

MOVING TIPS

Getting Organized

1. Start early — Almost everyone has more stuff than they think they do, and almost no one leaves enough time to pack it.
2. Room Lists — Start by forming two room lists, one for your current place and one for your future place. This will help you manage what has to go where.
3. Room Inventory — Go to each room and write down the types of things that need to be packed: furniture items, length of shelving, closets, etc.
4. Time Allotment — The most common timeframe reported by people moving is that it takes a month to pack. One study reported that it takes 4-5 hours to pack an average small room, so that should give you an idea of what's involved.
5. Use a calendar and plan by day when each room will be completed.
6. If you're moving with family members, agree with them exactly while tasks they will be doing and the date they will be finished.
7. Track your progress — at least once per week track where you are against the date on the calendar. Revise the plan if you're falling behind.

Finding Great Movers

1. When you choose to hire professional movers, do your research and hire good ones. Poor quality movers really can be worse than none at all.
2. Get referrals from friends who have moved recently.
3. Only consider movers that are licensed, bonded and insured.
4. Investigate your potential movers through the Better Business Bureau, the U.S. Department of Transportation and MovingScam-dot-com.
5. Ask for In-home estimates, use a minimum of three movers in-home estimates of goods to be moved.
6. Low price isn't the only factor, an extremely low bid could indicate a desperate or unprofessional mover.
7. "Binding Not-To-Exceed" — Ask for written "Binding Not-To-Exceed" estimates.

General Packing Tips

1. Pack a suitcase for each family member as if you're all going on a short vacation, including changes of clothes, medications, eyeglasses, toiletries, etc. Keep the suitcases separated from all the other items to be moved, such as in your car, at your new workplace, etc. so you'll have everything you need for the first few days without searching through boxes.
2. Create open me first boxes, one or two boxes per room. Put in them the things you'll need first at your new location. Then mark the sides of the boxes so you'll know which ones are which.
3. Wherever possible, work on packing just one room at a time to keep things focused and organized.
4. Use packing as an opportunity to clean out belongings for donations and garage sales. Aim to eliminate unnecessary items, saving time and expense.
5. Use a completely cleared-off table top or counter in each room for packing boxes. You'll find you get much more accomplished.

6. When taking apart items to be moved, such as tables, securely tape screws and other small parts securely to the underside of the item. You'll always know where to look and save time putting things back together.

7. Use towels, pillows and t-shirts you're packing as extra padding around fragile items. It will save room in your boxes.

8. Tape boxes along the seams where the flaps meet together. Then tape perpendicularly at the center of the first tape, forming a cross.

9. Stack boxes with the heaviest on the bottom, lightest on top to prevent crushing.

10. The 30-pound rule — Keep each box below 50 pounds absolute maximum and below 30 pounds wherever possible.

Packing Electronics

1. Use a digital or cell phone camera to take pictures of how complicated wiring (computer cords, speaker wires) are hooked up. Referencing them will make their set up in your new place much easier.

2. Use original packaging when available.

3. Use at least 2" of packing materials around each side of fragile items.

Box Inventory and Labeling

1. Start box labels with the name of the room followed by a box number, such as "Bathroom 1 of 4", 2 of 4, etc. You can then track each box to make sure everything arrived safely.

2. Label open Me first on boxes.

3. Mark "Fragile" where appropriate.

4. Identify the major contents and where they came from, such as "Medicine Cabinet" or "Linen Closet — Towels and Wash Cloths."

5. Keep a box Inventory and write down each box's room, box number and contents.

6. When unloading, check off each box as it gets unloaded at your new place. Then you'll know everything arrived safely.

7. Ask your movers to stack boxes in your new place with the labels facing out so that you can easily spot a specific box.

Letting People Know

1. File your change of address with the Post Office at least 30 days prior to the date of the move.

2. Get copies of your existing records (transcripts from schools, medical records from doctors, etc.) while you're notifying the changes of address.

Change of Address; Notify

1. Accountant/tax preparer; Alumni associations; Attorneys

2. Banks (auto loans, checking accounts, credit cards, home equity, IRA's, mortgage, safe deposit box, savings account).

3. Cell phone provider; Child care/ daycare; Chiropractor; Courts, especially for traffic tickets or local disputes; Credit bureaus; Credit card issuers

4. Doctor; Department of Motor Vehicles; Dentist

5. Family members and friends

6. Insurance providers (auto, health, life, other vehicles); IRS (form 8822)

7. Magazine subscriptions

8. Parent-teacher association; Passport; Pharmacy Physical therapist; Physician; Post office; Professional organizations.

9. Schools (get copies of transcripts); Social Security Administration.

10. If you have pets, your veterinarian. Get vet records and recommendations

Moving With Kids

1. Talk to your kids about the move often, look for a children's story on moving for smaller kids. When it's appropriate and safe involve them.
2. If appropriate, let children pick their room.
3. If possible, let kids pick a decoration (poster, light switch, name banner, etc.) for their new room.
4. Pack a kid's sized suitcase and let each child pick out a special toy to keep with them and a special outfit to wear on "new home day."
5. Consider unpacking the kids' rooms first, or at least their some of their boxes to help them settle in.

Open Me First Box: The Kitchen

1. Aluminum foil or plastic wrap
2. Break-proof or disposable flatware, cups, and plates
3. Coffee maker and coffee (don't forget the filters!)
4. Dish detergent
5. Frying pan and spatula
6. Pet food and bowls
7. Scissors
8. Tea kettle

Open Me First Box: Main Bathroom

1. Bath mat
2. Bath towels
3. First-aid kit (aspirin, band-aids, hydrogen peroxide)
4. Shampoo
5. Shower curtain and rings
6. Soap
7. Toilet paper
8. Toothbrushes and toothpaste

Open Me First Box: Tool Room or Drawer

1. Duct tape
2. Flashlight
3. Flat-head screwdriver
4. Hammer
5. Level
6. Phillips-head screwdriver
7. Picture hangers
8. Tape measure
9. Utility knife

Moving Day

1. Start early — You want to have everything as organized as possible prior to the arrival of the movers.

2. Use sitters — Recruit help in watching your small kids and pets on Moving Day. Your attention will be needed for the nuts and bolts of the move.
3. Have food ready — Whether you have professional movers or friends and family, having coffee, orange juice, and bagels or donuts available will make it easier for everyone to get started.
4. Cell phone numbers — Make sure you have the cell phone number of the driver of the truck entered into your cell phone, and that the driver has yours in case you get separated or have a problem.
5. Directions — Have directions and a map ready for anyone will be driving between your old place and your new place.

Unpacking

1. Have a plan for unpacking. Otherwise you're likely to end up frustrated with a sea of half-opened boxes with your necessities still missing.
2. Prioritize Rooms and focus on boxes you would open first, think bathrooms and kitchen first.
3. Have trash and recyclable boxes ready to dispose trash and store and save any reuseable packing materials available before you start the heavy unpacking.
4. Set a goal of unpacking a certain number of boxes each day until all the boxes are all unpacked.