



A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR WOMEN REBUILDING LIFE

Starting Over in Dubai

Daily life essentials and small, manageable steps after abuse.

Start where you are

Starting again can mean finding a home, organising daily routines, protecting your privacy and making decisions when your energy is stretched. Use the pages that help you today; leave the rest for another time.

YOUR PACE IS ENOUGH

You do not need to complete every step at once. If a device or account may be monitored, consider using a safer device before saving this guide or contacting a service.

What is inside

Housing and moving costs / transport and utilities / health and work / family routines / support and a simple planning page.

A note on local details

Fees, eligibility and service arrangements can change. Check the provider directly before paying, signing, travelling or sharing personal details. This guide gives general information; a qualified local professional can advise on your circumstances.

Find immediate and specialist support on page 8

Finding a place to live

Think first about the daily journey and the people who need to reach you safely.

- Check the route to work, school or a metro stop, including school bus access and realistic travel time.
- Ask what is included in the rent: cooling or chiller, maintenance, parking, gas, internet and any move-in charges.
- Before signing, confirm the deposit, agency fee, payment schedule and tenancy registration process in writing.
- If contact with a former partner is a concern, discuss building access and privacy with the relevant security team.

BUDGET FOR THE FIRST MONTH

Rent and deposit; agency charges if applicable; Ejari registration; DEWA connection; cooling, gas and internet; essential furniture and transport.

Where to check the official process

The Dubai Land Department explains tenancy registration (Ejari), and DEWA explains electricity and water activation. Confirm current fees on those official pages.

Dubai Land Department: Ejari

DEWA: move-in service

Transport & the everyday

Choose the arrangement that fits your current budget and routine; it can change later.

Public transport

Dubai Metro and buses use the nol system. Check routes, fares and card options on the Roads and Transport Authority website before making a regular commute.

Taxis and car rental

Compare the full cost of taxis with a monthly rental. For a rental, ask what insurance, excess, maintenance, registration and roadside assistance are included.

If you own a car

Allow for insurance and registration renewals, fuel, tyres, a battery and servicing. Get written estimates from a licensed provider rather than relying on an informal recommendation.

ONE USEFUL QUESTION

What arrangement makes school, work, appointments and essential errands manageable this month?

RTA public transport and nol

Utilities & household basics

A short checklist helps turn a new space into a workable routine.

- Keep copies of your tenancy contract, Ejari, Emirates ID, visa, utility bills and important receipts in a place only you can access safely.
- Compare internet and mobile plans by total cost, contract length and cancellation terms. A prepaid mobile option may offer flexibility.
- Ask who is responsible for air-conditioning and plumbing repairs before arranging work.
- Prioritise essentials. Local second-hand and community groups can help with furniture or household items; protect your address and personal details when posting.

A simple life folder

Keep the contracts and documents you use most often together. Choose paper, a secure digital folder, or both according to what is safest for you.

MY FIRST THREE ESSENTIALS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Health, work & family

You can rebuild routines in small steps, with support suited to your situation.

Health cover

Read the policy before relying on a service. Check emergency care, mental health, dental care, medication, maternity cover and any exclusions. Ask an employer whether an employee assistance programme is available.

Work and income

Update your CV around the experience you have now. Consider which hours and commute fit your childcare arrangements. Keep copies of applications and employment terms.

Children and back-up care

Save a few trusted contacts for school collections or unexpected appointments. Confirm childcare arrangements and permissions directly with the provider.

QUESTIONS FOR LATER

What is most urgent this week? What could wait? Who can help with one practical task without increasing pressure or risk?

Residency, banking & money

The right steps depend on your visa, income, family circumstances and any court arrangements.

Residency and documents

Check your current visa status and sponsorship terms with the relevant authority or a qualified adviser before a change in employment or family status. Keep accessible copies of your passport, Emirates ID, visa, tenancy and insurance details.

Banking and commitments

Ask a bank directly about opening an account, account access, debts and payment arrangements. If another person can access an account or device, consider how to make enquiries safely. Do not assume that the same documents or conditions apply to every account.

A realistic monthly picture

List rent and utilities first, then transport, food, childcare, health cover and debt payments. Ask providers for written terms before committing to a plan.

QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING

Which documents are needed? What will the full cost be? What happens if my circumstances change? Can you confirm the answer in writing?

Support in the UAE

You can ask about your options without having to make a decision today.

IMMEDIATE DANGER

Call UAE Police on 999. For an ambulance, call 998. If it is unsafe to call from your own phone, seek a safer device or a trusted person nearby.

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children

DFWAC offers a free 24-hour helpline for women and children across the UAE. Call 800111 to ask about its services, urgent help and referrals.

DFWAC helpline

Other routes to advice

Your embassy or consulate, a trusted healthcare professional, an employer assistance programme, or a qualified local lawyer may help with distinct practical questions. Consider privacy before using a shared account or device.

SAFETY WITHOUT PRESSURE

The Liberated Woman offers information and coaching. It does not replace emergency services, legal advice or clinical care.

The next manageable step

You can use this page privately. There is no right order.

THE ONE THING I NEED TO SORT FIRST

SOMEONE I CAN CONTACT SAFELY

A QUESTION I WANT TO ASK A PROVIDER

A COST I NEED TO CONFIRM

REMEMBER

It is reasonable to ask for information, time, written terms and support. You get to decide what happens next.

Useful official links

These links were checked in September 2026. Recheck local services and fees when you use the guide.

UAE emergency numbers

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children

Dubai Land Department: Ejari

DEWA: electricity and water move-in

Dubai RTA: nol

The Liberated Woman supports women living overseas with clarity, education and practical guidance. Explore current support and resources at theliberatedwoman.com.