

# ARGENTINA RELOCATION STARTER GUIDE

Everything You Need to Start  
a New Life in Argentina  
By *KnowArgentina.com*



# Argentina Relocation Starter Guide

*A Quick-Start Guide from [KnowArgentina.com](http://KnowArgentina.com)*



## Table of Contents

### **Introduction**

Why Move to Argentina? ..... 1

### **CHAPTER 1**

Choosing Where to Live ..... 3

### **CHAPTER 2**

Visa & Residency Pathways ..... 7

### **CHAPTER 3**

Housing in Argentina ..... 11

### **CHAPTER 4**

Healthcare & Insurance ..... 15

### **CHAPTER 5**

Money & Banking ..... 19

### **CHAPTER 6**

Schooling & Family Life ..... 23

### **CHAPTER 7**

Daily Life Essentials ..... 27

### **APPENDICES**

Pre-move Checklist ..... 31

First 30-Day Checklist ..... 33

Spanish for Newcomers: Essential Phrases ..... 35

Resources & Referrals ..... 37

### **Final Words**

¡Buena Suerte! ..... 40

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## Welcome to Your Argentina Relocation Starter Guide

### Why Move to Argentina?

There's a reason so many dreamers, adventurers, and change-seekers end up in Argentina. Maybe you've fallen for the tango and the wine. Maybe you're following love or roots. Maybe you're simply ready for a new rhythm — one with café conversations, Andean sunsets, and a life that moves to its own music.

Argentina offers a **rare blend of European elegance and Latin warmth**. It's a country where big-city hustle meets rural calm, where nature stuns and people share their hearts. It's complex, imperfect, soulful — and, for many, life-changing.



### Why people move here

People come for all kinds of reasons — and no two are the same. You might be:



**Following love** — joining a partner, or falling for the place itself



**Returning to roots** — reclaiming family ties or dual citizenship



**Escaping the grind** — looking for affordability, peace, or purpose



**Embracing freedom** — as a digital nomad, retiree, or remote worker

Argentina won't always make sense — but it will almost always make you **feel** something. This guide was created to help you prepare not only **practically** but also **mentally** for the move.

### What this guide covers

This isn't a boring government handbook. It's a **real-world, human-first guide** designed to help you:

- Understand visa options, healthcare, banking, and housing
- Choose a city or region that matches your lifestyle
- Settle in smoothly during your first 30 days
- Connect with the local culture, quirks, and rhythms

You'll find tips, tables, and local insight — **no fluff, no overwhelm**, just honest help.

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**Wherever you're coming from, and whatever brought you here — welcome.**  
Let's get started.

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## CHAPTER 1

# Choosing Where to Live in Argentina

*Finding your place in a land of contrast and color*

Argentina is a country that stretches wide like a restless dream — from the foggy delta shores of Tigre to the glaciers of Patagonia, from Andean vineyards to sunlit estancias. Choosing where to live here is about more than geography. It's about rhythm. Personality. Climate. And most of all: lifestyle.

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## Buenos Aires: The Big City Beat

The capital is the heart of the country — a sprawling metropolis with European flair and Latin soul. It's a world of endless cafés, bookstores, and late-night conversations.

- **Pros:** Great public transport, vibrant arts, cultural diversity, many expats
  - **Cons:** Traffic, bureaucracy, rising cost of living
  - **Best for:** Digital nomads, culture lovers, people who thrive on movement.
- 



## Mendoza & Wine Country

Nestled at the foot of the Andes, Mendoza offers sunshine, vineyards, and mountain views. Life moves slower here — think siestas, Sunday asados, and sipping Malbec.

- **Pros:** Gorgeous scenery, relaxed pace, close to Chile
  - **Cons:** Dry heat, fewer international services
  - **Best for:** Couples, retirees, wine lovers, remote workers who enjoy peace and beauty.
- 



## Córdoba: Youth and Heritage

A university city with a colonial soul, Córdoba blends academic energy with Jesuit roots and countryside traditions. It's central and well-connected, yet more affordable than Buenos Aires.

- **Pros:** Lower costs, growing expat community, access to sierras and lakes
  - **Cons:** Bureaucracy can be slower, summers are hot and humid
  - **Best for:** Students, families, remote workers wanting urban access with smaller scale.
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## Patagonia: Space and Solitude

For those who crave vastness, Patagonia delivers. Bariloche, San Martín de los Andes, and El Bolsón offer alpine towns, forests, and lakes straight from a fairytale.

- **Pros:** Natural beauty, low stress, ideal for outdoor lovers
- **Cons:** Isolation, fewer job opportunities, cold winters
- **Best for:** Nature lovers, retirees, creative souls, digital nomads.



## Salta & The Northwest

The Northwest brings desert skies, adobe villages, and Indigenous-Andean fusion. Life is traditional, colorful, and full of celebration.

- **Pros:** Affordable, authentic, rich culture
- **Cons:** Less infrastructure, slower internet
- **Best for:** Cultural explorers, Spanish learners, people wanting something truly different.



## Summary Table: Compare Your Options

Region	Best For	Cost of Living	Climate	Expat-Friendly
Buenos Aires	Culture, connection	High	Mild/humid	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mendoza	Wine, views, peace	Medium	Dry/sunny	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Córdoba	Affordable city life	Low–Medium	Hot summers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Patagonia	Nature, creativity, solitude	Medium–High	Cold	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Salta/NW	Culture, slower pace	Low	Warm/dry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*Where you choose to live should reflect who you are becoming. Argentina welcomes all kinds — you just need to find the rhythm that matches your next chapter.*

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## CHAPTER 2

# Visa & Residency Pathways

From tourist to temporary to permanent – your options to stay in Argentina legally

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Relocating to Argentina means more than falling in love with the empanadas and landscapes — it means choosing the right legal pathway to make your stay sustainable. Whether you're planning to live here part-time or commit long-term, understanding visas, residence permits, and eventual citizenship is key.

Let's demystify the options.

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### Tourist Entry: The 90-Day Start

Most travelers enter Argentina visa-free (or with an easy e-visa) and are granted a **90-day tourist stay**. This is renewable once, for another 90 days, either online or in person at a local immigration office.

- **Who it's for:** Explorers, short-term stays, those “testing the waters”
  - **Downside:** No legal right to work; no path to residency from this
  - **Pro tip:** Don't overstay — fines are charged per day after 90 days.
- 

### Digital Nomad Visa

Introduced in 2022, this new category supports remote workers earning income from abroad.

- **Requirements:** Proof of remote work, income level (no fixed minimum, but enough to support yourself), background check
  - **Valid for:** 180 days, renewable for another 180
  - **Upside:** Legal way to stay and work remotely
  - **Downside:** No path to permanent residency from this visa (yet)
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## Family Reunification

If you have an **Argentine spouse, partner, child, or parent**, you can apply for a residency permit through "**residencia por vínculo**."

**Documents needed:** Birth or marriage certificate (apostilled), DNI copy of the Argentine relative, address in Argentina

**Valid for:** 2 years for citizens of MERCOSUR and 1 year for citizens of other countries. The residency is renewable, and allows for a later application for permanent residency.

**Pro tip:** This is one of the fastest and most stable pathways to full legal status.

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## Work Vissa (*Residencia Temporal por Trabajo*)

If you're employed by an Argentine company, you may be eligible for a **temporary residence permit** based on a work contract.

- **What's required:** A signed job offer, company registration, and support from your employer in the immigration process
  - **Duration:** 1-year renewable residence, usually tied to employment
  - **Tip:** Freelancers or informal workers don't qualify under this route
- 

## Other Temporary Residency Options

There are several other paths depending on your situation:

- **Pensioner/Retiree Visa (*Visa de Rentista*):** For those with stable passive income (from abroad)
  - **Student Visa:** Enrolled in a recognized educational institution
- These usually require monthly income proof and health insurance.
- 

## DNI & Long Term Residency

Once approved for temporary residence, you receive your **DNI (*Documento Nacional de Identidad*)** — your key to:

- Renting with fewer hassles
- Accessing healthcare, banks, and schools

After 2 years of uninterrupted temporary residency, you can apply for **permanent residence**.

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## Citizenship in Argentina

Argentina has one of the **fastest and most open** naturalization processes in Latin America. You may apply for **citizenship after just 2 years of continuous residence**, regardless of your original visa type. You don't need to give up your original nationality (Argentina allows dual citizenship).

- **Requirements:** 2+ years living in Argentina, proof of integration (work, lease, Spanish skills, etc.)
- **Process:** Judicial — must apply via court, usually with legal help
- **Outcome:** You get an Argentine passport and full rights as a citizen

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## Documents, Fees and Timeline

Requirement	Notes
Apostilled documents	Birth, marriage, or education certificates
Background check	From your home country + Argentine police check
Proof of income	For most visa types
Legal translations	Required if not in Spanish (done in Argentina)
Health insurance	Required for most temporary residency categories
Fees	Vary (US\$100–300 for most residency applications)
Processing time	2–6 months depending on category

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## Final Thought

Argentina's residency options are refreshingly flexible — but the rules are not always clear-cut. Patience, paperwork, and persistence are your best allies.

If your goal is to live here long-term, choose the visa category that not only meets your current needs, but also sets you up for DNI and citizenship later.

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## CHAPTER 3

# Housing in Argentina

Renting, buying, and navigating the property market as a foreigner

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## Renting in Argentina: The Basics

Renting as a foreigner is totally possible — but not always straightforward. There are two main paths:

1. **With a garantía:** A co-signer (usually a property owner in Argentina) who guarantees your lease.
  2. **Without a garantía:** Higher deposits or prepaid rent are often required instead.
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## Standard Lease Terms

- **Lease Length:** 2-3 years (for residential contracts)
  - **Deposit:** Usually 1–2 months upfront
  - **Increases:** Rent can increase every 6–12 months, typically tied to inflation (indexado)
  - **Utilities:** Often not included — ask about gas, electricity, water, and “expensas” (building fees)
- 



## Without a *Garantía*?

You still have options:

- **Paying 6–12 months upfront** (common for expats)
  - **Furnished rentals**, often billed in dollars for short to medium stays
  - **Rental agencies** that cater to foreigners (but charge a premium)
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## Tips for Renters

- Use platforms like **Zonaprop**, **Alquiler Argentina**, or **Airbnb** for mid-term stays.
- Be cautious with classifieds or Facebook listings — scams do exist.
- Visit properties in person if possible, and confirm who holds your deposit.



## Buying Property as a Foreigner

Argentina allows foreigners to **own property with few restrictions**. You do not need to be a resident — only a valid passport and a CDI (tax ID number).



## What You Need

- **CDI (Clave de Identificación):** Request this at the AFIP (tax authority) with a lease or hotel address.
- **Foreign funds:** Must be brought in legally if used for the purchase — via bank transfer or specific brokers
- **Notary Public (*Escribano*):** All sales must go through one — they conduct title checks and handle formalities



## Prices & Process

- Property is usually listed in **USD** — especially in Buenos Aires and major cities.
- There's **no mortgage system for foreigners** — most purchases are made in cash or with international funds.
- Common price ranges:
  - ⇒ Studio in Buenos Aires: \$60,000–120,000 USD
  - ⇒ House in Mendoza: \$90,000–200,000 USD
  - ⇒ Cabin in Patagonia: \$80,000+ USD (depending on location)



## Where to Look (Top Sites)

- **Zonaprop** – largest portal, both rentals and sales
- **Properati** – user-friendly listings with pricing trends
- **Argencasas**, **Argenprop** – additional search portals

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## What to Expect

- **Older buildings:** Charming but may lack modern amenities
- **Expensas:** Monthly condo fees for building maintenance, sometimes steep
- **Dollars preferred:** Many sellers will only accept “billete” (physical USD)



## Legal Notes

- Always use a **bilingual escribano or trusted real estate agent**
- There’s **no MLS** – listings may be duplicated or outdated
- Property taxes are low, and ownership is well protected under Argentine law



## Renting vs. Buying: Quick Comparison

Factor	Renting	Buying
Cost	Lower upfront (unless prepaid)	High upfront (cash usually required)
Flexibility	High	Low – resale can be slow
Bureaucracy	Medium (paperwork, depósito)	High (CDI, escribano, money transfer rules)
Legal residency	Not required	Not required
Long-term benefit	None (unless part of a plan to stay)	Asset ownership, hedge against inflation



## Final Words

Whether you rent first and buy later — or dive straight into ownership — having a clear picture of the Argentine real estate landscape is essential. The rules are flexible, but the rhythm is different: informal, relationship-driven, and sometimes wonderfully chaotic.

**Next Step Suggestion:** If you’re planning to house-hunt remotely, consider working with a relocation consultant or local fixer who knows how to navigate the quirks — from handshake deals to contracts in pesos and dollars.

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## CHAPTER 4

# Healthcare & Insurance

**Staying healthy and covered in Argentina — what expats need to know**

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Moving to a new country means adapting not only to a new culture and climate — but also a new healthcare system. Fortunately, Argentina offers **accessible, affordable medical care**, whether you opt for public services or private coverage. But as a foreigner, knowing where and how to enter the system is crucial.

This chapter walks you through it all: emergency care, insurance plans, private clinics, and what to do if you get sick.



## The Dual System: Public vs. Private Healthcare

Argentina has a **dual healthcare system**:

1. **Public system** (free and open to all, including foreigners)
2. **Private system** (paid, often via insurance or out-of-pocket)



### Public Healthcare (Sistema Público)

- **Free at point of use** — no need for insurance or residency status
- Available to all, including tourists and undocumented migrants
- Funded by the government, clinics and hospitals are spread across the country

#### Pros:

- Completely free care (appointments, surgeries, medicines in public hospitals)
- Broad national access

#### Cons:

- Long wait times
- Limited English-speaking staff
- Overcrowded in major cities

**Best for:** Basic care, emergencies, vaccines, or when money is tight

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## Private Healthcare (Prepaid + Clinics)

Private healthcare in Argentina is **high-quality and affordable** compared to North America or Europe.

There are two main access paths:

- **Prepaid insurance plans (*Prepagas*)**
- **Pay-as-you-go private clinics**

## Prepaga Health Plans

These are **monthly-paid private insurance packages** that give access to private hospitals, clinics, and specialists.

Popular providers:

- **OSDE** (high-end, premium services)
- **Swiss Medical**
- **Galeno**
- **Medicus**

## How it Works

- Monthly fee (from ~US\$30–300+ depending on age and plan)
- Direct access to top clinics, shorter wait times
- Some include dental, vision, and mental health coverage

### Pros:

- International-level care
- Modern clinics, shorter waits
- Multilingual doctors often available

### Cons:

- Can be hard to enroll without DNI (though some accept passport)
- Preexisting conditions may require a waiting period

**Pro tip:** OSDE is most widely accepted by Buenos Aires doctors. For Patagonia, Galeno has better coverage.

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## Foreign Insurance vs. Local Plans

- **Travel insurance** may be accepted by some private clinics, but often won't cover long-term care.
- **International expat insurance** (like Cigna or IMG) is widely accepted, but more expensive.
- **Local prepagas** are your best value if staying long-term.



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## What to Do in a Medical Emergency

In any emergency, dial **107** — Argentina's free public ambulance line.

- You'll be taken to the **nearest public hospital**, regardless of insurance.
- If you prefer a private hospital, call their direct line (many offer their own ambulances for plan holders).

Top private hospitals (especially in Buenos Aires):

- **Hospital Italiano**
- **Hospital Alemán**
- **Clínica Bazterrica**
- **Sanatorio Güemes**

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## Routine Care & Medications

- **Pharmacies (*farmacias*)** are widespread and often have an on-call pharmacist who can advise without needing a doctor.
- Many medications are **available without prescription**.
- Some chronic care medications are **heavily subsidized or free** under public or prepaid

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## Summary Table: Healthcare Options for Expats

Option	Cost	Access to Care	English-Friendly?	Best For
Public System	Free	Long waits, basic care	Rarely	Budget-conscious, basic needs
Private Clinics	Pay per visit (~\$20–\$50)	Fast access	Sometimes	Immediate care, without long-term plan
Prepaid Plan	\$30–\$300/month	Excellent, fast	Often	Long-term stays, full coverage
International Plan	\$100+/month	Global coverage	Yes	Digital nomads, high-income expats

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## Mental Health Support

Argentina has **strong mental health services**, including therapy and psychiatry, both public and private. In major cities, you can find:

- **English-speaking psychologists**
- **Freudian and Jungian schools of thought** are especially common

Costs:

- Public system: free (limited availability)
- Private therapy: ~\$10–40 USD/session without insurance



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## Final Thoughts

Argentina's healthcare system may surprise you — it's **open, affordable, and offers excellent private options**. While the public system provides a solid safety net, most expats benefit from a prepaid plan for better access and peace of mind.

**Next Step Tip:** Once you get your DNI, sign up for a *prepaga*. Until then, find a private clinic that accepts passport-only enrollment or maintain international insurance.

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## CHAPTER 5

# Money & Banking in Argentina

Understanding currency, sending money, and managing your finances abroad

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Managing your money in Argentina can feel like navigating a maze — one lined with constantly changing exchange rates, creative workarounds, and a parallel economy. But don't worry. With the right tools and awareness, you can keep your finances flowing smoothly and legally.

In this chapter, you'll learn how to handle currency exchange, open a bank account, and send or receive money safely.

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## Currency Basics: What You Need to Know

Argentina's official currency is the **Argentine peso (ARS)**, but you'll quickly discover that **many locals think in USD** — and that two (or more) exchange rates exist at the same



## The Two Main Rates

- **Official rate** – controlled by the government; lower value
- **Blue rate** – the informal market rate (what locals often use); higher value

### Example:

- Official: 1 USD = 900 ARS (As of Aug. 2025. Rates vary weekly — always check the current spread)
- Blue: 1 USD = 1300+ ARS (As of Aug. 2025)

### Result:

Exchanging at the blue rate gives you **up to 30–40% more pesos** for your dollar.

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## How to Exchange Money Safely

You have options:

- **Cash in USD:** Bring physical dollars and exchange at cuevas (informal exchange houses)
- **Western Union:** Send yourself USD and pick up pesos at the blue rate
- **Crypto platforms:** USDT-to-peso exchanges are growing
- **Wise/Remitly:** Often send at official or "MEP" rate (somewhat in between)

## Best Option for Most Expats:

**Western Union to yourself** – best rate, legal, fast, widespread

 **Be cautious** when exchanging on the street (called *arbolitos*); not recommended for newcomers.

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## Opening a Bank Account as a Foreigner

You'll need a local bank account if you plan to:


- Get paid in Argentina
- Pay rent via transfer
- Receive funds domestically

## Requirements

- **DNI (Argentine ID)** – essential for most banks
- Local address proof (rental contract, bill)
- CUIT or CUIL (tax ID – linked to your DNI)

## Popular Banks for Expats

- Banco Santander
- BBVA
- Banco Nación (government bank)
- Banco Galicia (tech-forward interface)

 Without a DNI, opening a bank account is nearly impossible — stick to international platforms or prepaid cards until then.

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## Digital & Mobile Banking

Argentina has excellent **online banking infrastructure**. Once you're set up, you can:

- Make transfers instantly via **CBU or CVU**
- Use **Mercado Pago** or **Ualá** (popular apps like Venmo or Revolut)
- Pay rent, services, or even groceries with QR codes

**Tip:** Most locals use **Mercado Pago** for everything from buying empanadas to paying for gym classes.

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## Sending Money into Argentina

If you're bringing in funds regularly, you'll want a **legal and tax-safe way** to do it.

### Options compared

Method	Exchange Rate	Speed	Best For
Western Union	Near blue rate	Same-day	Personal support, monthly transfers
Wise/Remitly	MEP rate	1–2 days	Official channel, documentation
Crypto (USDT)	Near blue	Minutes	Tech-savvy expats, freelancers
Bank wire	Official rate	3–5 days	Large official purchases

### Keep in mind:

If you use the official rate channel, **you lose a significant chunk of value**. Many expats prefer Western Union or crypto to get more pesos per dollar.

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## Cash or Card? How to Pay in Argentina

Most locals:

- Pay by **debit card, QR code, or Mercado Pago**
- Use **cash for rent, services, tips, and small shops**
- Avoid credit cards in USD (due to taxes and bad rates)



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## Tips:

- Always carry **some cash in pesos** — not all businesses take cards
- Avoid using foreign cards for large purchases — **you'll be charged the official rate + taxes**
- Prepaid local wallets (Ualá, Brubank) offer a great solution once you're here



## Inflation & Savings

Argentina is **one of the most inflationary economies in the world**, with prices sometimes rising **10–15% per month**. Locals adapt by:

- Spending quickly
- Converting savings to USD or crypto
- Avoiding fixed peso savings accounts

If you're planning to stay long-term:

- **Keep your savings in USD or abroad**



## Summary Table

Goal	Best Tool	Notes
Get best exchange rate	Western Union	WU gives near-blue rate legally
Open a local bank account	With DNI + local bank (BBVA, Nación, etc.)	Not possible without DNI
Digital payments	Mercado Pago, Ualá	QR accepted almost everywhere
Send money from abroad	WU, Wise, crypto	Avoid traditional bank transfers
Save value long-term	USD, crypto	Pesos devalue rapidly

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## Final Thoughts

Dealing with money in Argentina means **thinking flexibly, staying informed**, and sometimes choosing workarounds. Once you get the hang of the exchange rates and digital payments, the financial rhythm of Argentina becomes second nature.

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## CHAPTER 6

# Schooling & Family Life

**Bringing kids to Argentina and building your family routine abroad**

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Relocating with children — or planning to start a family in a new country — is one of the most life-changing decisions you can make. The good news? Argentina is a **family-friendly country** where **education is free**, children are cherished, and the rhythm of daily life allows for balance and connection.

This chapter explores **education options**, **family life logistics**, and **how to help your children (and yourself) settle in smoothly**.

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## Public vs. Private Education

Argentina offers **free public education** at all levels, plus a wide array of **private and international schools** — especially in major cities.



## Public Schools

- **Free and open to all residents**, regardless of immigration status
- Spanish-language instruction only
- Generally follow a **March–December** school calendar

### Pros:

- No cost
- Immersion into local culture and language
- Easy access in cities and rural areas

### Cons:

- Overcrowding in urban areas
- Variable quality depending on region
- Limited support for non-Spanish speakers

Best for: Families seeking **cultural immersion** and willing to help kids adapt to Spanish quickly.

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## Private & International Schools

- Offer **smaller class sizes**, modern facilities, and often bilingual programs
- Many follow international curricula (British, American, IB)
- Located mostly in **Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Mendoza, Rosario**, and expat-heavy areas

### Pros:

- English or bilingual education
- More structured environments
- Internationally recognized diplomas

### Cons:

- Tuition can range from **US\$200 to \$1,000+ per month**
- Long waiting lists at top schools
- Admissions may require placement testing

Best for: Expats staying short- or long-term who want **continuity with home-country education systems**.

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## Top International School Options

Here are some of the most well-known institutions:

School Name	Location	Curriculum
St. George's College	Buenos Aires	British, IB
Lincoln International School	Buenos Aires	U.S., AP, IB
Colegio Pestalozzi	Buenos Aires	German, Spanish, Portuguese
Liceo Francés Jean Mermoz	Buenos Aires	French, Bilingual
Northlands School	Buenos Aires	IB, English Bilingual
Colegio Alemán de Córdoba	Córdoba	German, English Bilingual, IB
Colegio San Jorge	Mendoza	English Bilingual, IB

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## Enrollment Process

Whether you choose public or private, you'll generally need:

- **Child's passport** (or DNI, if available)
- **Previous school records** (translated to Spanish)
- **Proof of residence**
- **Vaccination records**

In some cases, **apostilles** and notarized translations may be requested — especially for private or international schools.

**School year runs from March to mid-December**, with a long summer break and shorter winter break in July.

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## Family Life Essentials

Argentina offers a family-friendly environment with:

- **Affordable childcare and babysitting**
- **Parks, plazas, and playgrounds** in nearly every neighborhood
- A culture where **kids are welcomed almost everywhere** — from restaurants to social events

## Daycare & Preschool (*Jardín*)

- Public daycare is free and starts around **18 months**
- Private options are abundant (with monthly costs from US\$100–300)
- Preschool (*jardín de infantes*) is often **mandatory from age 4**

## Domestic Help

It's common (and affordable) to hire part-time or full-time help:

- Nannies, housekeepers, and babysitters
  - Standard rates: **USD \$3–6/hour** depending on experience and city
  - Legal contracts available (called *empleadas registradas*)
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## Adapting to a New Culture: Tips for Parents

1. **Language Support:** Kids pick up Spanish quickly — but prepare to help with homework or hire tutors early on.
2. **Stay Social:** Attend local parenting groups or expat family meetups (many on Facebook or WhatsApp).
3. **Let Kids Lead:** Children often adjust faster than parents — their school and playground experiences will become your cultural anchor.
4. **Celebrate Together:** Embrace local traditions (Carnaval, Día del Niño, etc.) to help your family feel part of the rhythm.



## Summary Table: Family Life at a Glance

Need	Public Option	Private Option	Notes
Preschool & daycare	Free (limited spots)	\$100–300/month	Jardín is available starting at age 3
Primary/secondary school	Free	\$200–\$1,000/month	Bilingual/private options in cities
Babysitters/nannies	N/A	\$3–6/hour	Affordable and common
Family healthcare	Free hospitals	With prepaga or clinic	Pediatricians are widely available



## Parent's Perspective

*“We enrolled our daughter in a local public school in Salta. The first few months were tough — all in Spanish — but by month four, she was correcting **our** grammar. Kids adapt fast.”*  
— Janine B., expat from Canada

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*A Quick-Start Guide from [KnowArgentina.com](https://www.knowargentina.com)*

## Final Thoughts

Whether you choose local schools for the cultural deep-dive or an international curriculum for continuity, **Argentina supports family life** with warmth, flexibility, and surprisingly good options. With some upfront planning and an open mind, your family can thrive here — in Spanish, in community, and in rhythm with the Argentine way.

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## CHAPTER 7

# Daily Life Essentials

How to set up your everyday life in Argentina — from phones to public transport and groceries

Living in Argentina is as much about the **little daily rhythms** as the big changes. Whether you're staying in Buenos Aires or settling in a quiet mountain town, you'll need to set up some key essentials — like your phone, Wi-Fi, transport card, and how to shop for groceries (and *yerba mate*, of course).

This chapter gives you a practical toolkit to help **get your daily routine flowing**.



## Cell Phones, SIM Cards & Mobile Plans

Argentina has a well-developed mobile network. As soon as you arrive, you'll want to get a **local SIM card** to avoid roaming fees.



### Getting Set Up:

- Bring an **unlocked phone**
- Visit any kiosk or provider (Claro, Movistar, Personal)
- Buy a prepaid **chip (SIM)** — often free or ~500 ARS
- Recharge via app, kiosks, or online banking



### Recommended Providers

Provider	Coverage	Notes
Claro	Excellent	Fastest 4G/LTE in many cities
Movistar	Very good	Popular nationwide
Personal	Good in cities	Easy prepaid setup

**Tip:** Use **WhatsApp** for nearly all communication — even with businesses.

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## Internet & Wi-Fi

Most homes and apartments in Argentina have access to broadband internet, especially in cities.

- Average home speeds: **100–300 Mbps**
- Monthly cost: **USD \$10–25**
- Common providers: **Fibertel (Cablevisión), Movistar, Telecentro**

If you're working remotely:

- Ask landlords to confirm **fiber-optic access**
- Use a **backup data plan** on your phone or a portable modem

**Tip:** Internet speeds can drop during peak hours in some areas — Patagonia and small towns may be slower.

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## Transportation: Getting Around

Argentina has a **robust and cheap public transit system**, especially in cities like Buenos Aires, Córdoba, and Rosario.

### SUBE Card

This rechargeable card is used to pay for:

- Buses (*colectivos*)
- Subways (*Subte*) in Buenos Aires
- Trains and some long-distance routes

 **Where to get it:** Kiosks, Subte station, airports

 **Cost per ride:** ~250–500 ARS (under 50 cents USD!)

**Tip:** You can recharge your SUBE card online or via Mercado Pago app.

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## Taxis, Rideshares & Long-Distance Travel

- **Taxis** are safe and metered — but carry cash.
- **Uber, Cabify, and Didi** are available in big cities (Uber is semi-legal but widely used).
- **Long-distance buses** are affordable, comfortable, and widely used for travel between cities.

Mode	Best For	Notes
SUBE card	Daily city transport	Rechargeable, used everywhere
Uber/Cabify	Airport runs, late night	Often cheaper than taxis
Long-distance bus	Interprovincial travel	Fully reclining seats on night buses

## Shopping, Schedules & Grocery Culture

Grocery shopping in Argentina combines **supermarkets, corner stores, outdoor markets,** and specialty shops (*carnicerías, verdulerías, panaderías*).

### Where to Shop

- **Supermarkets:** Carrefour, Día, Jumbo, Coto
- **Local shops:** Buy produce, meat, bread fresh and cheap
- **Ferias:** Open-air markets for fruit, cheese, crafts (usually weekends)
- **Chinos:** Small convenience stores run by Chinese-Argentines — open late, everywhere

 Cheese, meat, wine, and fresh bread are **excellent and affordable**.

 Organic food and plant-based options are growing, especially in larger cities.

### Schedule & Timing Tips

Argentine schedules can feel “off” at first:



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- **Lunch:** 12–2 PM
- **Siesta:** Many shops close from ~1–5 PM, especially in small towns
- **Dinner:** 8–10 PM (yes, really!)
- **Supermarkets:** Open 9 AM–9 PM most days
- **Sundays:** Many stores are closed or close early

**Tip:** Plan your errands **before 1 PM or after 5 PM** in small towns to avoid siesta closures



## Cultura Quirks & Daily Life Customs

Argentina is a culture of warmth, spontaneity, and strong social rituals.

- **Mate culture:** Sharing this bitter green tea is sacred — offer it, accept it, pass it!
- **Greetings:** A kiss on the cheek is the norm (even for new acquaintances).
- **Cash culture:** Still important! Credit/debit cards are accepted, but not universal.
- **Lines (*colas*):** Expect to take a number and wait — especially at banks or AFIP.
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**Pro tip:** Don't expect everything to “just work” — but locals are generous, helpful, and creative. Ask questions, laugh it off, and go with the flow.



## Summary Table: Daily Essentials

Task	Tool/Provider	Notes
Mobile service	Claro / Movistar	Prepaid SIMs are easy to get
Internet	Fibertel / Telecentro	Fiber in most cities, slower rural
Local transit	SUBE card	Recharge via kiosks or apps
Groceries	Coto, Carrefour + locals	Combine markets & <i>supermercados</i>
Long-distance travel	Via Bariloche, Andesmar	Book buses in advance for best seats
Payments	Mercado Pago	Use QR codes, link to bank or cash

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## First 30 Days Starter Kit

Here's what to do in your first month:

- ✓ Buy a prepaid SIM and install WhatsApp
  - ✓ Pick up a SUBE card + recharge
  - ✓ Download Mercado Pago or Ualá
  - ✓ Explore your local feria or market
  - ✓ Learn your neighborhood's siesta hours
  - ✓ Practice ordering mate or medialunas at a café
- 

## Final Thoughts

Daily life in Argentina has its own rhythm — slower in some ways, richer in others. Once you adapt to the quirks (and stock up on your favorite empanadas), you'll find that the routine becomes second nature.

It's not just about surviving; it's about **savoring the flow of local life**, from sidewalk cafés to corner bakeries to the friendly neighbor who always has a mate ready.

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## APPENDICES

### Resources, checklists, and language tools for a smooth start in Argentina

Whether you're already packing your bags or still dreaming, this section gives you **practical tools** to feel more prepared — and less overwhelmed — as you land, settle, and adapt.



### A. Pre-Move Checklist

Everything to research, gather, and decide *before* you leave:

#### Documents & Legal

- ☐ Passport (valid for 6+ months)
- ☐ Apostilled birth certificate & marriage certificate (if applicable)
- ☐ Health insurance with international coverage
- ☐ Certified translations (if needed for residency or DNI)
- ☐ Copies of diplomas, job contracts, references

#### Financial

- ☐ Notify your bank and credit cards of international travel
- ☐ Set up Wise, Revolut or similar for money transfers
- ☐ Bring some USD/EUR in cash (for exchange)
- ☐ Backup credit/debit cards

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## Housing

- ☐ Book short-term accommodation (1–3 weeks)
- ☐ Research local rental sites and expat Facebook groups

## Health & Safety

- ☐ Vaccinations up to date
- ☐ Medical prescriptions in original packaging
- ☐ Emergency contact list + embassy info

## Packing

- ☐ Power adapters (Argentina uses Type C & I plugs)
  - ☐ SIM-free phone
  - ☐ Spanish phrasebook or app
  - ☐ Travel-size toiletries (some brands may differ)
  - ☐ Important documents in carry-on (not checked)
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## B. First 30 Days Checklist

What to do once you arrive in Argentina


### Week 1:

- ☐ Buy prepaid SIM and install WhatsApp
- ☐ Get a SUBE card + recharge
- ☐ Explore local supermarket & nearby grocery spots
- ☐ Find coworking spaces or cafes with strong Wi-Fi
- ☐ Learn basic Spanish greetings

### Week 2–3:

- ☐ Book appointments if applying for residency
- ☐ Register for a CUIT or CUIL if working
- ☐ Look into public/private healthcare options
- ☐ Tour neighborhoods if seeking long-term rental

### Week 4:

- ☐ Set up Mercado Pago or Ualá for local payments
- ☐ Introduce yourself to neighbors/shopkeepers
- ☐ Visit a feria or cultural event
- ☐ Make your first local friend 

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## C. Spanish for Newcomers

Essential phrases to start communicating with locals

### Everyday Basics

English	Spanish
Hello / Good morning	Hola / Buenos días
Please / Thank you	Por favor / Gracias
Excuse me / Sorry	Disculpá / Perdón
I don't understand	No entiendo
Do you speak English?	¿Hablás inglés?
I need help	Necesito ayuda
How much does it cost?	¿Cuánto cuesta?
I'm looking for...	Estoy buscando...

### At a Café or Store

English	Spanish
A coffee, please	Un café, por favor
Can I pay with card?	¿Puedo pagar con tarjeta?
I'll take this one	Me llevo este
The bill, please	La cuenta, por favor

### Social & Cultural

English	Spanish
I'm from the U.S.	Soy de Estados Unidos
Recién llegué	Recién llegué
I'm living here now	Estoy viviendo acá
I love Argentina!	¡Me encanta Argentina!

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## D. Resources & Referrals

### Housing

- [Zonaprop.com.ar](https://www.zonaprop.com.ar)
- [Airbnb](https://www.airbnb.com)
- Expat groups on Facebook: *Expats in Buenos Aires*, *Argentina Expats*, *Patagonia Digital Nomads*

### Visas & Legal

- Migraciones Argentina
- Local law firms specializing in expat residency (check ratings)
- Facebook groups for visa advice and document templates

### Banking & Money

- [Wise](https://wise.com) (formerly TransferWise)
- [Mercado Pago](https://www.mercadopago.com)
- Argentine currency tracking: Dólar Blue

### Language Learning

- [DuoLingo](https://www.duolingo.com)
- [Italki](https://www.italki.com)
- Conversation exchanges on Meetup or Couchsurfing

### News & Culture

- [The Bubble](https://www.thebubble.com) (in English)
- [Buenos Aires Herald](https://www.buenosairesherald.com) (in English)
- [Clarín](https://www.clarin.com) & [La Nación](https://www.lanacion.com) (Spanish)



## Final Words: Buena Suerte!

Moving to Argentina is a **leap of curiosity, courage, and culture**. There will be surprises, beauty, frustration, and growth — often all in one day. But if you approach it with patience, openness, and a sense of adventure, you'll find more than a new home. You'll find **a new rhythm of life**.

We hope this guide helps you feel **confident, prepared, and inspired** to begin your Argentine journey.