



Get Moving

Ten tips for a successful move.

Before the move:

1) Prioritize your possessions. Look at every item before you pop it in the box. Don't pack anything you don't love. Take the treasures and anything useful and donate or toss the rest. If you can't decide, ask yourself if you care enough about the item to pay good money to move it. That usually tips the scales.

Then group possessions into four piles:

- Pack it.
- Return it. *Items that belong to family members, friends or the library.*
- Dump it. *Recycling as much as possible, of course.*
- Donate or sell it. *Look in the Yellow pages for charities that can pick-up your donations.*

2) Choose a mover and a method. There are several ways to move. Factor in things like the distance you're moving, the amount of possessions you're moving, the strength of your back and your budget. If you decide to pay professionals, ask friends or acquaintances for a referral and get a few bids.

- Do it yourself. Borrow a truck or rent a U-haul. Enlist friends and family to help keep the costs low.
- You move all but the largest and most cumbersome pieces. On our last move, professionals moved the armoire, piano, bookcases and other large pieces, we moved the rest.
- You pack and load and they drive. This alleviates the concern about driving a big truck and is less expensive than paying for full service. This might be a good option if you're moving far away.
- Full service. They box, drive and move it all for you. Get a binding estimate with a "not to exceed" clause. Who needs surprises at the end?

3) Pack carefully. Take an inventory as you are packing, in case you need to file an insurance claim later.

- Pack the boxes evenly with the heavy stuff on the bottom.
- Use packing paper, its what the pro's use. Unprinted newspaper is sold in 10-25 lb. packs and is recyclable when you're done.
- Remember the *like with like* rule. Keep items from the same room together, don't mix rooms.
- Label the boxes with the contents and the room destination. Clearly mark fragile boxes so that they can be loaded at the end.
- Avoid overloading the boxes. Banker boxes are a nice uniform size and it's difficult to over pack them. Keep each box under 50 pounds.

- Tape it well.

4) *Slow and steady wins the race.* Moving takes time and planning. If you wait until the last minute, it'll be much more stressful. Don't wait to pack until a day or two before you move. I've had friends who were still frantically boxing as we were loading up the truck. Don't put that kind of pressure on yourself. The closer you get to moving day, the more rushed and careless you'll become. That will just cause more aggravation when you're un-boxing.

Pack a box or two every day and you'll be amazed how much you'll get done. It will relieve so much stress if you take the time to work from a master list, purge the items that won't be moving with you and plan the room arrangement for the new location.

5) *Build a book.* Keep your master to-do list on a clipboard or in a binder, so that you have the important information with you when you need it. Include the to-do list, checklists, floor plans, contact information for your moving company and any other important information. Break it down by room and include any tear sheets from magazines.

6) *Hook and Unhook.* List all of the services that you need to contact about your change of address. These are the most common:

- Electric, phone, cable, garbage, water and gas companies.
- Post Office (this can be done online at www.usps.gov), family and friends.
- Banks, insurance companies, credit card companies and the IRS. (Call 1-800-829-1040 for a change of address form.)
- Contact schools, doctor and dentist and transfer necessary records.
- Newspaper and magazines.

On Moving Day:

7) *Pack a survival kit.* This is a kit that goes with you, not the movers. Include the essentials like light bulbs and cleaning supplies, but also bring important family records and jewelry. Here's a more complete list:

- Garbage bags.
- Cleaning supplies, rags, paper towels and a broom.
- Kitchen utensils and food for snacks.
- Toilet paper and personal items.
- Linens for your bed and an alarm clock.
- Tools to re-assemble furniture or to hang pictures.
- Important documents and sensitive financial information.
- Medications.
- Mover's contract and their payment.
- Your moving to-do list clipboard or file.

Before you leave walk through the house one last time to make sure nothing was forgotten.

8) *Pack a tool belt.* Use a carpenter's belt to hold tape, pens, tape measure, packing knife and more. You'll feel so efficient when you aren't constantly searching for these items!

At the new place:

9) Handle everything once. This tip is an adaptation of the old office management rule. Once you arrive at your new home, unpack one box at a time, putting everything away before opening the next box.

10) Purge before and after. As you unpack, you may find things that will not fit in the new location. That's OK. It's hard to predict where every item will go before you make the move. Don't be too hard on yourself. It happens to everyone.

Remember that moving is all about attitude. Sure, moving can be stressful but if you approach it as an adventure you'll have a better experience. Just remind yourself that you're moving on to the next chapter of your life!

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