

FREE CHECKLIST · FROM TEZ

THE BANGKOK SETUP CHECKLIST

Everything to sort in your first week —
SIM, internet, money, utilities, and the
apps you actually need.

✓ Real numbers ✓ Real steps ✓ No BS

YOU'RE IN. HERE'S YOUR CHECKLIST 📌

Tick things off as you go — your progress saves on this device. **Bookmark this page** (Ctrl/⌘+D) so you can come back to it.



BEFORE YOU FLY

Sort these at home — they save you the most stress on arrival.



Visa sorted (DTV or your path)

The DTV is a 5-year visa, 180 days/entry. Have your documents clean before you fly — don't wing it at the airport.



Unlock your phone for a Thai SIM

Ask your carrier to network-unlock it, or you can't use a cheap local SIM/eSIM here.



Book only your first week's stay

A hotel or serviced apartment. Test the neighborhood before a long lease.



Install the core apps before you land

Grab, LINE, Google Maps, Wise — so you're not fumbling on airport wifi (list below).



Tez's tip: Do **not** sign a 1-year lease before you land. Book a week somewhere, see the area in person, then commit.



DAY ONE – ARRIVAL

The first few hours, done right.



Get a SIM / activate your eSIM

AIS, True, or dtac counters are right in the airport — or activate an eSIM you bought beforehand.



Pull cash from an airport ATM

Thai ATMs charge ~220฿ per foreign withdrawal, so take out a larger amount at once.



Book a Grab, don't take a tout

Price is locked in the app — no haggling, no surprises.



Consider the Airport Rail Link

In bad daytime traffic it beats a taxi into the city.



Tez's tip: Ignore anyone offering a 'fixed price' taxi at arrivals. Book a **Grab** from the app or use the public taxi queue with the meter.



SIM & MOBILE DATA

Getting connected properly.



Pick a network: AIS, True, or dtac

All three have strong Bangkok coverage. AIS is widely rated best; True often cheapest.



Start on a tourist SIM, then go monthly

Grab a short tourist package first, then move to a monthly plan once you have an address.



Set up easy top-ups

Top up in any 7-Eleven, or via the network's app / TrueMoney.



Tez's tip: Tourist SIMs are convenient but pricey per GB. If you're staying, switch to a **monthly** plan after week one — much better value.



HOME INTERNET

Once you've got a place.



Order fibre: AIS, True, or 3BB

Ask the building which providers are already wired in — install is faster.



Book the install early

It can take a few days; schedule it the day you move in.



Bridge with a pocket wifi / SIM hotspot

Tether from your phone until the fibre is live.



Tez's tip: Fibre here is fast and cheap by Western standards — usually **400–600฿/month** for a solid connection. Don't overpay a middleman.



MONEY & PAYMENTS

Move and spend without getting killed on fees.



Set up Wise

Cheapest way to move money over and spend on the card without bad exchange rates.



Get TrueMoney Wallet

Great for top-ups, bills, and paying by QR before you have a Thai bank.



Learn Thai QR / PromptPay

Scan-to-pay is everywhere — restaurants, markets, taxis.



Open a Thai bank account (if staying)

Needs your passport + visa and sometimes a work/address doc — ask the branch what they require.



Always carry some cash

Street food, markets, and small shops are cash-first.



Tez's tip: Half of Thailand pays by **PromptPay QR**. Once you can scan-to-pay, you'll barely touch cash — but always keep some for street food and markets.



UTILITIES & YOUR PLACE

The stuff landlords hope you won't ask about.



Confirm the electricity rate (MEA vs private)

Government MEA rate is fair; a private markup can double your bill.



Check water billing

Usually cheap and metered — confirm it's not padded.



Ask about condo/juristic fees

Some are on the tenant, some on the owner — get it in writing.



Get a digital door lock (if you can)

Standard here and a big quality-of-life upgrade.



Budget an aircon cleaning

A cheap service every few months keeps bills down and air clean.



Tez's tip: The #1 overpay: **electricity**. Many condos bill a marked-up private rate instead of the government MEA rate. Ask which one you're on **before** you sign.



APPS TO INSTALL

Your Bangkok toolkit.



Grab — rides + food delivery

Your daily lifeline.



Bolt — cheaper rides

Compare against Grab each time.



LINE — messaging + everything

Landlords, restaurants, services all run on it.



Google Maps — transit

Nails the BTS/MRT routing.



LINE MAN / Foodpanda — food & errands

More delivery options and coverage.



Wise — money

Card + transfers.



Google Translate — download Thai offline

Camera translate for menus and signs.



Tez's tip: Check **both** Grab and Bolt for every ride — Bolt is often cheaper, so you pick the better price.



HEALTH & SAFETY

Sort this before you need it.



Get expat health insurance early

Travel insurance is for trips, not for living here.



Know your nearest good hospital

e.g. Bumrungrad, Samitivej, BNH — private, excellent, English-speaking.



Save the emergency numbers

Tourist Police 1155 · Ambulance/Emergency 1669.



Note your embassy contact

Register or save the details in case you need them.



Tez's tip: Get **private health insurance before you arrive**. Wait until you're here and premiums jump — plus anything you develop meanwhile can be excluded.



GETTING AROUND

Set it up once, glide after.



Get a Rabbit card (BTS) / stored value

Skip the ticket queues.



Live near a train line

Everything else is negotiable; this isn't.



Use Grab/Bolt for the rest

Cheap, metered, no haggling.



Tez's tip: The single best area rule: live within a **10-minute walk of a BTS or MRT station**. It decides your daily life more than anything else.

WHO'S BEHIND THIS

HEY, I'M TEZ 🙌



I'm an American who got tired of the burnout and the crushing cost back home, so I moved to Bangkok — and I actually got my life back. Now I help other people do the same, without the expensive first-year mistakes I made.

Real numbers, real steps, no BS. I do these calls myself — you're talking to someone who actually lives here, not a faceless agency.

WANT IT DONE FOR YOU?

This checklist is the DIY version. If you'd rather have one clear plan — visa path, the right neighborhood, and your real monthly number — book a 45-minute call with me.

👉 [Book your free 45-min planning call: cal.com/imtiazh/thailand-move-planning](https://cal.com/imtiazh/thailand-move-planning)

Bangkok For Less · Your honest guide to living in Bangkok, for a fraction of the cost back home.

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