

SENDING LUGGAGE HOME



At the end of the year, you may find that you have accumulated a lot more things than you'd realised; clothes, gifts from students and teaching materials often add up!

If you are lucky enough to have a friend or relative visiting you during the year, it may be a good idea to send things that you no longer need back with them, for example, if someone visits you in spring, you may want to send your heavy winter clothes home with them.

If you are flying directly home from China back to the UK at the end of the year, one of the best options is to add an extra suitcase onto your flight ticket. If you book it in advance, prices for additional baggage start at around £70, depending on the airline. Some airlines even offer it for free as part of their package to entice you to pick their company, so do consider this when booking.

Although this is a slight more costly way of getting things home, it is safe, and you can rest assured that your luggage is with you and can be picked up straight away when you arrive back in the UK.

However, if you intend to travel before making your way home, the best option may be shipping. 'Shipping' is exactly what it says on the tin – it is the process of taking a box of your possessions, by sea, back to the UK for you, for a fee. China Post charge around £30 for a large box of your possessions. They charge by weight not by size, so you can send a very large box for £30 if it is mostly clothing, or a smaller box for the same price if it contains heavier objects like decorations/souvenirs. Below is a photo of a box sent home by one of our teachers this year, which was sent on her last day in China in July, and arrived at her door just under two months later.



The problem with shipping through China Post, aside from the fact that it normally takes around two months, is security. It is not uncommon for things in your box to go missing. To avoid this, never put anything with any high financial or emotional worth inside. Over the last few years the security of shipping boxes has improved, but still, it would be ill advised to put anything like a laptop inside, so do take care.

A more costly, but safe and efficient way to ship your items home is by going through an international shipping company, such as Send My Bag. Several of our teachers have used Send My Bag and they have provided a great service, enabling you to view the progress of your luggage and receive text notifications upon delivery. Send My Bag accepts both boxes and suitcases, though they do have specific requirements on the type of suitcase and measurements. Their service only takes 2-3 working days and though more expensive, is much faster and more reliable. See below for prices:

Up to 5kg: £48.00
Up to 15kg: £118.00
Up to 30kg: £161.00
Over 30kg: £161.00 + £5.50 per additional kilo

If you choose to ship your excess luggage home, please be aware that recent rule changes in China mean that you are prohibited from sending any electronic items containing lithium batteries (any rechargeable electronic items). If you have any of these in your luggage, it will be returned to you, therefore it is worth considering what you intend to do with your laptop if you wish to travel after your placement.