

101 things to do on Home Assignment

(in no particular order)

- Get some theological training on a short course
- Have a reunion with all your relatives
- Check the state of your house
- Get your children into a school and prepare them for the bullying, indiscipline and swearing they may encounter
- Have a full medical
- Review your finances
- Get a new laptop
- Report back to your prayer partners
- Update your will if your circumstances have changed
- Top up your injections ☺
- Hand out gifts from your host country to your friends and supporters
- Join a house group at church
- Check your National Insurance and get a Pensions Forecast
- Be prepared for some loss of identity as you're no longer a key person in your community
- Have a review with your church leaders
- Help your kids understand that Christians in your country may think and behave differently from those on the field, possibly in ways that may not appear 'Christian' in their eyes
- Get to know people who've been on HA before and understand how hard it can be
- Catch up on your favourite music
- Get some professional training to make sure your skills are up to date
- Visit organisations which may be able to support your ministry
- Arrange a re-commissioning service
- Post yourself some little treats so they'll be there in your host country for you
- Spend time asking God what he wants you to do when you get back
- Visit the dentist ☺
- Be ready to do all your own cleaning and cooking as you won't be able to afford help
- Say goodbye to your friends and family, especially elderly relatives you may not see again
- Have a presentation evening (with food!) for your supporters to hear what you've been doing
- Get supplies of prescription medicines to take back with you
- Warn teachers that your children may not understand basic concepts familiar to other kids (e.g. What's a creme egg?)
- Make sure your prayer support group knows how much you appreciate them
- Get to know the people who have joined your church since you went abroad
- Attend a Christian conference
- Update your address book

- Have a SMALL photo album to show people about your life abroad – where you live/work /worship etc
- Take one or two 'comfort blankets' to help you transition
- Re-engage in a favourite hobby
- Invite your pastor/elders/missions secretary to come and visit you
- Visit all your church's house groups to get to know people and let them get to know you
- Check your passport is still valid and apply for a visa well in advance
- Report back to your sending agency
- Remember not to spill your life story in the first five minutes of meeting someone new, as mission partners have been known to appear arrogant and self-obsessed
- Do a retreat, particularly one aimed at people like you
- Get well acquainted with new church leaders
- Earn some money
- If your kids are going into school, help them find out what clothes they should wear, bag they should carry, music they should listen to and tv they should watch so that they don't get laughed at
- Prepare one or two short but pithy stories which encapsulate your life and ministry
- Read books by missionaries
- Spend significant amounts of time with all your supporting churches, not just a Sunday morning
- Do a presentation at church about your ministry
- Catch up on the latest technology
- Book your flights through a missions supporting travel agent to get extra baggage allowance
- Check your pension arrangements are up to date
- Have a full debrief
- Don't assume your kids know how to use things like buses, cashpoints, or oyster cards
- Go on holiday – TWICE!
- Seriously consider whether it's working out and you're doing God's will