



## A painless move...

Four years ago our family decided to move. This was a big decision for us. We had absolutely outgrown our space. Moving seemed like a daunting task, particularly to my husband. He hadn't relocated in 17 years and *hated* the idea of moving. I reasoned, cajoled and finally persuaded him that we could move *and* it could be relatively painless.

I knew that since I had won this battle, I had better deliver on my promise of a painless transition. I knew it wouldn't be easy. I had a 3 ½ and 5 year old underfoot. I knew I had to have a plan.

I had never moved a family before. Moving myself was a no-brainer. I had it done it many times, once with short notice. I just kept my Dad and brother, and their two pick up trucks on retainer.

This was different. Now there were three people counting on me. There was so much more volume. What if a favorite blankie or a toy was lost in one of 100 boxes?

### **This was my plan:**

- 1) Declutter the town home. Room by room, closet by closet, I edited our possessions. There are two good reasons for this: there is less to move; and, a clutter-free house sells better.
- 2) Drop off donations.
- 3) Follow the steps listed in the book, Dress Your House for Success by Martha Webb. She suggested doing five things to bring top dollar for your home:
  - \*Uncluttering
  - \* Cleaning
  - \* Repairing
  - \* Neutralizing
  - \* Dynamizing
- 4) Box possessions and label them with their intended destination. Some of it was

easy. Kitchen to kitchen. Some changed. The boys had been sharing a bedroom. Now they would have a toy room and bedroom. Each room was assigned a color. I taped 3x5 colored cards to the boxes, so that you could tell where the box was headed at a glance.

5) I got permission to take measurements in the new house, so that I could draw up floor plans. I made notations regarding outlets, radiators, windows and doors. I drew everything to scale and then began plotting furniture. This enabled me to know what we would need. A lamp, a rug and a sofa were ordered before we moved. Once I decided where the furniture would go I started working on the smaller details.

6) I made a list of all of the storage racks, bookcases and basket systems that we owned. I decided where each would be placed and what items would be stored on or in them.

7) I made a “to-do list” of things that needed to be done in the new house.

8) I created a Project Book that was divided into sections. There was a section for each room in the new house. I included the floor plan and pictures of the furniture that would be located in that room. I also collected paint chips, magazine articles and furniture ads that I thought might be helpful. Anything that gave me inspiration for that room ended up in that section.

9) Our realtor gave us some very helpful forms. One was a checklist of services to cancel at the old house and set up at the new. Mail, phone, gas, electric, water, garbage and recycling were the main services for us. I also changed addresses for magazines and stopped and restarted the newspaper.

We had the luxury of one week between closings. We hadn't planned it that way. At first, we were bummed. In the end it turned out to be a blessing.

Since we were only moving one mile, we relied on family for help with the move. We did hire professionals for 15 large and cumbersome pieces. When the movers delivered the furniture I had them put it exactly where I wanted it. Because I had planned it on paper first, I was able to say, “that bookcase belongs 12” from the corner and flush against the wall.” The mover laughed and said, “Most people just say, ‘Pile it up over there.’”

Once in the new house, we used the to-do list. We removed shelves, painted and cleaned. We solicited help from our families for some of the painting and cleaning. We then put the storage racks and basket systems in the correct areas and put stuff away in the assigned bin, basket or drawer. I will admit that we worked very long days. Sometimes we started at 7am and finished at 11pm. But the payoff was huge. Two weeks after the closing, friends dropped by and said, “It looks like you've lived here for years.”

This is the short list of my favorite moving secrets:

1. **Banker boxes.** They are cheap, strong, hard to overfill and they stack neatly. I've continued to use them after the move.

2. **Project book.** It is so nice to have this information at your fingertips. The notebook is easy to carry along when shopping. We continue to use this book long after the move.

3. **Plotting out organizing racks** and bins ahead of time is a great time saver.

4. **Paint before moving.** If this is even a remote possibility, make it happen! It is so much easier to paint when you don't have to work around furniture and boxes. If you get too settled, you may never do it.

My husband just read this and said, "This *still* feels like a daunting task." If you agree with him and would like some help, give me a call. I'd love to help you move.