



Your Brussels Playbook

ExpatsatHome Essential Guide

Your Brussels Playbook: A Personal Guide to Your New Life

Welcome to Your Brussels Playbook!

Welcome to Brussels! The past few weeks have been a whirlwind of information, from administrative tasks to cultural nuances. It's completely normal to feel overwhelmed.

What is this playbook? This is not just a summary of a course; it's a **living document** designed to be your single source of truth for your new life in Brussels. It's a personalized, custom-made guidebook that you will build and grow over time.

Why do you need it? The goal is to eliminate stress and save time. Instead of searching through piles of paper or old emails, you'll have one central place for every important detail—from your National Number to the name of that amazing bakery your colleague recommended.

How do you use it? Start by filling in the foundational information from your move. Then, make it a habit to add new discoveries, contacts, and tips as you experience them. This playbook will grow with you, becoming an invaluable tool for navigating the city with confidence.

Quick Reference Sheet

This is the most important page in your playbook. Fill it out immediately and keep it accessible. This is for the critical information you'll need at a moment's notice.

Personal Identification

- Full Name:
- National Registration Number (Numéro National / Rijksregisternummer):
- Passport Number:
- Home Address:

Emergency Contacts

- Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance): 112
- Police (Urgent): 101
- My Emergency Contact (Name):
- My Emergency Contact (Phone):


Healthcare

- My Doctor (Médecin traitant / Huisarts):
- Doctor's Phone:

Banking & Housing

- Bank Name:
- IBAN:

- **Health Insurance (Mutuelle / Ziekenfonds):**
- **Insurance Policy Number:**
- **24/7 Pharmacy Info: 0903 99 000**
- **Landlord Agency Name:**
- **Landlord Agency Phone:**
- **Building Manager (Syndic):**

 **Tip:** Take a photo of this completed page and save it to your phone's "favorites" album. You'll be surprised how often you need your National Number or IBAN when you're out and about.

Part 1: Admin & Bureaucracy

This section helps you track and organize all the essential administrative steps for living legally and comfortably in Brussels.

Commune & Residency

This is where you'll record your interactions with your local town hall (**Maison Communale / Gemeentehuis**).

My Address: **Commune:**

Website: **Main Phone Number:**

Residency Process Notes

Use this space to document your journey. What documents did you need? Who did you speak to? What were the exact steps? This will be invaluable for renewals.

- **Date of first appointment:**
- **Type of Residence Card (E, E+, F, etc.):**
- **Card Expiry Date:**
- **Key contact person (if any):**
- **Notes on the process:**

Document	Checklist	for	Registration/Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Passport / National ID Card		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Work Contract or Proof of Enrollment (Student)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of Sufficient Funds (for non-EU/non-workers)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of Health Insurance (from your Mutuelle/Ziekenfonds)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rental Agreement (Lease)		

- ☐ Passport-sized Photos (usually 2-3)
- ☐ Other:

Health Insurance (Mutuelle / Ziekenfonds)

Your Belgian health insurance is mandatory and crucial.

My **Provider:** **Policy** / **Mem-**
bership **Number:** **Customer** **Ser-**
vice **Phone:** **Local** **Branch** **Ad-**
dress:

How to get reimbursed:

! Important: Remember to stick the little coloured stickers from your mutuelle onto any medical forms you submit for reimbursement. Without them, your claim will be rejected.

Banking

My **Bank:**
Branch **Address:**
ager / **Helpful** **Contact:** **Account** **Man-**
Phone: **Customer** **Service**

Notes on my account(s) (e.g., card limits, special features):

Taxes

Key **Websites:** **MyMinfin.be** **Tax** **Advisor** **Name**
(if **applicable):** **Tax** **Advisor** **Con-**
tact:

Important Dates & Deadlines:

Part 2: Daily Life & Logistics

This is your manual for the day-to-day operations of living in Brussels.


Housing & Utilities

Rent due date: **Amount:**

Utility	Provider	Account/Customer Number
Electricity		
Gas		

Water		
Internet/TV		

Trash Collection Schedule

 **Tip:** Visit your commune's website or recycle.brussels to find the exact calendar for your street. The colour-coded bag system is very specific!

- **White Bag (General Waste):** Day:
- **Blue Bag (Plastic, Metal, Cartons):** Day:
- **Yellow Bag (Paper, Cardboard):** Day:
- **Green Bag (Garden Waste):** Day:
- **Orange Bag (Food Waste):** Day:

Transport

My MOBIB Card Number:

STIB/MIVB Customer Service: 070 23 20 00

Useful Apps: STIB/MIVB App, SNCB/NMBS App, Google Maps, Citymapper

My Regular Commutes & Routes:

- **Route 1 (e.g., Home to Work):**

- **Route 2 (e.g., Home to City Center):**

- **Route 3 (e.g., Home to Gym):**

Shopping

My Go-To Supermarkets:

- **For everyday basics:**
- **For fresh produce/quality meat:**
- **For international foods:**

My Favorite Outdoor Markets:

Market Name / Location	What It's Good For	Day(s) / Times
Ex: Marché du Midi	Everything! Huge, diverse, cheap produce	Sunday 7am-2pm

Part 3: Social, Food & Fun

This is the fun part! This section transforms Brussels from a place you live into a place you call home.

My “Go-To” Places

Log your favorite spots as you discover them. When you have a tough day, or friends are visiting, this list will be your best friend.

Favorite Cafés for Coffee or Reading:

Favorite Restaurants:

- For a special occasion:
- For a casual weeknight dinner:
- For the best pizza/sushi/etc.:

Favorite Friterie / Frietkot:

- Name: Location:
- My go-to order:

Favorite Bars:

- For a quiet drink:
- For meeting friends:
- For the best Belgian beer selection:

Favorite Parks & Green Spaces:

Clubs, Groups & Hobbies

List any groups you’ve joined or are interested in joining.

Group / Club Name	Website / Contact Info	Meeting Info

My Brussels Wishlist

Things I want to do, see, or try in and around Brussels.

- [] Visit the Atomium
- [] Do a brewery tour
- [] Explore the Sonian Forest
- []
- []
- []

Part 4: Language & Communication

A space to keep track of the practical language you learn on the streets, not just in a textbook.

Essential Vocabulary

English	French	Notes / When to use
Hello (formal)	Bonjour	Always polite


Hello (informal)	Salut	With friends, younger people
Please	S'il vous plaît / S'il te plaît	Formal / Informal
Thank you	Merci	
A coffee, please	Un café, s'il vous plaît	
The bill, please	L'addition, s'il vous plaît	
Do you speak English?	Parlez-vous anglais?	Good to ask first
I don't understand	Je ne comprends pas	

Note: In many parts of Brussels, you will also hear and see Dutch (Nederlands). “Hello” is “Hallo”, “Please” is “Alstublieft”, and “Thank you” is “Dank u wel”.

Brussels Slang & Phrases I've Learned

This is where you log the real language of Brussels.

- **Phrase/Word:** _____ **Meaning/**
Context: _____
- **Phrase/Word:** _____ **Meaning/**
Context: _____
- **Phrase/Word:** _____ **Meaning/**
Context: _____
- **Phrase/Word:** _____ **Meaning/**
Context: _____

 **Tip:** Example: “Non, peut-être?” - A sarcastic way of saying “Yes, of course!”. Or using “savoir” instead of “pouvoir” (e.g. “Tu sais me passer le sel?” instead of “Tu peux...”).

Part 5: My Brussels Network

A city feels smaller and friendlier when you know who to call. This isn't for your close friends, but for the helpful people who make life work.

The helpful person at the bank:

- **Name:** _____ **Contact:** _____

A good plumber:

- **Name:** _____ **Contact:** _____

A reliable electrician:

- **Name:** _____ **Contact:** _____

A trustworthy handyman:

- **Name:** _____ **Contact:** _____

My preferred taxi/driver service:

- **Name:** _____ **Contact:** _____

Other useful contacts (e.g., IT support, cleaner, etc.):

- **Service:**
- Contact:**
- **Service:**
- Contact:**

Name:**Name:**

How to Keep Your Playbook Alive

Your playbook is a powerful tool, but only if you use it. Here's how to make it a lasting habit.

Step-by-Step Guide

1. **Fill in the Basics:** Start by completing the “Quick Reference Sheet” and the “Admin & Bureaucracy” section with all the information you currently have.
2. **Add Your First Discoveries:** Think back over the last few weeks. What café did you enjoy? What park did you walk through? Add at least three places to the “Social, Food & Fun” section.
3. **Make it Accessible:** Decide where your playbook will live. If it's a printed document, keep it in an obvious place like your desk or kitchen counter. If it's digital, save it to your computer's desktop or a cloud service you use often.
4. **Schedule a Monthly Update:** Set a recurring 10-minute appointment in your calendar for the first Sunday of every month. Use this time to add new contacts, update information, and add new “go-to” spots.

Your Playbook Starter Checklist

- ☐ Complete the “Quick Reference Sheet”.
- ☐ Fill in all known details in the “Admin & Bureaucracy” section.
- ☐ Add at least one favorite spot to the “My Go-To Places” section.
- ☐ Add one new phrase to the “Language” section.
- ☐ Schedule your first monthly playbook update in your calendar.

You've Got This!

Creating this playbook is an act of taking control of your new life. You are building a foundation that will make your time in Brussels easier, more enjoyable, and less stressful. This is your personal guide to success, and you are more than capable of building it. Welcome home!