

Minimizing Moving Nightmares

Checklist to make your local move smooth and stress-free

6-8 weeks out

- Establish a timeline for the move so you don't get overwhelmed.
- Begin collecting/buying boxes and packaging supplies.
- If you will be hiring movers, begin researching and collecting quotes.
- Begin sorting through basement and attics to purge out items you can toss or donate.
- Have adult children pick up any items/memories that belong to them.
- Start a bin and fill it with the essentials for packing boxes – tape, scissors, paper to label, colored stickers. This bin will float with you as you pack.
- Designate a place where you will begin to stack packed boxes.
- Buy colored labels so you can label your boxes by color based on their contents and final destination. Red=Kitchen, Green=office, Yellow=storage, etc.
- Label boxes to identify contents. Try to pack similar items in one box.
- Begin packing seasonal items and areas of the house that are not in the common living space.
- Host a garage sale or arrange for bulk trash pick-up, if needed. Moving less items will be beneficial in the long run.
- Get measurements of rooms in your new home so you can start planning for furniture and storage. Don't move items that don't fit in the new space.
- If your current home is on the market, make a list of what needs to be done each time you prep for a showing to be sure it looks clutter free.
- Create a Quick Reference folder for moving related expenses and notes. Some expenses may be tax-deductible. When things start to get hectic, you'll have one go-to folder for all your contact info and documents.

3-4 weeks out

- Contact insurance company to schedule transfer of home owners coverage.
- Make a list of the places you will need to contact to let them know that you will have a change of address (school, church, work, credit cards, subscriptions, drivers license, etc). You may have to wait until closer to move date for some locations, but if you have a list, you won't forget any of the important places.
- Reserve movers for moving date (if using).
- Schedule utility and cable providers to turn on/off services.
- Get additional insurance coverage for the move of valuable items. Take photos of items, pre move.
- Schedule any services -- repairs, improvements, painters -- so they can get into the new home and make repairs before you arrive.
- Continue to pack boxes of items you don't use on a daily basis.
- Make weekly trips to drop off goods you are donating. Don't take it with you if you don't use it.
- Have a landing zone for all the appliance manuals and items that will stay with the current house.
- Start an "open first" bin that has the essential items you will need on day one in your new home and allow you to live for 1-3 days if you don't get all the boxes unpacked right away. (i.e. essential documents, keys, toilet paper, hand/dish soap, all-purpose cleaner, paper towels, rags, trash bags, towels and other bathroom essentials, bed linens, plastic utensils and plates, medications, an emergency kit, scissors, basic tools, bottle opener, pet items, games, charger cords, etc.)

2 weeks out

- Call friends or relatives to see if they can help on the day of the move.
- Arrange for daycare for your children for the day of the move.
- Contact the Post Office to have your mail forwarded.
- Pack a bag of clothes/toiletries for each person as if you're going on a two-week trip. Pack the rest in boxes to be moved.
- Begin cleaning rooms that have been emptied.
- Plan meals to use remaining food items.
- Contact landlord or realtor to confirm when you will pick up the keys.
- Continue to pack boxes everyday. Separate out valuables to be sure you keep track of them in the move. Recommended that you identify boxes that YOU move in your vehicle, such as jewelry and valuables.

1 week out

- Check secret hiding spots for items that are out of site (hidden keys, safes, hidden spaces in the attic)
- Clean the new home. Wipe out cupboards, drawers, and closets.
- Plug in appliances at new home so they are ready when you arrive.
- Mow the lawn one last time at current house.
- Pack final belongings and bedding. (put bedding in "open first" box)
- Label furniture so movers know which room at the new home to put the items.
- Continue to clean areas of the current house as rooms/cupboards are emptied.

Day of Move

- Put the fragile items/boxes in a separate area so you are sure to move those yourself.
- Have plenty of water on hand for people helping.
- Do final cleaning.
- Post a list at the new home to identify the color coding of the box labels so that movers can put the boxes in the correct room. Saves time when unpacking and looking for items. In addition to a list, post colors outside each room to make it easy for all the helping hands.
- Be sure to leave the proper keys, alarm codes, and garage door openers behind.
- Have payment ready for movers.
- Unplug the fridge/defrost freezer.
- Turn off all the lights and lock doors.
- Take a picture of the family in front of the house for a final memento!

If you are making a long-distance move, be sure to: notify and collect school records, transfer medical records, set up new bank accounts, take inventory of belongings, obtain proper insurance, clear out storage units and safety deposit boxes, look up new city ordinances, etc.

