Household Effects**

Cats and dogs; stamp collections, provided they are for personal and not commercial use; tradesmen's hand tools; bicycles; sewing machines; typewriters; automobiles; one television and one radio.

## **Are not Duty-Free**

Motors imported separately from vehicle or appliance; speed boats; pleasure craft (except canoes and kayaks); school, store & office furniture; wine, alcoholic beverages, & spirits; trucks and utility vehicles; and raw materials.

## **Restrictions on Duty-Free Household Effects**

A person who is importing a television should go to a "Radiodiffusion Television" office soon after arrival in France. All televisions used in France are subject to taxation.

However, it should be mentioned that American-made televisions must be drastically adapted to work in France, and the cost of this procedure is often above the cost of a new television. There are Customs restrictions on the importation of various guns, ammunitions, and certain printed matter. Check with the nearest French Consulate in the U.S. to obtain the specific restrictions on the importation of these objects.