RELOCATE2UAE GUIDES · 2026/27

The UAE Everyday Survival Guide

Groceries, delivery apps, tipping and service charges, reliable tradespeople, bills and subscriptions, and what to do when something goes wrong at home

Last verified 23 November 2026 · Next review 23 February 2027

Relocate2UAE Editorial Team · relocate2uae.com/uae-everyday-survival-guide

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Contents

How to read this guide . . . 3
1. Groceries: where and how to buy cheaply in the UAE . . . 4
2. Supermarket and grocery delivery apps in the UAE . . . 7
3. Bargaining, tipping and service charges in the UAE . . . 9
4. Finding reliable tradespeople in the UAE . . . 11
5. Understanding UAE bills, subscriptions and recurring costs . . . 14
6. What to do when something goes wrong at home . . . 17
7. Your everyday setup checklist . . . 19
8. Interactive tool: UAE monthly bills checker . . . 20
9. Common mistakes newcomers make . . . 20
10. Frequently asked questions . . . 22
11. Primary sources . . . 24
About this guide . . . 24
Legal notice . . . 25

The UAE Everyday Survival Guide

Groceries, delivery apps, tipping, tradespeople, bills and home problems, 2026/27

Visas, housing and schools get the attention before a move. What decides whether life in the UAE feels easy or expensive is everything that comes after: where you shop, which apps you pay for, what you tip, who you let into your home to fix things, and which bills quietly arrive every month. This guide covers the things you need to know once you actually live here, with UAE-specific prices, rules and phone numbers checked against official sources.

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Most everyday-life articles about the UAE are written by a supermarket, an app or a services marketplace, or are one-off news pieces. This guide brings the practical picture together in one place, separates the rules that are set by law from the habits that are simply common, and tells you who to call when something goes wrong.

The short answer

- **Cheapest groceries:** hypermarkets and cooperatives (Lulu, Carrefour, Nesto, Union Coop, Emirates Coop, Sharjah Coop) usually beat premium chains on staples. Check the government's free Essential Goods Prices Platform before a big shop. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
- **Prices must include VAT.** Shelf and menu prices should already include the 5% VAT. Nine essential foods, including rice, eggs, bread and cooking oil, cannot go up in price without Ministry approval. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]
- **Delivery apps:** Talabat, Noon, Careem, Carrefour, InstaShop and others cover most areas, often within 30 minutes. Delivery, service and small-order fees add up, so a subscription only pays for itself if you order weekly or more. [MARKET]
- **Tipping is not compulsory.** Where no service charge is on the bill, 10 to 15% in a restaurant is common, AED 3 to 5 for a delivery rider, and rounding up for taxis. Do not tip government staff. [MARKET] [REPORTED]
- **Service charges:** standalone restaurants are not allowed to add one. Hotel restaurants and some licensed venues can add around 10%, plus local fees. [REPORTED] [VERIFY]
- **Tradespeople:** start with your landlord or building management for anything structural, AC or plumbing. For your own jobs, check the trade licence online, get a written quote and never use unlicensed pest control. [OFFICIAL] [LAW]
- **Bills:** budget for electricity and water, a 5% housing or municipality fee on your rent (Dubai and Abu Dhabi), cooling, gas, internet and mobile. Summer electricity bills can be two to three times winter bills. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
- **Something broken at home?** Power or water failure: 991 for electricity and 992 for water in most of the UAE. Gas smell or fire: leave and call 997. Then report it in writing to your landlord or building management. [OFFICIAL]

How to read this guide

Every factual claim carries a source tag so you can see how much weight it will bear.

Tag	What it means
[LAW]	Set by UAE federal or emirate legislation. Stable until the law changes.
[OFFICIAL]	Published by a UAE government body, such as u.ae, the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, the Federal Tax Authority, a municipality or a utility.
[MARKET]	Current practice among supermarkets, apps, landlords and tradespeople. Varies between providers and changes often.
[REPORTED]	Reported consistently by reputable UAE news or professional sources but not confirmed on a primary government page we could access.
[VERIFY]	Rules differ between sources or change often. Confirm with the named authority or provider before you rely on it.
[ESTIMATE]	Our own worked estimate. Useful for planning, not a quote.

Important information

This guide is general information only. It is not legal, financial, tax or safety advice, and it does not take your personal circumstances into account. Prices, fees, app features and rules change often, sometimes without notice. In an emergency, always call the emergency services first and follow their instructions. Where a dispute with a landlord, provider or contractor involves real money, check the current position with the relevant authority and take advice from a UAE-licensed lawyer; Davidson & Co. (a Relocate2UAE partner) is one firm that advises on tenancy and consumer matters. Relocate2UAE accepts no responsibility for any loss arising from reliance on this guide. Please read the full Legal notice at the end.

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1. Groceries: where and how to buy cheaply in the UAE

Short answer: for the lowest prices on everyday staples, shop at a hypermarket or a cooperative society, buy staples in larger packs, compare prices on the Ministry of Economy and Tourism's free Essential Goods Prices Platform, and keep premium chains for the specific items you cannot find elsewhere. A household that switches its weekly staples from a premium chain to a hypermarket or coop usually saves noticeably on the same basket. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

1.1 UAE supermarkets compared

Chain	Price position	Best for	Loyalty or app
Lulu Hypermarket	Budget to mid	Big weekly shops, South Asian and Middle Eastern products, fresh fish and produce	Lulu Happiness loyalty; Lulu app delivery [MARKET]
Carrefour	Budget to mid	Full range under one roof, own-brand staples, frequent promotions	SHARE points (Majid Al Futtaim); Carrefour app [MARKET]
Nesto	Budget	Rice, sugar, lentils and other staples at low unit prices	In-store offers [MARKET] [REPORTED]
Union Coop (Dubai)	Budget to mid	Staples, weekly offers, branches across Dubai	Tamayaz loyalty; shareholder discounts for UAE nationals [MARKET]
Emirates Coop, Sharjah Coop and other cooperatives	Budget to mid	Milk, bread, oil and pulses, often among the lowest listed prices	Coop loyalty cards [MARKET] [REPORTED]
Al Maya, Choithrams, Grandiose, Viva	Mid	Convenience, neighbourhood branches, imported brands	Store programmes vary [MARKET]
Spinneys and Waitrose	Premium	British and European brands, quality fresh meat, bakery, organic	Spinneys Club; Waitrose through Spinneys [MARKET]
Kibsons	Mid to premium	Fresh fruit, vegetables and meat delivered next day	Online only [MARKET]

These positions are general. Every chain runs weekly offers, and premium chains can be cheapest on a specific item in a given week. That is why a price check before a big shop is worth two minutes.

1.2 Use the government's free price comparison tool

The Ministry of Economy and Tourism runs the **Essential Goods Prices Platform** at moet.gov.ae. Launched in April 2026, it compares prices of 33 everyday items, such as rice, eggs, milk, bread, cooking oil, chicken, fruit and vegetables, across participating chains including Carrefour, Lulu, Nesto, Union Coop, Choithrams, Waitrose, Spinneys and Al Maya. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

How to use it:

1. Open the platform on the Ministry of Economy and Tourism website.
2. Choose a category, such as grains, dairy or fresh produce, or search for a specific product or brand.
3. Filter by your emirate, retailer or branch and sort from lowest to highest price.
4. Build your list from the cheapest options and see which supermarket gives the best total for your basket. [REPORTED]

Compare the price per kilo or per litre, but also look at the full pack price. A 10 kg pack is only a saving if you will use it before it spoils and have room to store it. [MARKET]

1.3 Price rules that protect you

Rule	What it means for you
Prices must include VAT	Displayed prices should already include the 5% VAT, so the shelf price is what you pay. If VAT is added at the till, you can report the business to the Federal Tax Authority on 800 82923 or at tax.gov.ae. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]
Nine essential goods are price-controlled	Retailers cannot raise prices of cooking oil, eggs, dairy, rice, sugar, poultry, legumes, bread and wheat without prior approval from the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, under a pricing policy in force since January 2025. Approved increases are reported to need at least six months between them. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]
You are entitled to an invoice	Under the Consumer Protection Law, Federal Law No. 15 of 2020, businesses must give you a dated invoice. Keep it for returns and complaints. [LAW]
Report overcharging	Call the Ministry of Economy and Tourism on 800 1222, or the economic department of the emirate where the shop is licensed. [OFFICIAL]

1.4 Twelve ways to cut your grocery bill

1. **Shop the weekly flyers.** Lulu, Carrefour, Union Coop and the cooperatives publish offers that change weekly, usually from Thursday or Friday. Plan the big shop around them. [MARKET]
2. **Buy own-brand staples.** Supermarket own brands of rice, pasta, oil, cleaning products and tinned goods are often well below branded equivalents. [MARKET]
3. **Buy imported favourites sparingly.** Familiar brands from home are imported and priced accordingly. Regional and UAE-made equivalents of dairy, bread, juice and snacks are usually cheaper. [MARKET]
4. **Shop fruit, vegetables and fish at markets.** Dubai's Waterfront Market in Deira, Abu Dhabi's Mina Port fruit, vegetable and fish markets, and Sharjah's central fruit and vegetable market often beat supermarket prices on fresh produce bought in quantity. [MARKET]
5. **Join the free loyalty schemes you actually use.** SHARE, Lulu Happiness and the coop cards return small percentages on spending you would make anyway. Do not pay for a membership to save on groceries. [MARKET]
6. **Use the surplus-food apps.** Apps that sell end-of-day bakery, café and supermarket surplus at reduced prices suit flexible cooks. Our UAE Discounts & Savings Guide covers the current options. [MARKET]
7. **Buy bulk dry goods once a month.** Rice, flour, sugar, lentils and oil keep well and are cheapest in large packs at hypermarkets. [MARKET]
8. **Avoid the delivery premium for weekly shops.** Some products cost more on quick-delivery apps than in store, and fees are added on top. Order the big shop through the supermarket's own app or go in person. [MARKET] [REPORTED]
9. **Check unit prices on promotions.** "Buy two, get one free" is only a saving if the per-unit price beats the normal pack you buy. [MARKET]
10. **Drink filtered or tap water, not single bottles.** A water dispenser with 5-gallon refills, or a filter on the kitchen tap, costs far less than buying small bottles (section 1.6). [MARKET]
11. **Shop late for reductions.** Many supermarkets reduce bakery, fish and ready meals in the evening. [MARKET]
12. **Watch Ramadan and holiday offers.** Retailers run large promotions on staples during Ramadan, and the Ministry monitors prices closely in that period. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Partner note: eating out for less

Eating out is the grocery bill's biggest rival in most UAE budgets. Best Bites UAE (a Relocate2UAE partner) runs a dining offers programme, and our UAE Discounts & Savings Guide compares the main dining and savings memberships so you can see whether any of them will pay for itself for your household.

1.5 Shopping bags and the plastic ban

Under Ministerial Decision No. 380 of 2022, the UAE has banned single-use plastic shopping bags since 1 January 2024. From 1 January 2026 the ban widened to single-use bags of any material, including thin paper bags under 50 microns, and to single-use plastic cups and lids, cutlery, plates, straws, stirrers and polystyrene food containers. [LAW] [REPORTED]

- **Bring your own bags.** Supermarkets sell reusable bags at the till, so keeping a few in the car or by the door saves money and time. [MARKET]
- **Thin bags for fresh produce are still allowed.** The rules exempt very thin bags for fresh meat, fish, fruit, vegetables and bread, as well as medicine and rubbish bags. [LAW] [REPORTED]
- **Dubai phased its own ban in earlier,** finishing its final phase on 1 January 2026. [OFFICIAL]

1.6 Drinking water: tap, filter or delivery?

DEWA has stated that the water it supplies meets World Health Organization drinking water guidelines up to the meter. Inside the building, the tanks and pipes are the owner's responsibility, and their condition is what decides the quality of the water from your tap. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Option	Typical approach	Good to know
Tap water	Many residents drink it filtered rather than straight from the tap	Ask your landlord or building management when the water tanks were last cleaned and tested [MARKET]
Under-sink or tap filter	Fitted by a supplier or a handyman	Filters need changing on schedule to work [MARKET]
5-gallon dispenser bottles	Delivered by water companies on a weekly or fortnightly schedule	The usual choice for families. Most suppliers take a refundable deposit on the bottles [MARKET]
Small bottled water	Supermarket packs	The most expensive option per litre and the one the plastic rules are pushing households away from [MARKET]

2. Supermarket and grocery delivery apps in the UAE

Short answer: almost everything can be delivered in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and much of it within 30 minutes. Quick-commerce apps such as Talabat Mart, Noon Minutes and Careem Quik suit top-ups; supermarket apps such as Carrefour and Lulu suit the weekly shop; InstaShop and elGrocer connect you to local stores; Kibsons and Amazon suit planned orders. [MARKET]

2.1 Which app for which job

App	What it does	Best for
Talabat (including Talabat Mart)	Restaurant delivery plus its own fast grocery stores	Quick top-ups and takeaways in one app [MARKET]
Noon (Noon Minutes and Noon Food)	Fast grocery delivery and restaurant delivery	Quick top-ups; regular Noon shoppers [MARKET]
Careem (Careem Quik and Careem Food)	Fast grocery, restaurant delivery, rides and payments in one app	People who already use Careem for transport [MARKET]
Carrefour app	Full Carrefour range with scheduled and express slots	The weekly shop with SHARE points [MARKET]
Lulu app	Lulu range at hypermarket prices	Big, price-led weekly shops; delivery is slower than quick-commerce [MARKET]
InstaShop and elGrocer	Order from nearby supermarkets, butchers, pharmacies and speciality stores	Specific stores and products not stocked by the big apps [MARKET]
Kibsons	Fresh produce, meat and pantry items, next-day delivery	Fresh food in bulk, fruit and vegetable boxes [MARKET]
Amazon.ae	Groceries and household goods with standard and same-day delivery in many areas	Heavy household items and Prime members [MARKET]

Coverage, speeds and minimum orders change often and vary by neighbourhood. Check the app for your exact address before you rely on it.

2.2 Why the checkout total is higher than the basket

Delivery bills in the UAE commonly include several charges on top of the items: [REPORTED]

- **Delivery fee,** which varies with distance, time and whether the order qualifies for free delivery
- **Service or platform fee,** charged by the app itself
- **Small-order fee,** when the basket is below the minimum order value
- **Higher menu or shelf prices** on the app than in the shop or restaurant, which some businesses use to cover app commissions
- **An optional rider tip**

Under UAE guidance for delivery platforms, riders must receive the full amount of any tip customers pay through the app. [REPORTED]

2.3 Is a delivery subscription worth it?

The main apps sell monthly subscriptions that waive or reduce delivery fees. As a rule of thumb, a subscription pays for itself only if the delivery fees you would otherwise pay in a month are higher than the subscription price. Add up last month's delivery and service fees from your order history before you sign up, and set a reminder to review it after three months. [ESTIMATE] [MARKET]

Five habits that keep delivery costs under control

1. Use delivery for top-ups and emergencies, and do the weekly shop in store or through a supermarket app with free delivery above a threshold.
2. Compare the app price with the shop price for the ten items you buy most.
3. Combine orders to clear the minimum and avoid small-order fees.
4. Review subscriptions every three months and cancel any you have not used enough.
5. Turn off one-tap reordering of restaurant meals if eating in has quietly become eating delivered.

3. Bargaining, tipping and service charges in the UAE

3.1 Where you can bargain, and where you cannot

Short answer: haggling is normal in traditional souks, markets and many independent shops, but not in malls, supermarkets, chain stores or anywhere with fixed, printed prices. [MARKET]

Where	Can you bargain?	How it usually works
Gold and jewellery souks	Yes, on the making charge	Gold is priced by weight at the day's published rate plus a making charge for the design. The making charge is where there is room to negotiate. Ask for the weight, the karat and an itemised invoice [MARKET] [REPORTED]
Spice, textile and perfume souks	Yes	Expect an opening price with room to move. Buying several items gives you more leverage [MARKET]
Carpet shops	Yes	Prices vary widely. Take time and compare several shops [MARKET]
Dragon Mart, electronics markets and independent shops	Often	Ask for "the best price" or a discount for cash or for buying more than one item [MARKET]
Fruit, vegetable and fish markets	Sometimes, especially for bulk	Polite negotiation is common for larger quantities [MARKET]
Second-hand marketplaces (for example, Dubizzle)	Yes	Agree the price before you travel, inspect before you pay and meet in a public place [MARKET]
Rent, tradespeople and service quotes	Yes	Rent, agency fees and contractor quotes are all negotiable. Get competing quotes first [MARKET]
Malls, supermarkets, chain stores, pharmacies	No	Prices are fixed. Look for sales, loyalty points and card offers instead [MARKET]

How to bargain politely: greet the seller, show genuine interest, ask for their best price, make a fair counter-offer and be ready to walk away with a smile. Raised voices or insulting offers do not work and are out of keeping with local courtesy. Our UAE Culture & Customs Guide covers everyday etiquette in more depth.

3.2 Service charges: what is allowed on your bill

Type of venue	What can appear on the bill
Standalone restaurants and cafés (not in a hotel)	Menu price including 5% VAT. UAE authorities instructed these outlets to stop adding service charges in 2009 and 2010, and diners can report outlets that still add one [REPORTED]
Hotel restaurants and bars in Dubai	Commonly a 10% service charge and a 7% municipality fee, as well as VAT. Many menus state that prices are inclusive of these [REPORTED] [VERIFY]
Restaurants in some special zones, such as DIFC	A service charge or zone fee of around 10% is reported as permitted [REPORTED] [VERIFY]
Hotel and fine-dining restaurants in Abu Dhabi	Often a service charge of about 10% and, at some venues, a tourism fee. Abu Dhabi removed several fees on hotel restaurant bills in September 2023, and official tourism pages are not consistent, so check the menu note [REPORTED] [VERIFY]
Delivery apps	Delivery, service and small-order fees, which are the app's charges, not a service charge for staff [REPORTED]

Read the menu footnote

Almost every UAE menu says whether prices include VAT, service charge and any local fee. Read it before ordering, check the bill against it, and ask for a correction if something has been added that the menu did not mention. If a standalone restaurant adds a service charge, you can report it to the economic department of the emirate (section 6.6).

3.3 How much to tip in the UAE

Tipping is not compulsory anywhere in the UAE, but it is common and appreciated in hospitality and delivery. Many service workers rely on tips as a meaningful part of their income. [REPORTED] Cash is still the most reliable way for the tip to reach the person who served you, though more apps and card machines now let you add a tip digitally. [REPORTED]

Service	Typical tip	Notes
Restaurant, no service charge on the bill	10 to 15%	Round up to the nearest AED 10 or 20 for small bills [MARKET] [OFFICIAL]
Restaurant, service charge included	Optional	A service charge does not always reach the staff. A small cash tip for excellent service is welcome [MARKET] [REPORTED]
Food and grocery delivery	AED 3 to 5, more in summer heat, bad weather or for heavy orders	Apps offer preset amounts. Riders must receive the full tip [MARKET] [REPORTED]
Taxi and ride-hailing	Round up, or AED 5 to 10	Not expected; drivers appreciate help with bags and rounding up [MARKET]
Hotel porter	AED 5 to 10 per bag	[MARKET]
Hotel housekeeping	AED 10 to 20 per night, or at the end of the stay	[MARKET]
Valet parking	AED 5 to 10	[MARKET]
Petrol station attendant, car wash	AED 2 to 10	Most UAE petrol stations are full service [MARKET]
Hairdresser, barber, beauty salon	10% or rounding up	[MARKET]

Service	Typical tip	Notes
Movers, furniture assembly, delivery of heavy goods	AED 20 to 50 per person for a big job	Water on a hot day is also appreciated [MARKET]
Building security, concierge, cleaners	A gift or cash at Eid or the end of the year	Many residents give at Eid al Fitr, Eid al Adha or New Year rather than routinely [MARKET]
Government staff, police, medical staff	Do not tip	A thank you is appropriate. Gifts to public officials can breach anti-bribery rules [REPORTED] [LAW]
Supermarket and shop staff	Not expected	Packers who carry shopping to your car may be tipped a few dirhams [MARKET]

3.4 A restaurant bill, worked through

A dinner with a menu total of AED 400 at two different venues: [ESTIMATE]

	Standalone restaurant	Dubai hotel restaurant, prices exclusive of charges
Food and drinks	AED 400 (VAT included)	AED 400
Service charge	None permitted	AED 40 (10%)
Municipality fee	None	AED 28 (7%)
VAT	Included in menu prices	5%, the basis depends on the venue's invoice
Tip	AED 40 to 60 if service was good	Optional
Roughly what you pay	AED 440 to 460	Around AED 490 before any tip

Many hotel venues now show prices inclusive of all charges, in which case the menu price is the total. The point of the example is to read the footnote, not to assume.

4. Finding reliable tradespeople in the UAE

Short answer: in a rented home, report AC, plumbing, electrical and structural problems to your landlord or building management first, because major maintenance is generally their responsibility. For work you pay for yourself, use a licensed company, check the licence online, get a written quote, pay against a tax invoice and never hire unlicensed pest control. [LAW] [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

4.1 Who should fix it: you or your landlord?

Problem	Who usually arranges and pays	Notes
AC failure, main plumbing, wiring, water heater, structural defects	Landlord or building management	Unless your contract says otherwise, major maintenance is generally the landlord's responsibility in Dubai and Abu Dhabi [LAW] [REPORTED]
Building common areas, lifts, pools, gyms, water tanks	Building management or owners' association	Funded through service charges paid by owners [MARKET]
Minor repairs, such as light bulbs, a dripping tap washer, a loose handle	Often the tenant	Many contracts set a threshold, such as repairs under a stated amount being the tenant's cost. Check your contract [MARKET] [VERIFY]
Damage you or your guests caused	Tenant	It may be deducted from your deposit if not repaired properly [LAW] [REPORTED]
Your own appliances, furniture, curtains, mounting a TV	Tenant	Ask the landlord's permission before drilling or making changes [MARKET]
Owner-occupied homes	Owner	Owners often take an annual maintenance contract (section 4.4) [MARKET]

Always report a landlord's repair in writing, by email or WhatsApp, with photos and the date. If repairs are not made, that record is the most useful document in any later dispute. Our UAE Emergency Guide explains how the rental dispute committees work in each emirate.

4.2 Where to find a good tradesperson

Route	Best for	Watch for
Building management or facilities management (FM)	Anything in the building's systems, such as AC, plumbing and water supply	Response times vary. Escalate in writing if a fault is not fixed [MARKET]
Your landlord's or agent's usual contractor	Repairs the landlord pays for	Agree in writing who pays before work starts [MARKET]
Home services marketplaces, such as ServiceMarket, Justlife and Urban Company	Cleaning, handyman jobs, AC servicing, moving and pest control, with fixed prices and reviews	The marketplace connects you to a provider; check who carries out the work and who stands behind it [MARKET]
Manufacturer or agency service centres	Appliances under warranty, cars, branded AC systems	More expensive, but warranty stays valid [MARKET]
Community recommendations	Trusted individual tradespeople	Neighbourhood WhatsApp and Facebook groups are useful leads, but still check the company's licence [MARKET]
Annual maintenance contracts (AMCs)	Owners and villa tenants responsible for their own maintenance	Read what is excluded, such as parts, AC gas and emergency call-outs [MARKET]

4.3 The seven-point check before anyone starts work

1. **Check the trade licence.** Ask for the company's trade licence and check it online: Dubai Economy and Tourism's trade name and business activity search, Abu Dhabi's Department of Economic Development licence search, Sharjah's Economic Development Department, Ajman's Department of Economic Development, or the federal National Economic Register. [OFFICIAL]
2. **Match the activity to the job.** A cleaning company's licence does not cover electrical or gas work. Gas installations and repairs should only be done by a company approved for gas work, and pest control only by a company approved by the municipality. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]
3. **Get a written quote.** It should list labour, parts, VAT, call-out fee and how long the work will take. Get at least two quotes for anything over a few hundred dirhams. [MARKET]
4. **Ask about the warranty.** Reputable companies give a warranty on labour and pass on manufacturer warranties on parts. [MARKET]
5. **Do not pay everything upfront.** Paying a deposit for parts is normal for bigger jobs; full payment before work is a red flag. [MARKET]
6. **Pay against a tax invoice.** A VAT-registered business must issue a tax invoice showing its tax registration number. That invoice is your evidence for any complaint. [LAW] [REPORTED]
7. **Take before and after photos,** especially in a rented home where your deposit may depend on the condition of the property. [MARKET]

Never use unlicensed pest control or "pest bombs"

Unlicensed fumigation has killed residents in the UAE. Aluminium phosphide, a fumigant behind several deaths, has been banned from public sale since 2009, and fumes from one flat can spread to neighbouring homes through shared ventilation. Ignore pest control flyers left on doors, ask to see the company's licence and its approved materials, and use a company on your municipality's approved list. Dubai Municipality publishes a regularly updated list of approved pest control companies. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

4.4 What common home jobs cost

These are published price ranges from Dubai service providers in mid-2026. They exclude VAT and parts unless stated. Abu Dhabi and the northern emirates are broadly similar or slightly lower. Always get a quote for your job. [MARKET]

Job	Typical price range
Handyman, per hour	AED 80 to 200, often with a minimum charge of about AED 100
Call-out or inspection fee	AED 80 to 150, sometimes waived if you go ahead with the repair
Basic plumbing repair	AED 150 to 250
Tap replacement	AED 150 to 350, plus the tap
Socket or switch repair	AED 180 to 300
AC servicing, per unit	AED 180 to 400
AC gas top-up	AED 150 to 600
Door lock replacement	AED 150 to 250, plus the lock
Annual maintenance contract	AED 1,500 to 5,000 a year, depending on property size and cover

When to service your AC: most residents have AC units cleaned and serviced before the summer, in March to May, when companies are less busy. A dirty system costs more to run and is more likely to fail in August. [MARKET]

5. Understanding UAE bills, subscriptions and recurring costs

Short answer: most UAE households pay monthly for electricity and water, a housing or municipality fee charged at 5% of the annual rent in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, district cooling if their building has it, gas, home internet and mobile phones, plus streaming and app subscriptions. Annual costs such as car registration, insurance, visa and Emirates ID renewal and AC servicing are easy to forget, so set them up in a calendar on day one. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

5.1 Your monthly bill map

Bill	Who you pay	How it is billed	Typical monthly range [ESTIMATE]	What drives it
Electricity and water, Dubai	DEWA	Monthly, by app, website or bank	AED 350 to 3,000 including the housing fee and cooling, depending on home size and season	Slab tariff that rises with use, AC load, summer heat [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
Electricity and water, Abu Dhabi	TAQA Distribution (formerly ADDC and AADC)	Monthly	Broadly similar to Dubai for the same home	Use, AC load, season [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
Electricity and water, Sharjah	SEWA	Monthly	Varies with use	Use, season [OFFICIAL]
Electricity and water, other emirates	Etihad Water and Electricity	Monthly	Varies with use	Use, season [OFFICIAL]
Housing fee, Dubai	Dubai Municipality, collected on your DEWA bill	5% of annual rent, split into 12 monthly charges	5% of annual rent divided by 12	Your rent [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]
Municipality fee, Abu Dhabi	Department of Municipalities and Transport, collected on your TAQA Distribution bill	5% of annual rent or the rental index, whichever is higher, in monthly instalments	5% of annual rent divided by 12	Your rent; UAE nationals are exempt for their own home [OFFICIAL]
District cooling (chiller)	Empower, Emicool, Tabreed or another provider, if your building uses one	Monthly, with a capacity and a consumption charge	AED 0 if "chiller free", otherwise several hundred dirhams a month	Building type, home size, use [MARKET]
Gas	Building's central gas supplier, or cylinder supplier	Monthly meter bill or per cylinder	Usually modest for cooking only	Cooking and, in some buildings, water heating [MARKET]
Home internet	e& or du	Monthly plan, usually on a 12 or 24 month contract	Included in AED 350 to 1,000 for internet and mobile combined	Speed, TV package, bundled lines [MARKET]
Mobile phones	e&, du or Virgin Mobile	Monthly plan or prepaid	Included above	Data allowance, roaming [MARKET]
Streaming, apps and delivery subscriptions	Each provider, usually by card	Monthly or annual, usually auto-renewing	Varies	How many you keep [MARKET]

Typical ranges are planning figures for an apartment or villa in Dubai or Abu Dhabi and are consistent with our UAE Cost of Living Guide and UAE Salary Guide budget models. Your own bills depend heavily on the size and age of your home and how you use AC.

5.2 Why your summer bill is so much higher

UAE utilities charge electricity on a slab or tiered basis, so the price per unit rises as monthly use goes up. Air conditioning drives most household electricity use, and from June to September it runs almost constantly. It is normal for summer bills to be two to three times winter bills in the same home. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

How to keep it down:

- **Set the AC to 24°C or above** and use timers or smart thermostats rather than cooling empty rooms. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
- **Service the AC before summer** and clean or change filters regularly (section 4.4).
- **Close curtains on sun-facing windows** during the day.
- **Run washing machines and dishwashers on full loads.**
- **Check for leaking taps and running toilets,** which add to the water bill quietly.
- **Compare your bill with last year's** in the DEWA or TAQA app. A sudden jump with no change in use can mean a fault or a meter problem worth reporting. [MARKET]

5.3 One-off and annual costs to put in your calendar

Cost	When	Typical approach
Rent cheques	One to twelve cheques a year, set out in your tenancy contract	Keep enough in your account before each cheque date. A bounced cheque is a civil debt the landlord can enforce directly [LAW] [REPORTED]
Tenancy renewal and Ejari or Tawtheeq	Each renewal	Registration fees and any agreed rent change. See the Dubai Tenant Guide or Abu Dhabi Tenant Guide [OFFICIAL]
Utility deposits	On move-in, refunded when you close the account	DEWA reports a deposit of AED 2,000 for an apartment and AED 4,000 for a villa, plus a connection fee [REPORTED]
Gas connection	On move-in	Reported at about AED 600 to 800 for a new connection or transfer in Dubai, plus any deposit [REPORTED]
Car registration and insurance	Every year	Renewal requires valid insurance and, for older cars, a vehicle test. See our UAE Driving & Vehicle Guide [OFFICIAL]
Residence visa and Emirates ID	When they expire	See our UAE Visa Requirements Guide [OFFICIAL]
School fees	Usually in three terms	See our Schools and Education in the UAE guide [OFFICIAL]
AC servicing	Once or twice a year, ideally before summer	Section 4.4 [MARKET]
Home contents insurance	Every year	Optional, and usually inexpensive relative to what it covers (section 6.5) [MARKET]
Salik and Darb tolls, parking	Ongoing top-ups or auto top-up	See our UAE Driving & Vehicle Guide [OFFICIAL]
Annual subscriptions	On each renewal date	Note the renewal date the day you sign up [MARKET]

5.4 Subscriptions: how to stop paying for things you do not use

UAE households commonly pay for several streaming services, delivery subscriptions, gym memberships, cloud storage, dining memberships and telecom add-ons. Most renew automatically. A quarterly subscription audit takes ten minutes and often finds money. [MARKET]

1. **List every recurring charge** from your card and bank statements for the last three months, and your phone bill.
2. **Cancel what you have not used** in the last month. Cancel through the provider's own app or website and keep the confirmation email or screenshot.
3. **Check for telecom add-ons and third-party charges** on your mobile bill, such as content services you do not remember signing up to. Ask your provider to remove them and to block premium content services on your line. [MARKET] [REPORTED]
4. **Dispute charges taken after you cancelled.** Contact the provider first with your cancellation confirmation. If it does not refund, raise a card dispute with your bank. A correctly cancelled subscription should end on the cancellation date unless your contract sets a notice period or minimum term. [REPORTED]

5 **Escalate if needed.** Bank complaints go to Sanadak, the Central Bank's ombudsman unit, and telecom complaints go to the provider first, then the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA). [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

6 **Watch minimum terms on internet and mobile contracts.** Leaving a 12 or 24 month contract early can mean paying the remaining months or an early termination fee. Read the contract before you sign. [MARKET]

Block promotional texts. Under a TDRA service, you can text "BALL" to 7726 to block promotional SMS messages from all categories, or "B" followed by a category, such as "B Banking", to block one category. Text "UALL" to undo it. [REPORTED]

5.5 What happens if you pay late

- **Utilities:** unpaid DEWA, TAQA, SEWA or Etihad Water and Electricity bills can lead to disconnection and reconnection fees, and an outstanding balance must be cleared before you move to a new home. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]
- **Rent cheques:** since 2022, most bounced cheques are no longer a criminal offence, but the landlord can enforce the cheque directly as a debt, and it affects your credit record. [LAW] [REPORTED]
- **Credit cards and loans:** unpaid debts can lead to court cases and, in some cases, a travel ban. Our UAE Emergency Guide explains how to check for a travel ban. [OFFICIAL]
- **Phones and internet:** an unpaid telecom account can be passed to a collection agency and can stop you opening a new account. [MARKET]

Paying by direct debit or card auto-pay from your salary account avoids most of these problems. If you are choosing a bank, our UAE Banking Guide compares the main options; HSBC UAE (a Relocate2UAE partner) is one bank that offers bill payment and card controls through its app.

6. What to do when something goes wrong at home

Short answer: make it safe first, then report it. For a power or water failure, call 991 for electricity and 992 for water in most of the UAE, or your provider's line. For a gas smell, a fire or smoke, leave and call 997. For anything else, contact your building management or landlord in writing, with photos, and keep a record of every reply. [OFFICIAL]

6.1 Home problem finder

Problem	Do this first	Who to call	Who usually pays
Fire or smoke	Get everyone out, close doors behind you, use stairs not lifts	997 Civil Defence [OFFICIAL]	Insurance, landlord or the person responsible
Smell of gas	Do not use switches, lighters or phones inside. Open windows, leave and close the door	997, then your building management and gas supplier [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]	Gas supplier or landlord for supply faults
Power cut	Check your own breakers and whether neighbours are affected	Dubai, Sharjah and the northern emirates: 991. Abu Dhabi: 991, or TAQA Distribution on 800 2332 [OFFICIAL]	Utility for supply faults; landlord for internal wiring
No water	Check whether the building has a notice about maintenance or tank cleaning	Building management first. Supply failures: DEWA 991, TAQA Distribution 992, Etihad Water and Electricity 992 [OFFICIAL]	Utility or building
AC not cooling	Check the thermostat, filters and breaker. In summer, report it the same day	Building management or landlord's maintenance line [MARKET]	Landlord, unless you caused the damage [LAW] [REPORTED]
Water leak or flooding	Turn off the water at the stopcock or the valve under the sink and switch off electrics near the water if it is safe to do so	Building management, then landlord. Tell the neighbour below [MARKET]	Landlord or building; your insurance for your belongings
Blocked drain or toilet	Stop using it	Building management or a plumber [MARKET]	Often the tenant if caused by misuse, landlord if structural [MARKET] [VERIFY]
Pests	Do not use professional chemicals or pest bombs yourself	A municipality-approved pest control company (section 4.3) [OFFICIAL]	Landlord for infestations at move-in, often the tenant after [MARKET] [VERIFY]
Locked out	Do not force the door	Building security or reception, then a licensed locksmith. Ask security to confirm your identity [MARKET]	Tenant
Internet down	Restart the router and check the provider's app for outages	e& or du support [MARKET]	Provider for line faults
Heavy rain and water coming in	Move valuables, unplug electrics near water, photograph the damage	Building management. In an emergency, 999 [OFFICIAL]	Building or landlord; your insurance
Lift stuck	Press the alarm and stay calm	Building security. If anyone is unwell, 999 or 998 [OFFICIAL]	Building

6.2 Getting a landlord to fix something

1. **Report it in writing the same day,** by email or WhatsApp to your landlord or agent and to building management, with photos or a short video.
2. **Say what you need and by when,** for example "Please arrange repair of the bedroom AC unit by Thursday".
3. **Give access.** Agree a time and keep a record of when technicians visited.

4. **Follow up in writing** if nothing happens. Keep every message.
5. **Do not stop paying rent.** Withholding rent weakens your position and can lead to eviction proceedings. [REPORTED]
6. **Escalate to the dispute committee** if the problem continues and affects your use of the home: the Rental Disputes Center in Dubai, or the Rental Dispute Settlement Committees at the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department. Our UAE Emergency Guide explains the process and fees. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Paying for an urgent repair yourself and deducting it from rent is risky unless your landlord agrees in writing first. If your landlord will not act and the cost is significant, take advice before you spend. [MARKET] [VERIFY]

6.3 Summer AC failures

An AC failure in July or August is the home problem that UAE residents worry about most. Report it immediately and in writing, ask building management for a time slot, and move children, older relatives and pets to a cooler room or a neighbour's home in the meantime. Portable fans and blackout curtains help briefly but do not replace cooling. If your building cannot fix it within a reasonable time, ask in writing whether the landlord will provide a temporary portable unit. [MARKET]

6.4 After a leak or flood

- **Photograph and video everything** before cleaning up, including where the water came from.
- **Tell building management** so they can find the source. Water from the flat above is usually that owner's or the building's responsibility. [MARKET]
- **Dry the home quickly** and watch for mould, which spreads fast in the UAE's humidity and AC conditions. [MARKET]
- **Notify your insurer** if you have home contents cover.

6.5 Home contents insurance: worth it?

Landlords usually insure the building, not your belongings. Home contents insurance in the UAE covers your furniture, electronics, clothes and valuables against fire, water damage, theft and accidental damage, and often includes personal liability, for example if water from your home damages a neighbour's. Policies are generally inexpensive compared with the value they protect. Check the excess, the limits on single valuable items, and whether accidental damage is included. [MARKET]

6.6 When the problem is a business, not your home

If a shop, app or contractor will not fix a problem with something you paid for, complain to the business in writing first, then to the economic department of the emirate that licensed it: Dubai Economy and Tourism's Consumer Rights service, Abu Dhabi's Department of Economic Development, the Sharjah Economic Development Department, or the Ministry of Economy and Tourism on 800 1222. [OFFICIAL] Our UAE Emergency Guide lists every channel and what to include.

Numbers to save today

999 police · 998 ambulance · 997 fire and civil defence · 991 electricity failure · 992 water supply failure in Abu Dhabi and the northern emirates · DEWA 24-hour contact centre 04 601 9999 · TAQA Distribution 800 2332 · 800 1222 consumer complaints. Emergency numbers are fixed; check other numbers on the provider's own website before you need them. [OFFICIAL]

7. Your everyday setup checklist

Use this in your first month. Each item saves money or trouble later.

Shopping and food

☐ Download the apps for the two supermarkets nearest you and one quick-delivery app
☐ Join the free loyalty scheme at the supermarket you use most
☐ Bookmark the Essential Goods Prices Platform
☐ Buy a set of reusable shopping bags and keep them in the car or by the door
☐ Decide on drinking water: filter, dispenser delivery or both

Home

☐ Save your building management's maintenance number and email
☐ Find the water stopcock, the electricity breaker board and the gas shut-off valve
☐ Ask when the water tanks and AC were last serviced
☐ Take dated photos and video of the whole home before you unpack, for your deposit
☐ Arrange home contents insurance

Bills

☐ Set up auto-pay for DEWA, TAQA, SEWA or Etihad Water and Electricity
☐ Note your internet and mobile contract end dates
☐ Put rent cheque dates, car registration, insurance and visa expiry in your calendar
☐ Text "BALL" to 7726 if you want to stop promotional SMS messages

Safety

☐ Save 999, 998, 997, 991 and 992 in your phone
☐ Check your smoke detector works
☐ Keep a torch and a power bank charged

Our First 30 Days Guide covers the official setup steps, and the UAE Utilities Guide walks through connecting each utility after you sign a tenancy.

8. Interactive tool: UAE monthly bills checker

Use our free **UAE Monthly Bills Checker**. Enter your emirate, home type, annual rent and how your household uses AC, delivery and subscriptions, and it estimates your monthly recurring costs, works out your exact 5% housing or municipality fee, and shows where the biggest savings are likely to be. It works on your phone and offline once loaded.

> **Use the interactive version online**
> The UAE Monthly Bills Checker runs on the web version of this guide at relocate2uae.com/uae-everyday-survival-guide. It works on a phone and offline once loaded.

9. Common mistakes newcomers make

1. **Doing the weekly shop on a quick-delivery app** and paying fees and higher prices on every item. [MARKET]
2. **Tipping on top of a service charge without checking it,** or not tipping at all where there is no service charge. [MARKET]
3. **Paying a standalone restaurant's service charge** without questioning it. [REPORTED]

4 **Hiring from a flyer under the door,** especially for pest control. [OFFICIAL]
5 **Paying a tradesperson in full before the job,** with no written quote or invoice. [MARKET]
6 **Ignoring the housing fee** when budgeting rent. On AED 100,000 of rent, it is AED 5,000 a year. [OFFICIAL]
7 **Being surprised by the first summer electricity bill.** [MARKET]
8 **Forgetting auto-renewing subscriptions and telecom add-ons.** [MARKET]
9 **Fixing a landlord's repair yourself** and assuming you can deduct it from rent. [MARKET] [VERIFY]
10 **Reporting problems by phone only,** with no written record. [MARKET]

Related Relocate2UAE guides

If you need	Read
Full monthly budgets by household	UAE Cost of Living Guide
Memberships, loyalty and discount apps	UAE Discounts & Savings Guide
Connecting DEWA, TAQA, cooling, gas and internet	UAE Utilities Guide
Disputes, scams, accidents and emergency numbers	UAE Emergency Guide
Renting, deposits and maintenance rules	UAE Housing Guide
Tenant rights in Dubai	Dubai Tenant Guide
Tenant rights in Abu Dhabi	Abu Dhabi Tenant Guide
Delivery, payment and government apps	UAE Digital Services & Apps Guide
Bank accounts, cards and bill payments	UAE Banking Guide
Hiring a cleaner, maid or nanny	Hiring a Maid or Nanny in the UAE
Everyday etiquette	UAE Culture & Customs Guide
Your first month, step by step	First 30 Days Guide

10. Frequently asked questions

What is the cheapest supermarket in the UAE?

There is no single cheapest supermarket for every item. Hypermarkets and cooperatives such as Lulu, Carrefour, Nesto, Union Coop, Emirates Coop and Sharjah Coop usually have the lowest prices on staples, while Spinneys and Waitrose are premium. The Ministry of Economy and Tourism's free Essential Goods Prices Platform compares current prices across major chains. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

How can I save money on groceries in Dubai?

Shop weekly offers at a hypermarket or coop, buy own-brand and bulk staples, buy fruit, vegetables and fish at markets such as Waterfront Market, use free loyalty schemes, and avoid doing the weekly shop through quick-delivery apps, which add fees and sometimes higher prices. [MARKET]

Is there a government website to compare supermarket prices in the UAE?

Yes. The Ministry of Economy and Tourism's Essential Goods Prices Platform, launched in April 2026, compares prices of 33 everyday items across participating supermarket chains and lets you filter by emirate, retailer and branch. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Are prices in UAE shops shown with VAT included?

Yes. Displayed prices should include the 5% VAT. If VAT is added at the till, you can report the business to the Federal Tax Authority on 800 82923 or at tax.gov.ae. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Can UAE supermarkets raise the price of rice, eggs or bread?

Not without approval. Under the Ministry of Economy and Tourism's pricing policy, retailers need prior approval to raise prices of nine essential goods: cooking oil, eggs, dairy, rice, sugar, poultry, legumes, bread and wheat. Report violations on 800 1222. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

What is the best grocery delivery app in the UAE?

It depends on the job. Talabat Mart, Noon Minutes and Careem Quik suit fast top-ups; the Carrefour and Lulu apps suit the weekly shop; InstaShop and elGrocer connect you to local stores; Kibsons suits fresh produce. Check coverage for your address. [MARKET]

Do supermarkets in the UAE charge for bags?

Single-use plastic shopping bags have been banned across the UAE since 1 January 2024, and since 1 January 2026 single-use bags of any material are banned. Supermarkets sell reusable bags, so bring your own. [LAW] [REPORTED]

Is tap water safe to drink in the UAE?

DEWA says the water it supplies in Dubai meets World Health Organization guidelines up to the meter. Quality at your tap depends on your building's tanks and pipes, so many residents use a filter or delivered dispenser water. Ask your building when the tanks were last cleaned. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Is tipping expected in the UAE?

Tipping is not compulsory but is common in hospitality and delivery. Where there is no service charge, 10 to 15% in restaurants is usual, AED 3 to 5 for delivery riders, and rounding up for taxis. Do not tip government staff or police. [MARKET] [REPORTED]

How much should I tip a delivery driver in Dubai?

AED 3 to 5 is typical for a normal order, with more for heavy orders, bad weather or the summer heat. Riders must receive the full amount of tips paid through delivery apps. [MARKET] [REPORTED]

Can restaurants in the UAE add a service charge?

Standalone restaurants and cafés are not permitted to add a service charge, and diners can report those that do. Restaurants in hotels and some licensed venues can add a service charge, commonly around 10%, plus local fees. The menu should say what is included. [REPORTED] [VERIFY]

Why is there a 7% fee on my Dubai restaurant bill?

Hotel restaurants and bars in Dubai commonly add a 7% municipality fee as well as a service charge and VAT. Many menus state that prices are inclusive of these charges, so check the footnote. [REPORTED] [VERIFY]

Can you bargain in Dubai?

Yes, in souks, markets, carpet shops, Dragon Mart and many independent shops, and on rent and contractor quotes. In the gold souk, the making charge is negotiable while the gold price follows the daily rate. You cannot bargain in malls, supermarkets or chain stores. [MARKET]

How do I find a reliable plumber, electrician or handyman in the UAE?

In a rented home, contact building management or your landlord first for AC, plumbing and electrical faults. For your own jobs, use a licensed company, check its trade licence online with the emirate's economic department, get a written quote and pay against a tax invoice. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

How do I check if a company is licensed in Dubai?

Use Dubai Economy and Tourism's trade name and business activity search, or the federal National Economic Register. Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ajman have their own licence search services. [OFFICIAL]

How much does AC servicing cost in Dubai?

Published prices in 2026 range from about AED 180 to 400 per unit, excluding VAT, with gas top-ups extra. Service before summer, when companies are less busy. [MARKET]

Who pays for AC repairs in a rented apartment in Dubai?

Generally the landlord, as major maintenance is the landlord's responsibility unless the tenancy contract says otherwise. Tenants usually pay for minor repairs and damage they cause. Report faults in writing. [LAW] [REPORTED]

What is the 5% housing fee on my DEWA bill?

It is Dubai Municipality's housing fee, charged at 5% of your annual rent and collected in monthly instalments on your DEWA bill. Abu Dhabi charges a similar 5% municipality fee on TAQA Distribution bills. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

Why is my DEWA bill so high in summer?

Electricity is charged on a tiered tariff, so the price per unit rises as use goes up, and AC runs almost constantly from June to September. Summer bills of two to three times winter bills are normal. [OFFICIAL] [MARKET]

What should I do if the power goes out in my home?

Check your own breaker board and whether neighbours are affected. For a supply failure, call 991 in Dubai, Sharjah and the northern emirates, and 991 or TAQA Distribution on 800 2332 in Abu Dhabi. [OFFICIAL]

What should I do if I smell gas in my apartment?

Do not use switches, lighters or phones inside. Open windows, leave, close the door and call 997, then your building management and gas supplier. [OFFICIAL] [REPORTED]

How do I stop promotional text messages in the UAE?

Text "BALL" to 7726 to block promotional SMS from all categories, or "B" followed by a category name to block one category. Text "UALL" to undo it. [REPORTED]

How do I get a refund for a subscription I already cancelled?

Contact the provider with your cancellation confirmation and ask for the charges to be reversed. If it refuses, raise a card dispute with your bank, and escalate bank complaints to Sanadak, the Central Bank's ombudsman unit. [REPORTED] [OFFICIAL]

11. Primary sources

Federal

- u.ae: Inquire about licences, names and activities; Handling emergencies; Power and water supply failure; Taxes in tourist facilities; Consumer protection
- Ministry of Economy and Tourism: Essential Goods Prices Platform; pricing policy for essential consumer goods; consumer complaints, 800 1222
- Federal Tax Authority: VAT-inclusive price display; 800 82923
- Federal Law No. 15 of 2020 on Consumer Protection
- Ministry of Climate Change and Environment: Ministerial Decision No. 380 of 2022 on single-use products
- Central Bank of the UAE, Sanadak: banking and insurance complaints
- Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA): promotional SMS blocking

Emirate

- Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA): potable water quality; 991; contact centre
- Dubai Municipality: single-use plastic ban phases; approved pest control companies; housing fee
- Dubai Economy and Tourism: trade name and business activity search; Consumer Rights
- TAQA Distribution (formerly ADDC and AADC): municipality fee; contact centre and emergency numbers
- Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development: licence search
- Visit Abu Dhabi: taxes, service charges and tipping
- Sharjah Municipality: pest control warnings
- Sharjah Economic Development Department; Ajman Department of Economic Development

We also reviewed UAE newspapers (Gulf News, Khaleej Times, The National, Arabian Business), supermarket and app websites, and published price lists from UAE home services providers. We treated them as leads, not sources, and checked their claims against the primary sources above where those pages were available. Where only reputable secondary reporting was available, the claim is tagged [REPORTED]. Supermarket price positions, app features and tradesperson prices are tagged [MARKET] because they change week to week. Where sources disagree, such as on service charges and tourism fees in Abu Dhabi, we say so in the text.

About this guide

Written and verified by the Relocate2UAE editorial team. Last verified 23 November 2026. Next review 23 February 2027, or sooner if a fee, rule or phone number changes. If you spot something out of date, tell us at info@relocate2uae.com and we will check it.

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Emergencies and safety

In an emergency, call the emergency services and follow the instructions of the police, ambulance, civil defence and utility providers. This guide is not a substitute for those instructions. Electrical, gas, pest control and structural work should only be carried out by appropriately licensed and approved professionals.

Your responsibility

You are responsible for your own decisions, purchases and arrangements with landlords, providers and contractors, and for checking information before relying on it. Nothing in this guide guarantees any price, saving, fee, outcome or timescale.

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