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FORWARD

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One of the biggest changes you can make in life is moving to a new home. The average person will move about 11 times throughout his or her life, and 40 million people are said to move each year. With so many people relocating so often, there is no denying the impact that moving has on everyone.

While moving is itself a big change, the need to relocate is often due to changes in a person's life. A newly married couple trying to start a family might want to move into a larger house, while parents whose children have grown up and moved out may want to downsize to a smaller condo. Some less joyous life events, like divorce or the death of a family member, are other reasons for relocating.

Aside from these family-related reasons, there are plenty of other life changes that cause people to move. A college student who plans to live on campus will have to move. A member of the military could be assigned to a station on the other side of the country. Senior citizens who can no longer live on their own might decide to move to an assisted living facility. Additionally, a company may want to relocate an employee to another location or move its entire office to a new building. All of these changes can result in the need to move.

But the reasons for relocating are far from limited to the list above. Each individual move is different, and so may be the reason why a particular person needs to move. In addition, the destination that people move to is also a major part of their own moving story. Moves are generally classified into the categories of local, long distance, and international, each with its own share of specific challenges.

Whatever your reason for moving and no matter where you need to go, a major change in life like relocating should not be taken lightly. And that is exactly why Movers.com created this eBook.

When going through a move, the best thing you can do is be prepared. The goal of this book is to prepare you for each step of the move, giving you insider tips and advice on how to make your relocation as smooth as possible. Throughout the book, we'll provide you not only with useful moving knowledge, but also specific links where you can find even more information as you prepare for your move.

There is only one Movers.com, and we're happy to share our in-depth expertise in the moving realm. If you need any additional help or advice that isn't in this book, please feel free to give us a call (1-866-343-1243) or send an e-mail (contactus@movers.com), and we'll answer any moving-related questions you have.

TYPES OF MOVES

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HOUSEHOLD MOVING

Household relocations involve a person or family relocating from one house, apartment, or condo to another one. This is the most common type of move and can be one of the most complicated. That's because there will often be an entire family's worth of belongings that have to be transported to a new home. That process can certainly be a [challenge](#), but moving can also be a great adventure and chance for a fresh start.



Image by rhansman, sxc.hu

SENIOR MOVING



Image by siulesoj, sxc.hu

Sometimes, senior citizens can no longer live on their own. This may be due to the health or mobility concerns of a senior's doctors or family members, or a conscious decision a senior makes on his or her own. Thus, the senior will often have to move to an assisted living facility, where they can have better access to medical services and other important facilities. Keeping these sometimes delicate situations in mind, senior moving companies take all the necessary precautions to ensure the move goes successfully.

There are several moving companies specializing in senior moves. Additionally, there are many organizations that provide oversight for such sensitive moves. Some of the services offered by these senior moving professionals include the following:

- [Assistance in finding a new home, based on individual needs](#)
- Creating an inventory of all belongings
- Moving all furniture to the new location or to a storage facility
- Help with liquidating any unneeded physical assets
- [Aid in putting old home up for sale](#)

Tip: Generally among the 4-5 estimates that you keep for comparison, two are very close to each other in terms of weight, price and services. Choose any of these and avoid the extreme ends, either high or low.

TYPES OF MOVES

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STUDENT MOVING

Whether moving into a [dorm or an off-campus](#) apartment, students moving away to college may need professional movers to help them get there. Since students don't usually have that many belongings, it might not be logical to hire a full service moving company (not to mention the cost involved). Indeed, the main concern for students on the move is usually the cost.

Thankfully, many moving companies offer services geared specifically to students. These can include:

- The use of a small truck so students don't have to pay for a larger one.
- You could have an empty trailer delivered to your home, which can be packed at your convenience and then [delivered](#) to your dorm or apartment.
- Moving companies often have coupons and discounts for students on the move.



Image by omar_franc, sxc.hu

MILITARY MOVES



Image by coloniera2, sxc.hu

Military families are often on the move. Due to changes of station, deployment, or other reasons, moving is a fact of life for those involved in the military. Though military families are likely to receive financial assistance for the move, any type of move can still be stressful.

Fortunately, your Installation Relocation Office can help you find a moving company that's well versed in moving our military heroes all over the world.

When undergoing a military move, there are a few things to take into consideration:

- You'll need to use a moving company approved by the General Service Administration (GSA).
- A military move requires the military person to work closely with the Relocation Office and the moving company of choice.
- Find out how much allowance you have to cover the cost of the move and whether you'll be responsible for any overages.

Tip: Full service move and self-move both have pros and cons. While in the full-service move you can just sit back and let the professionals handle everything, in self move from packing to moving, all you have to do.

TYPES OF MOVES

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CORPORATE MOVES

Corporate moves occur for a wide variety of [reasons](#). Maybe someone got a new job on the other side of the country. Maybe a new promotion comes with the chance to relocate to another location. Or maybe an entire department or branch has to move to a new office in another city.

Whatever the case may be, corporate moves can be more complicated than regular household moves. Even if the company pays for some or all of the costs of relocating, a corporate move can still be stressful. Here are some other things that can make a corporate move so challenging:

- That job offer or promotion could be very sudden, leaving you with little time to [prepare](#).
- Corporate relocations often have tight time frames - you'll have to be moved in and ready start work within a short period of time.
- In addition to the above reasons, or because of them, a corporate move can be especially difficult on your family.



Image by ctr, sxc.hu

Tip: Create inventory by taking down the serial and model numbers of the electronic items or use video camera for creating office inventory and share it with the insurance agent before securing it in a fireproof box.

TYPES OF MOVES

(By Distance)

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Whether undergoing a household, senior, student, military, or corporate relocation, your move will be further categorized by distance. Depending on where your new home is in relation to your old one, your move will fall into one of the following [categories](#):

LOCAL MOVES

A local move is any move that is within a single state and under a certain number of miles. Different moving companies have varying standards for what they consider a local move, but usually they range from under 50 miles to under 100 miles.

Though you may not be moving far away, local moves still require a lot of planning and attention to detail. Whether you are just moving down the street or moving across the state, your [local move](#) is just as important.



Image by konr4d, sxc.hu

LONG DISTANCE MOVES



Image by jcsilveira, sxc.hu

Any move that is over 50 or 100 miles within the same state is considered a [long distance move](#). If a relocation involves moving to another state, regardless of the distance to the new home, this will be considered a long distance move as well.

These moves are a little more complicated than local moves. Since you will be traveling a longer distance and/or crossing state lines, there are more things to keep in mind. For instance, since your goods will be traveling a longer distance, you'll want to take extra care when packing them. Furthermore, if your move involves crossing state lines, you'll need to make sure your moving company can operate in all the states involved.

Tip# You have to inform your mover of the flight of stairs, elevators when you are charged for per man/per hour which is rather common than getting charged on the basis of volume or weight or distance in the move.

TYPES OF MOVES

(By Distance)

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INTERNATIONAL MOVES

As its name suggests, an [international move](#) is any move that goes from one country to another. In fact, any move that crosses national borders, such as going through Canada to get to Alaska, is considered to be an international move. This also applies to those who are moving to Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

International moves are the most complicated type. Unlike local and long distance moves, you'll have to deal with the customs process as well as the [policies and regulations](#) of your destination country. Aside from that, moving to another country often involves a long adjustment period.



Image by linder6580, sxc.hu



Tip: Be aware and informed thoroughly of the custom regulations before the move which may require you to produce proof of ownership and that may also dictate the number and type of goods you are allowed to transport.

PREPARING FOR THE MOVE

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DETERMINE IF MOVING IS THE RIGHT DECISION

Sometimes, moving is unavoidable. For whatever reason, you may have no other option than to move to a new home. But, for many people, [making the decision](#) to move is perhaps one of the hardest decisions in life to make.

Transitioning your life from one home to another is hard enough. The idea of leaving familiar surroundings and getting used to a new neighborhood or even a new culture makes the prospect of moving even more challenging. On the other hand, moving presents the opportunity to start over. Whether you are faced with the prospect of moving for professional reasons, personal preferences, or just for a change of scenery, moving gives you the chance to make a new start.



Image by lusi, sxc.hu

Whatever the cause or reason for considering a move, there will be many things to take into account:

Finances - Perhaps the biggest factor in deciding to move or not will be your [financial situation](#). It's not just the cost of the move itself that you'll need to focus on, though. You'll need to be sure you can afford your new rent or mortgage payments as well as additional costs of living.



Check out the Movers.com's [mortgage](#) and [renting vs. owning](#) calculators to help you determine how much you can afford.

Stress - When you move, you are essentially uprooting your life and transplanting it somewhere else. Even the smallest details of such a process can be frustrating. From making all the arrangements and packing your goods to getting your utilities connected at the new home, moving takes a lot of hard work. Before deciding to move, make sure you can handle the intense pressure that moving can create.

Culture Shock - In addition to the typical stress a move can cause, as described above, the idea of moving to a new place can be just as challenging. Starting a new life in an unfamiliar place can be pretty scary, especially if you don't know anyone there. Whether moving to a different country or even to a new state or city, your move can result in some [culture shock](#). Deciding whether you can live in an unfamiliar environment, away from familiar people, is a big decision.

Tip: Moving is a very stressful undertaking which can take its toll on your behavior and mood badly. Be sure to keep some emotional support and reliable people in the volunteer team that will assist you on moving day.

PREPARING FOR THE MOVE

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FINDING A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding a new neighborhood is the first step toward finding your new home. At this stage in the moving process, you'll need to decide not just on what you want out of a future home, but also what you want out of a community.



Image by bjearwicke, sxc.hu

When [looking for a neighborhood](#), you'll have to choose whether you want urban, suburban, or rural surroundings. Some other considerations will be about such amenities as public transportation, parks, hospitals, and other important features. Here are some other things you'll want to consider before deciding on a neighborhood to relocate to:

Property Values - Every neighborhood has its own unique set of property values; the nicer the neighborhood, the higher the property value. This is certainly an important aspect to look into for any location you consider. For example, you'll want to know what the current value is as well as any future developments in the neighborhood that could affect property values in the long run.

Cost of Living - You should find out the cost of living for any neighborhood you consider moving to. If the cost of living is too high in a neighborhood you like, it may not be worth it to move there, regardless of property value. To help you determine the cost of living in any town, you can use one of several websites offering cost-of-living calculators, such as [this one](#) on Movers.com.

Crime Rates - Though a crime can technically occur at any time and at any place, it is no secret that certain areas are more susceptible to crime than others. Before settling on a neighborhood, check its [crime report](#). If your desired location checks out okay, you may be more encouraged to move there. On the other hand, if a neighborhood has an unexpectedly high [crime rate](#), then you might want to consider other locations.

School Systems - If you have kids, then finding a neighborhood with top-notch [schools](#) is likely to be a priority. You'll want to know which type of school (like public, private, independent or charter) you'd like your children to attend. Some other points to consider are the quality of education of each school, the ratio of students to teachers, and the extracurricular activities offered.



Image by svilen001, sxc.hu



You can find out more about the schools in a particular area by contacting a member of the Parent Teacher Association or by speaking with a representative of the local school district.

Tip: Chalk out a plan to know every aspect of the neighborhood you are moving to. Keep at least two months in hand to research on the culture, jobs, school, entertainment options, and cost of living of the new locality.

PREPARING FOR THE MOVE

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Obviously, there are many things to take into account before deciding on a neighborhood. The above list is just a sampling of what may be important to you as you look for a new community to live in. The best way to find a neighborhood that meets your needs is to make a list of the qualities most important to you. Then, you can investigate different neighborhoods until you find one that best matches your criteria.

FINDING A NEW HOME

Once you have decided to move, you'll need to find a new place to live. Whether you're looking to buy or rent, or live in the city or suburbs, you can easily get overwhelmed in the search for a new home. While the decisions on your most basic housing needs might be easier to make (e.g., how many rooms you need, which amenities are most important, etc.), picking a particular neighborhood and the actual home you want can take much longer.

The process of finding a home can be made much easier if you decide to use the help of a [real estate agent](#). You can use the services of a real estate agent to help you find a place within your price range and assist you with all of the necessary paperwork.

There are many ways to find a real estate agent, as listed below:



Image by svilen001, sxc.hu



Image by Szorstki, sxc.hu

Search online - Perhaps the easiest way to find a real estate agent is to look online for various websites and directories listing real estate agencies in the area you wish to move to. Once you locate an agency that meets your requirements, you can search the agency's website to find an individual agent.



Though you may be tempted to select an agent with a lot of experience, they will often have to juggle many clients. A newer agent is likely to have more time to spend working with you.

Get Referrals - Instead of trying to find an agency on your own, you can always talk to friends and relatives who have recently bought a home with the help of an agent. By getting a recommendation for a specific agent, you can feel more comfortable letting him or her help you in your search for a new home.

Tip: You may sell your house before moving. Gather information of the real estate market in your area before you decide on the price. Checking online listing and taking a tour of the present neighborhood will help.

PREPARING FOR THE MOVE

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Go to Open Houses - To experience firsthand the services of a real estate agent, without committing to hiring one, you can go to an open house in your community. This way, you can see how certain agents work and how focused they are on selling homes. If you like how a particular agent works, be sure to ask for his or her business card and consider hiring them. Should the agent make a half-hearted attempt at selling the home, leave your options open.

Explore the Neighborhood - You could locate a real estate agency by looking at real estate signs in your neighborhood. By monitoring the time between when the sign gets put up to when the house gets sold, you may have a better sense of the effectiveness of various real estate agents and agencies in your location.

Read the Newspaper - Though most real estate listings and agent information can be found online, many agencies still use printed advertisements. Check your Sunday newspaper to find the listings of individual properties and to get the names of real estate agents in your area. You can then search online to find the agents' profiles or call them to discuss their experiences and services offered.



Image by bizior, sxc.hu

It will be very hard to [find a home](#) on your own. That's why you should employ the services of a real estate agent. Since he or she will be experienced in matching people up to the right home, you can trust your agent to help you find the home that best meets your needs.

Tip: Collect the necessary utility service provider's number and other important numbers in your new neighborhood prior to moving. A map and a telephone book of the new locality will help a lot in this regard.

FINDING A MOVER

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HOW TO FIND A MOVER

Finding a moving company to carry out your move can be challenging. Since you'll count on the movers to transport your entire household from one home to another, you want to make sure you hire a reliable moving company with a solid reputation. The best way to do that is by coming to Movers.com.

Movers.com is the industry leader in providing free moving quotes to all of our users. Rather than worry about finding a moving company on your own and hoping for the best, you can depend on Movers.com to connect you with the very best moving companies in the country. We prescreen all of our companies to make sure they have the [proper licensure and insurance](#) and that they have good reputations with the [Better Business Bureau](#).

All you have to do is simply fill out the free quote form. Then, you will receive free quotes from up to seven of the nation's best moving companies. Movers.com cuts out the middlemen, so you get connected directly to these movers. Simply look over the estimates and then pick the three that you are most interested in. Remember, the lowest estimate isn't always the best. After receiving your estimates, you can then call the three companies to get more information.



Image by Mattox, sxc.hu

It is also advisable that you have each company under consideration perform an in-home evaluation of your household. This will allow them to provide you with an even more [accurate estimate](#). You can also use this time to ask the movers any [questions](#) you may have about how certain items will be handled. You should also ask each moving company about any extra charges you might face. These would include such things as having a long walk between your front door and the moving truck or having to carry your goods up or down a few flights of stairs.



You should also find out each company's specific process for handling your goods and keeping your old home and new home free of damage during the move.

Of course, it can get overwhelming keeping track of all the important aspects of each moving company. To keep all the details straightened out, and to help you make your final decision, you can consult this [handy worksheet](#). Simply fill out the relevant information for your three top movers to compare their offerings. Before you know it, you'll be able to pick the moving company that best matches your needs.

Tip: Moving scammers are rampant and you should try your best not to end up with one like this. Do your research properly, consider 3-4 movers and then only make your final decision. (Thankfully, Movers.com screens all their moving partners.)

FINDING A MOVER

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TOP TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR MOVERS

Before deciding on which moving company to hire, you're going to want to ask them some questions. Below you will find the top ten questions to ask any potential moving company you're considering to move your goods.

1) How long have you been operating? This question will give you some information about the [company's background](#) and experience. A moving company that has been around for a long time is likely to be reputable. Just because a company hasn't been around for that many years, however, doesn't mean that it is a bad company. You'll just need to ask a few more questions to be sure it is the right company for you.



Image by svilen001, sxc.hu

2) Do you have any proof of good service? No matter how long a company has been in the industry, you'll want to see if they have a good reputation. Any favorable company will be proud to show you some proof of its good reputation, like its membership and customer rating with the Better Business Bureau. Also look for memberships with a professional moving organization like, most notably, the American Moving & Storage Association.

3) Do you have the right licensure and insurance? All moving companies should be registered with the U.S. Department of Transportation. If a company isn't registered, it is probably operating illegally. So, you'll want to make sure the company is properly licensed and insured by asking for its [US DOT](#) number. By verifying the legitimacy of a mover, you can be sure that your goods will be transported safely and legally.



To be sure that your company is operating legally, ask for its US DOT number. You can then verify the number with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration ([FMCSA](#)).

4) What types of estimates do you provide? As you try to put together your [moving budget](#), you'll want to include each potential moving company's estimates. But, there are three estimates available, so it's important to know which of the three each company will provide.

5) How do you charge? Since moving can be so costly, you'll want to know how the moving companies arrive at the prices they give. For the most part, long-distance and interstate moves are charged by the weight of the shipment. On the other hand, if you are undergoing a local move, the price will be determined by the amount of time it takes the movers to perform the move. Finally, for an international move, the cost will be determined by the shipment's volume.

Tip: Do a thorough background check of the mover that you are hiring by checking with the BBB and their U.S DOT number. For interstate moving companies you can check Performance Report with Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC).

FINDING A MOVER

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6) How will you protect my home on moving day? Obviously, you want the movers to protect both your original home and the one you're moving into from any [damage](#). That's why you should find out what measures the moving company will take to prevent damage during the move. The mover should be able to provide you with information about their moving techniques and what protective measures they employ.

7) How do you protect your employees? You'll want to find out whether the company provides insurance to its workers. If a moving company doesn't provide its employees with insurance or Workers' Compensation, then you could be held liable for injuries that occur on your property.

8) How will my belongings be protected? Your goods are important to you, so you'll want to know how the movers will go about protecting them. You should find out what types of [packing materials](#) the movers use as well as what precautions they take during the move to protect your assets. Along these lines, you'll also want to know what options you have for insuring your goods during the move.



Check out [these videos](#) to see some of the techniques that professional movers use to pack up all of your household goods.

9) How do you handle claims? No matter how many precautions you and your movers take, there is still the possibility that something will get damaged during the move. That's why you'll want to ask how the company will handle such a situation. Although you might never have to [file a claim](#), it's better to know how the procedure works up front.

10) When will my items arrive? This is perhaps the most important question of all. Unfortunately, the moving company can't give you an exact answer. Though they can give you a general time (for a [local move](#)) or day (for a [long-distance](#) or an [international move](#)), there are many factors that influence when your goods will actually arrive at your new home. Still, the moving company should be able to provide with a probable time frame.

AVOIDING ROGUE MOVERS

When searching for a moving company, you need to be aware of [rogue movers](#). Rogue movers are companies that do not operate with standard ethical procedures. Since they are unregulated, unlicensed, and uninsured, they have no reason to comply with any industry standards. Rogue movers may hold your belongings hostage, operate with dangerous or illegal procedures, or demand higher charges after agreeing to much lower estimates.

Tip: You can check the reliability and credibility of the mover that you have chosen by checking with the local department of consumer affairs as well. See if any complaint has been lodged against them ever.

FINDING A MOVER

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Unprofessional Phone Etiquette

When calling a moving company, the person answering the phone should be courteous and professional. Be wary if he or she uses a generic greeting, such as “Movers” or “Moving Company” rather than mentioning the company name. Another sign to look out for is if you can’t get in touch with anyone. If you are transferred to an answering machine each time you call them and the message on the machine is just as vague, this might be a rogue mover. Any reliable moving company would provide their name, phone number, and a short, professional greeting on their answering machine.

No Onsite Inspections

Avoid movers that don’t agree to come to your home to perform an evaluation of your goods. If a mover insists on only giving you an estimate over the phone, then they might be a rogue mover. A reputable mover would want to take the time to give you a more accurate estimate, rather than have to readjust all of the paperwork on the day of the move. Also, during the in-home estimate, you can see how your movers work and whether they are professional or not. If a company refuses to go to your home before committing, then you will have no idea what their business practices will be like.

Cash Up Front

Look out for movers that demand cash or large deposits before the move. If you pay a rogue mover before the move, what is going to stop them from running away with the money? No legitimate moving company would require large sums of money before any service is provided.

Know Your Rights

If you are undergoing an interstate move, your moving company is required by law to provide you with a copy of the [booklet](#), “Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move.” Developed by the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration](#), this booklet details the rights and responsibilities of you and the moving company. Should your mover not give this to you, they are already violating your rights and breaking the law.

Check the Website

Be sure to go to the mover’s website before committing to anything. Search the site for the physical address and phone number of the moving company’s office. If you can’t find any legitimate contact information, then they could be a rogue mover. You should also be skeptical if the company doesn’t have a website at all.

Tip: Before move understand all about the coverage for loss or damage of goods that your mover is offering. You need to know when and how it is applicable and the claiming process along with the applicable charges.

FINDING A MOVER

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Blanket Insurance

Watch out for any company offering blanket insurance covering all of your belongings. When buying insurance for your move, you'll often have to get coverage from a third-party insurer. This is because moving companies themselves only offer minimal coverage. It is very rare for a mover to offer full insurance coverage, so make sure to ask for a copy of their insurance policy in writing. If the mover cannot provide you with any paperwork regarding insurance policies, they are likely to be a rogue company.

Messy Office

Before committing to any company, it is a good idea to check out their office. Make note if the office is particularly messy, especially if you plan on using the company's storage facility. If things seem out of place, then you might not want to keep your belongings there. Also, if they aren't very organized, they might not be the best people to handle your move. Moving requires a lot of organization and coordination – should the company not be organized themselves, this could be a clue to how they will operate during your move.

Negative Reviews

Another good way to identify a rogue mover is to check for negative reviews. Look the company up on the Better Business Bureau to find if other people have had negative experiences. You could also search online for other reviews about the company. While no company can ever please all of its customers, if there are many negative reviews, it may be best to avoid the company.

Low Estimates

You should be aware of any mover that gives a particularly low estimate, regardless of whether they do an in-home estimate or not. It may be easy to give in and hire a rogue mover offering a temptingly low estimate. Even though they say the price will be low, there is nothing stopping them from raising the price later on. Since rogue movers are unregulated, they have no obligation to you or any other authority.

Unmarked Vehicles

You could also spot a rogue mover by driving to the company's office (if you find the address) and looking at its fleet. If they use rental or blank trucks, they are likely to be a rogue mover. Most companies would want their trucks to be seen by countless people on the highways. If the company doesn't want to be seen, then it is probably a rogue mover.

If you encounter any of these signs, then find another mover. You can also report your experiences to the BBB or the police, if a rogue mover has already run away with your money or possessions. By knowing these red flags beforehand, though, you can avoid the possibility of dealing with a rogue mover altogether.

Tip: You may go through the medium of a broker to select the right moving company for your move. However, brokers may help in making the right choice but they will not be responsible for any future loss or damage.

FINDING A MOVER

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GETTING ESTIMATES FOR YOUR MOVE

When choosing a moving company to transport your household, you should consider the [types of estimates](#) each company will give you. Before picking the type of estimate you want to receive, though, you will want to know the different types and how they will affect the final price of your move.

Nonbinding Estimates

The first type of moving estimate is called a nonbinding estimate. After evaluating your goods, the mover will provide you with the estimated cost of the move. Though they will give you the best estimate possible, the mover won't be able to tell you the actual cost of the move until everything is weighed on your moving day. Once your shipment is weighed, your movers will adjust the price.

Depending on whether the shipment is more or less than what was estimated, the cost will either increase or decrease. Though it would be nice if the shipment turns out to be less than the initial estimate, be prepared for the chance that the cost will rise if the estimate was too low.

Binding Estimates

While nonbinding estimates have a level of uncertainty, if you receive a binding estimate, you will know exactly what you'll be paying. With a binding estimate, the mover will assess your goods and give you an estimate for the move. The estimate is concrete and will not change according to the actual weight of the shipment.

The good thing about binding estimates is that the cost of your move will not increase, even if the actual weight is high above what was estimated. However, if the weight of your shipment is below the estimate, you still have to pay the agreed-upon price. While this may be a [gamble](#), binding estimates are helpful because they allow you to know in advance what you will pay.

Binding Not-To-Exceed Estimates

Binding not-to-exceed estimates are the best option for you, so make sure you ask your potential moving company if they provide these estimates. With a binding-not-to-exceed estimate, the cost of your move will never go above the estimated price. At the same time, if the total weight of the shipment is actually lower than what is estimated, the price will be lowered. Since the price will be adjusted only if it's lower, binding not-to-exceed estimates are your best option.

Now that you know about the three types of moving estimates, remember to ask any potential mover which types they will offer. This way, you can be sure you are getting the best deal possible.

Tip: Binding estimate is a must for the fair and honest pricing of the move. Non-binding estimates can often exceed the quote and you will be charged more. However, 400N Tariff Movers always offer binding estimates.

FINDING A MOVER

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MOVING INSURANCE

The last thing that you want to happen on moving day is to get into your new home, start [unpacking](#), and then find that some of your goods have been damaged. Unfortunately, no matter how much time and effort you and your movers put into packing and loading your belongings, accidents can still happen.

Should anything get damaged during the move, you'll need to start the [claims process](#), by which your moving company can reimburse you. Hopefully, you won't have to ever go through that process. Still, it is important to know all about your options for insuring your goods and to find out what happens if something gets lost or damaged.



Image by asterisco, sxc.hu

The first thing you need to do is create a [household inventory](#) as you go about packing your goods. This list should include every item you need to move as well as a description of its condition. This way, you'll have a record of everything that should have been moved. You'll be able to tell if any items didn't arrive, and, since you will have noted each item's condition, you'll know if something was damaged during the move. You may also want to take a digital inventory of your goods by photographing some of your more expensive items or even all of them if you want. Doing so will allow you to have even more proof of the condition of your belongings prior to the move.

Household Inventory

Aside from creating the household inventory list, you'll need to find an insurance company to cover your goods during the move. Here are two important things to keep in mind:

- Homeowner's insurance companies may cover your goods during a move. Before seeking insurance from anywhere else, contact your provider and find out if your belongings will be insured for the move.
- Moving companies do not provide insurance themselves. Though they may provide a free, basic coverage, any reimbursement you would receive for lost or damaged goods is minimal. This coverage is called valuation and often will only cover \$0.60 per pound of your goods.

Tip: Always remember that whatever value you are declaring on your shipment to your mover will be the liability amount also that your mover will pay you in case you have claimed for any loss or damage to your goods.

FINDING A MOVER

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So, if you have a homeowner's insurance policy that will cover your move, go with that. If that's not the case, though, you're much better off finding a third party to insure your goods, rather than going with the moving company's valuation coverage. Depending on the level of insurance you want, a professional moving insurance company can compensate you the full price of anything that was damaged or lost. You will also be covered against any potential weather-related catastrophes that could damage your shipment.



Image by twasa, sxc.hu

Upon arriving at your new home, you'll want to inspect all of your goods to make sure everything that should have arrived did and that nothing was damaged. If any item is missing or damaged, you'll need to start the claims process in order to be compensated.



Tip: After delivery if you find any of your items damaged or lost before signing the driver's inventory copy, mention the same. If the discovery is made after unpacking, you need to file the claim at the earliest.

PACKING

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This next chapter deals with getting all the goods in your household packed up and ready to be transported to your new home. For many people, packing is the most loathed aspect of the moving process.

Aside from being time-consuming, packing can be difficult for some other reasons. You might not know the right way to pack some items or which [materials](#) you should be using in the first place. Fortunately, Movers.com is pleased to provide you with all the details of packing each room of your home. As you go about the packing process, there are a couple important things to keep in mind. First of all, you'll want to use good-quality, brand-new [packing materials](#). Doing so will give your goods the best level of protection.

THE BEDROOM

The bedroom can present some of the most challenging items to move. Your bed and all of its components (mattress, box spring, bed frame, comforter, pillows, etc.) can be difficult to pack. You'll also have to get all of the clothes out of your dresser and closet and into cardboard boxes. Though getting the contents of your bedroom packed can be difficult, the following information can make the process easier.

In order to pack up the contents of your bedroom, you'll need these packing materials:

- **Boxes**
 - Small
 - Medium
 - Large
 - Wardrobe Cartons
 - Mattress Cartons
- **Packing Paper**
 - Unprinted Newsprint
 - Brown Packing Paper
 - Paper Pads
 - Tissue Paper
- **Plastic Mattress Bags**
- **Moving Blankets**
- **Packing Tape**
- **Permanent Marker**



Image by theswedish, sxc.hu

Once you have all of these items together, you can get started on your packing. Since you can use the bed as a workstation, you might want to hold off on packing it until the end. Instead, you can get started on what may very well be the hardest part - packing your clothes.

Tip: In self packing if your goods are damaged you need to prove that the same is the fault of the moving company. However, this is not easy to prove always and though expensive, you may consider full service movers.

PACKING

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Packing Your Clothing

You are likely to have [clothes](#) in a closet and in a dresser or bureau. You'll need to pack up both areas, but you can start with the closet. All hanging items in your closet should be shipped in wardrobe boxes, which will allow them to remain hanging throughout the move. Simply assemble the wardrobe box and put the metal bar into place.

Your hanging clothes can then be put onto the bar. You don't want to put so many items into one box that you have to squeeze them in. Also, though there might be some room at the bottom of your wardrobe box, you should never use that space for other objects. Wardrobe boxes should only be used for your hanging clothes.

For the clothes in your dresser, you have a couple options. You may want to leave the clothes in their drawers. If doing this, you'll want to remove the drawers from the dresser; otherwise, the dresser will be too heavy to carry out. After removing each drawer, put some packing paper over the clothes and tape it to the sides of the drawer. This will keep the clothes contained in the drawer and prevent them from getting dirty.

Your other option is to put the clothing into cardboard boxes. Line a few large-sized boxes with packing paper. Then, put a single layer of neatly folded clothes into the bottom. Place another sheet of paper over these clothes, and then another layer of clothes. Continue layering like this, until the box is full.

Packing Shoes

Though it may be tempting to just throw all your [shoes](#) into a box, this really isn't the best way to go about packing your shoes. Instead, you'll want to pack them into their original shoeboxes and then put those boxes into one larger box. This will give your shoes the best protection possible by keeping them neat and clean and preventing them from getting crushed.

If you don't have your original shoeboxes, you'll need to give your shoes a little extra care - mainly, by wrapping each pair in packing paper. You can do this by placing one shoe on a corner of a sheet of paper, and rolling it about halfway across the paper. Then, put the other shoe next to the wrapped one, and continue rolling until the pair is completely wrapped. Finally, put the bundle on its side in the bottom of a box. Repeat the process with all your shoes, putting the heavier ones on the bottom and lighter shoes on top.



Image by akiminki, sxc.hu



You can give your shoes some extra support (and keep them from getting crushed) by stuffing them with tissues paper or socks before packing them up.

Tip: Sturdy packing materials are needed to pack specific items safely while moving. This will be worth your investment. You can avoid the risk of getting your goods damaged and repair cost in this way for sure.

PACKING

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Packing Jewelry

Since each piece of [jewelry](#) can be fragile and easily broken (not to mention expensive and sentimental), it is important to pack your collection the right way.

The good thing about packing jewelry is that you can keep it in your jewelry box; you'll just have to take some protective measures. For instance, anything that can be scratched, like watches, should be wrapped in tissue paper and put back into the box. If your jewelry box has a compartment for hanging necklaces, stuff plenty of tissue paper around the hooks, so the necklaces won't fall off. You should then make sure everything is secure by putting more tissue paper into any gaps.

Once the jewelry box is secure, you can work on protecting the box itself. Simply wrap your jewelry box in packing paper as though you are wrapping a present, and put it in a box along with your other belongings. A larger, freestanding jewelry box should be packed like any other piece of furniture - wrapped with paper pads and covered in moving blankets.

Packing Bedding

Prepare the boxes that are going to contain your [bedding](#) (blankets, comforters, pillows, sheets, and towels), by lining the bottom and sides of each box with packing paper. Place the heaviest items, like comforters and quilts, in first. As you put each item in a box, press down on it to remove air. Doing so will compress the bedding and allow you to fit more into each box. Continue to pack up your remaining items, using additional boxes as necessary.



Image by michelsick, sxc.hu

Packing Mattresses and Bed Frames

Packing a bed is a surprisingly complex task. Since you have many components, like the mattress, box spring, headboard, and bed frame, it can be quite the challenge. If you have more than one bed in your home, the challenge just multiplies.

The key to packing up these things is to have some help. Since [mattresses](#) are pretty heavy, having a second or third pair of hands will help immensely. Firstly, you'll need to have the appropriately sized mattress cartons assembled and ready to be packed. With the carton standing on its narrow side, opening facing you, lift up the mattress and carefully put it in the carton. Try not to let the mattress touch the floor as you pack it into the box. Doing so could rip or soil the mattress. Repeat this process for every mattress and box spring in your home.

Tip: While moving keep all the necessary and important documents with you and don't parcel them with the goods in the truck. You should keep all important financial, medical papers as well as jewelries with you only.

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Once the mattresses are packed, you can focus on the bed frames. Using the appropriate tools, detach the frame from the headboard, and disassemble the frame itself. Put all screws and other hardware in a plastic bag and clearly label it. This bag can either be taped to a part of the bed frame or placed in a box with other hardware bags. The pieces of the bed frame can then be wrapped in protective covering, like moving pads or padded paper.

Though packing a bedroom can take a lot of work, it is important to do it right. By using the above advice, you can pack the contents of your bedroom just like professional movers!

THE LIVING ROOM

Though not as difficult as packing the bedroom, getting the contents of your living room ready for the move presents its own share of challenges. Your living room likely contains a large and bulky sofa, which can take a lot of time and effort to prepare. Many expensive electronic items, like a computer, television, and other equipment, are usually kept in the living room. Even smaller and less expensive items, such as books and DVDs, will have to be packed up as well. So, to make the process of packing your living room a little easier, follow the advice below.



Image by Living Room, sxc.hu

In order to pack up the contents of your bedroom, you'll need these packing materials:

- **Boxes**
 - Small
 - Medium
 - Large
 - Mirror Boxes
- **Packing Paper**
 - Unprinted Newsprint
 - Brown Packing Paper
 - Paper Pads
- **Sofa Covers**
- **Shrink wrap or Microfoam (optional)**
- **Bubble Wrap**
- **Packing Tape**
- **Permanent Marker**

Tip: While packing lampshades you have to handle them by the wire frames. In a carton keep the article and cover the shade with protective paper. You can keep several shades in the same way.

PACKING

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Once you have all of these items together, you can get started on your packing. The order you pack the contents of your living room shouldn't matter too much. If you want to sit on your sofa as you pack the smaller items, you can hold that off until last. However, if you want to get the big, bulky things out of the way earlier, you can pack the sofa first.

Packing Books

A common mistake people make when packing for a move is to put a lot of [books](#) into one large box. However, this often results in a box that is too heavy to lift and easily falls apart. Instead, you'll want to pack your books in multiple small boxes that have been reinforced with tape along the bottom and sides.



Image by lusi, sxc.hu

When packing books, you'll want them to be packed according to size; put similarly sized books together in the same box. As you go about filling your book boxes, you'll want to put them in standing up, as though they are still on a shelf. Put them against the sides of the box, with the binding of the books facing the middle of the box. You can then put in another row of books, placing them spine-to-spine with the first row. Should you have room for a third row, you can put more books against the other side, again placing them with their spines facing the middle.

After filling the box with books, you may have some extra space on top. You can utilize this space by putting more books in the box. If doing so, you can lay the books down flat on top of the other books. This method will allow you to maximize the amount of space in each box. If there is any open space, use crumpled packing paper to fill in the gaps to keep your books from moving around.

Packing CDs and DVDs

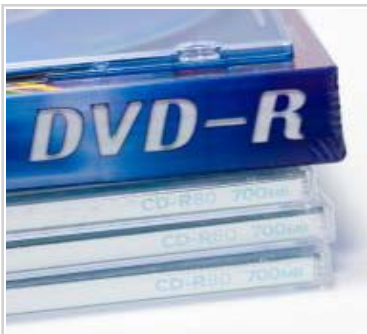


Image by E-Note, sxc.hu

Packing [CDs and DVDs](#) is very similar to the process of packing books. Again, you'll want to use small boxes (reinforced with extra tape) to keep everything more manageable. Simply place your CDs or DVDs, in their original cases, standing up in neat rows, as though on a shelf. Once the bottom of the box is full, place a layer of packing paper on top of this layer, and repeat the process on top of the paper. If you have any remaining CDs or DVDs, they can be layed flat on top. Any extra room in the box should be filled with crushed paper, to prevent damage.

Tip: Packing should go in a well planned way before the final day of moving out. Start at least two weeks before. A good way is to pack one room at a time starting with the room and items that are less in use.

PACKING

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Packing Lamps

[Lamps](#) are some of the most common items in your home that you'll have to move. However, they can be the most difficult items to pack. With the light bulbs, lampshades, and electrical cords, there are quite a few fragile pieces of each lamp. But, if you follow the method below, you can pack up your lamps like a pro.

To begin, separate the lampshade from the lamp itself; they'll have to be packed separately. The harp (the metal framework surrounding the bulb) should be removed from the shade. The lampshade can then be packed into its own box or in a box with other lampshades. Either way, you'll want to line the bottom of your lampshade box with crumpled packing paper. After putting the lampshade in the box, you can surround its sides and top with more packing paper.



Image by Lamprinh, sxc.hu

Once the lampshade is packed, you can work on wrapping up the light bulb and harp. This can be easily and safely done by laying the harp near one end of a sheet of packing paper. Fold the paper over the harp, and place the bulb on top of the harp. Continue rolling the package forward until the items are completely wrapped.

After that, you can turn your attention to the body of the lamp. To protect it, you'll need to wrap it up with corrugated paper or paper pads. Simply put the lamp on its side at the edge of a sheet of the paper, with the electrical cord kept away from the lamp. Then, start rolling the lamp up with the paper. When it is completely surrounded by the paper, tuck in the cord and continue wrapping. Once the lamp is wrapped up, use tape to keep it from unraveling.

The lamp can then be placed upright in a box that is slightly larger than the lamp itself. Make sure the bottom of the box has plenty of cushioning from crumpled packing paper, and put extra paper around the lamp to keep it from moving around. Next, place the bundle containing the light bulb and harp on top. Keep the lamp secure by putting more crumpled paper on top, ensuring it won't move around during transit.

Packing Your Electronics

Ideally, you would want to pack your [electronics](#) in their original boxes with their original foam packaging. Since people tend not to hold onto these items, you can pack them in any close-fitting box stuffed with plenty of packing paper to keep them from moving around.

The first thing to do to get your electronics ready is to remove any discs or cassettes from CD players, DVD players, and VCRs. Once empty, turn the items off and unplug the wires. You should then label the wires so you know where they go and then remove them from the appliance and wrap them up.

Tip: If you are moving within the city or for a short distance, you have the liberty not to pack certain items. Mattress, large pictures or mirrors need not to be packed for short distance but lamps and lampshades should always be packed.

PACKING

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After removing the wires, your electronics should be ready for packing. Take an item and place it on a paper pad. Then, wrap the item with the paper as though you were wrapping a present and tape it closed. Place the item in a box with plenty of packing paper on the bottom. You'll want to reinforce your electronic item by putting extra cushioning around the corners and top. If it fits snugly and doesn't move around in the box, go ahead and close the box.

Packing a Television

A large [television](#) can be a little trickier to pack. Before you get started, remember that big TVs are heavy, so you should have help when packing them to keep you and your TV safe. First, put a few strips of double-sided packing tape all the way around the TV. Then, wrap the TV in bubble wrap, pressing it onto the double-sided tape. This will keep the bubble wrap from slipping off. If necessary, secure the bubble wrap further with some more packing tape.



Image by fedek6, sxc.hu

Then, move the TV on to one side of an unfolded wardrobe box, the screen facing the rest of the box. You'll come back to this in a minute, but, before you do, drape a moving blanket over the top and back of the television. Tape it securely in place.

Next, pick up the far end of the unfolded box and fold it over the front and top of the TV. Tape it to the moving blanket. Then fold in the box on the sides of the TV and tape it all the way around, securing the cardboard in place.



Put the remote controls to your TV in a clearly labeled box, so you will know exactly where they are once your TV is set up in your new home.

Packing a Sofa



Image by pausimausi, sxc.hu

Obviously, you can't just put your couch in a box with some packing peanuts and tape it shut. You do want to protect it before it is shipped, though, especially if you don't want the upholstery to get damaged. Fortunately, there are a few ways you can protect your [sofa](#) on its way to your new home.

Your main concern when packing a sofa is protecting the fabric from getting damaged during the moving process. Not only do you want to avoid rips, you want to keep stains, water damage, and dust from the truck and other items you are packing from getting onto it. One way to protect your sofa is to buy a couch cover.

Tip: Assembling electronic items can be tough after the move. To solve this problem you can take clear digital pictures of the wired items before disassembling and paste them on the packing box for easy hooking up.

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Alternately, packing blankets work just as well. Simply cover the whole couch with them and tape it all together. Be sure to cover any finished wood (i.e., the legs). Stand the sofa up on its ends and tape around it a few times to make sure the blankets are secure.

Another option is more involved but provides the best protection. Start by wrapping the sofa in microfoam, taping it securely to itself. Next, wrap the sofa in paper pads and secure them with tape. Finish by shrink-wrapping everything.



Don't use shrink-wrap on a leather sofa; doing so can cause condensation to form that will ruin the leather.

Your living rooms contains some of the most commonly used items in your home, so you'll want to take extra care to make sure they're well taken care of. After moving into your new home, you can just sit on your sofa and watch a DVD or read a book, as long as these items are packed the right way!

THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is often the center of any home. That's why it is so important to pack the contents of your kitchen up in the right way. From simple things like cans of food to your fine china, follow the tips below to pack all of your kitchen goods.

In order to pack up the contents of your bedroom, you'll need these packing materials:

- Boxes
 - Small
 - Medium
 - Dish Carton
 - Cell Pack
- Packing Paper
 - Unprinted Newsprint
 - Tissue Paper
- Plastic Bags
- Packing Tape
- Permanent Marker



Image by QuickColor, sxc.hu

Tip: Pack durable kitchen items properly and place them at the bottom of the carton. You have to put the packed and padded light items on the top of the durable items while you can pack kitchen appliances individually.

PACKING

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Once you have all of the above items gathered together, you can begin the process of packing up your kitchen. The order you pack these goods in doesn't really matter. What is important, though, is that you have an area that you can make into a workstation. Since you'll have a lot of little things to pack up, a kitchen or dining room table, or even any open counter space, will be helpful in getting everything packed away.

Packing China

Whether used every day or only on special occasions, your [china collection](#) is likely to be an important part of your kitchen. Since china can be quite fragile, you'll want to give it the best level of protection possible. To do this, you'll need to pack your china in stacks, with layers of unprinted newsprint in between each item.

Start by placing one piece of china in the middle of a stack of packing paper. Fold one half of a sheet or two of paper over it, and place another plate on top of the first. Continue this process until you finish the stack, which can be anywhere from 4 to 8 plates high, depending on their thickness. Fold a couple more pieces of paper over the top of the stack. Then, roll the entire package together, tucking in the sides as you go.



Image by Ayla87, sxc.hu

You should then put the stack into a dish carton (an extra-thick and sturdy cardboard box) lined with crumpled up packing paper, which will serve to cushion your china. The stack should be placed on its side rather than flat, as the dishes will be less prone to damage on their sides. You'll want to place your heaviest items on the bottom, with lighter china pieces on top. As you pack the box, place some more crumpled paper into any gaps, so nothing will shift around.

Packing Glassware and Stemware

From your morning glass of orange juice to a fine wine served with dinner, your glassware and stemware are essential items of your kitchen. When packing them up for a move, you want to be sure they arrive at your new home in good shape and free of any damage.



Image by neadeau, sxc.hu

In order to pack these items, you'll need to put them in a dish carton lined with crumpled up packing paper. A cell pack (pieces of cardboard joined together to act as dividers for your glassware) should be placed above the layer of paper. You can begin by taking one [glass](#) and laying it on its side on the corner of a stack of packing paper. Then, pick up two or three sheets of packing paper to roll around the glass. As you roll, the excess paper can be tucked into the open end of the glass to add some extra support.

Tip: While loading follow the order that keeps the least used items first inside the truck and other items accordingly. Also be careful not to put heavy packing boxes on top of the fragile items while loading.

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Once wrapped, place the glass rim-side-down into one of the cells. Repeat the process for each glass until all the cells are filled. At this point, you'll want to add a layer of crushed paper on top of the glasses. You can then place a sheet of cardboard (which should come with the cell pack) over the first layer of glassware and another cell pack on top. Repeat the process until you get all of your glasses packed away.

As your wine glass have thin bowls and delicate stems, packing these objects requires a little more care than your sturdier glasses. Since [stemware](#) is so fragile, it should be packed in a box by itself or as the top layer of a box containing other goods.

The main difference between packing stemware and your other items is that you'll need to use tissue paper. Simply place a glass on a stack of tissue paper, and roll the paper around it. You should then take the package and wrap it again with a couple sheets of packing paper. Once you have filled all the cells, you can add another layer, as described above.

When all of your glassware and stemware is packed up, you'll have to ensure that the pieces don't move around and get damaged. You can accomplish this by putting more crumpled up paper in any gaps and on the top of the box. Once the box is closed, [remember to label](#) it as "Fragile."

Packing Pots and Pans

Even though [pots and pans](#) may seem durable, just throwing them into a box can make them vulnerable to damage. For example, if the non-stick surface of a pot or pan is scratched, it could be ruined. Take a little time to pack your pots and pans carefully, so you can avoid having to replace them.



Image by Lenscap, sxc.hu

The first thing to do is to prepare a medium-sized box by reinforcing the bottom with tape and lining the inside with a layer of crushed packing paper. Before putting pots and pans into the box, you can "nest" them together. Start with your largest pot and wrap it with packing paper. The next-largest item can then be wrapped and placed inside the larger one. Continue this process until you have a stack of pots, and put them into the box on their sides.

After the pots and pans are packed away, focus on the lids. The lids can be nested as well. Simply place the largest lid in the middle of a stack of packing paper. Fold one corner over to cover the lid, and put another lid on top. Cover that one as well with a corner of paper, and continue until you have a stack of three or four lids. The entire package can then be wrapped in more paper and put into the box. As always, the top of the box and any gaps should be filled with more crumpled packing paper.

Tip: Stemware and glassware should be packed separately. While putting them into the carton do not put unwrapped glassware and never rest them on their side but put them as right side up which will be more protective.

PACKING

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Packing Cutlery

When packing [cutlery](#), you need to ensure that your individual pieces are well protected and that they won't get lost. At the same time, since you're packing knives, you want to prevent any injuries when you pack and unpack later on.

Your cutlery should be packed in a small box that has been reinforced with tape and lined with a layer of crumpled packing paper. Your forks, spoons, and table knives should be stacked together in bundles of four similar pieces. Wrap the pieces in a couple sheets of packing paper, and lay them down in the box. Repeat the process for the rest of these items.

When packing silver, you'll want to use acid-free tissue paper rather than the usual packing paper. Doing so will prevent your silverware from getting tarnished. If you have a silverware case, you can wrap each item with the tissue paper and put them into the case. The case should then be protected with packing paper and placed in the box.

Knives require even more special care, since you don't want to get hurt as you wrap them up and when you unpack them at your new home. At the same time, you have to make sure their blades don't get damaged during the move. Knives should be wrapped with extra pieces of packing paper, so the blade won't break through. Your packages containing knives should be clearly labeled as such, and you should draw arrows on the package to indicate which way the blades are facing.



Another way to pack knives is roll them in a thick towel. Lay one knife down at the edge of the towel. Begin rolling it until it is covered, then place another knife over the towel. Continue rolling each knife and adding a new one until the towel is completely rolled up.

Packing Small Appliances

You will want to take time to carefully pack your [small appliances](#), especially the all-important coffee maker. Small appliances often have extra parts (lids, power cords, etc.) that need special attention, but, if you pack carefully, your small appliances should make it through the move without any problems.

The best way to pack small appliances is to put them in their original packaging. Since many people don't hold on to those boxes, though, you may have to pack in another way. You can start by separating the main parts of your appliance (like the lid to a blender or the power cord) from the main body of the appliance. Each component should then be wrapped separately in packing paper, paying particular attention to any items that are sharp or fragile.

Tip: For budget packing materials collect computer boxes, liquor and orange boxes as well as Copier paper. These will help you a lot in cutting packing material cost. To collect as many as possible you will need to start early.

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The individual parts of your small appliances can then be packed into small or medium boxes. Remember to reinforce the bottom and to place a cushion of packing paper inside. Begin placing each item into the box. You can pack multiple appliances into each box, just don't try to force anything in. As usual, any gaps in the boxes can be filled with more packing paper.

Packing Food

There are some [food items](#) (e.g., anything perishable) that you'll have to use, give away, or discard of before the move. Others, like cans, jars, and other non-perishable foods, can easily be taken with you. Though it may take some time to get your food items packed up, doing so can save you the trouble of re-buying everything after the move.

In order to pack your cans and jars, you'll need at least one small box (depending on how many cans and jars you have). You should reinforce the box with extra tape on the bottom and line it with crumpled packing paper. You can then place the items into the box, using packing paper to fill in any gaps.

Dry goods, like boxes of pasta or cereal and bags of chips, are much lighter than cans and jars, so they can be packed into a medium-sized box. Anything that has already been open, including canisters of spices, should be placed into sealable plastic bags. As usual, use crumpled packing paper to fill in any gaps in the box.

THE BATHROOM

Getting everything in your [bathroom](#) packed up for a move may seem like a daunting task. You'll need to pack up all those things under the sink and in your medicine cabinet. Though time consuming, packing the things in your bathroom for a move does give you the opportunity to get rid of that almost-empty bottle of shampoo and any other items you haven't used in a while.

In order to pack up your bathroom supplies, you'll need the following materials:

- [Boxes](#)
 - Small
 - Medium
- [Packing Paper](#)
 - Unprinted Newsprint
- [Plastic Bags](#)
- [Packing Tape](#)
- [Permanent Marker](#)



Image by marcuscruz, sxc.hu

Tip: A great and convenient way to pack and unpack is labeling the box with abbreviated room names. You can create the labels according to the room name abbreviation followed by the number of the box for that room.

PACKING

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The first step in preparing your bathroom for the move is to get rid of anything you don't need. In addition to disposing of the items you don't use, as mentioned above, you should get rid of any toiletries and medicines that have reached their expiration dates. Other items, like toilet brushes, mats, rags, or anything else that is germ-filled and can be cheaply replaced should be thrown out as well.

At this point, you should decide which items you will need on the way to your new home or immediately upon moving in and which items you won't use until later on. After determining which item goes where, you can start packing at least two boxes, making sure to label each one appropriately.

As you go about packing, have some plastic bags on hand. Any item that has the potential to leak out should be placed in these bags. For bathroom items that can break or get damaged, wrap them in packing paper before putting them into the boxes. Just make sure you put some extra paper in to keep your goods secure. Your shower curtains and towels can be hung in wardrobe boxes, like you use for your hanging clothes. Simply hang the objects (after making sure they're dry) from the metal bar, and they'll be ready to go to your new home.

THE GARAGE

One of the more difficult areas of your home to pack up is bound to be your [garage](#) or shed. That's because a garage or shed can contain a lot of random items that do not lend themselves to being packed very easily. Fortunately, there are certain methods for packing the contents of these areas easily and safely.

In order to pack up a garage or shed, you'll need the following materials:

- [Boxes](#)
 - Small
 - Medium
- [Packing Paper](#)
 - Unprinted Newsprint
- [Bubble Wrap](#)
- [Old Towels or Rags](#)
- [Twine](#)
- [Packing Tape](#)
- [Permanent Marker](#)

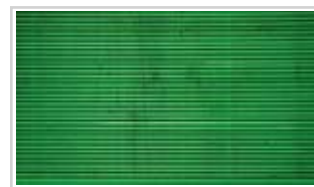


Image by melodi2, sxc.hu

Just like when packing the bathroom, the first thing to take into consideration when packing a garage or shed is what not to pack up. These areas often contain flammable or otherwise dangerous liquids and chemicals. Most moving companies won't allow these substances to be transported in their trucks. Thus, you'll either have to give them away or dispose of them properly.

Tip: Like every other item you have to pay attention to important tools. You can pack them together and keep in a sturdy box labeling accordingly. Generally you don't need to pack garage items like rakes, bottoms etc.

PACKING

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Any items that run on gasoline, like a chainsaw or lawnmower, should be drained before packing. These machines should also be given blade covers, so their sharp blades won't harm anyone, damage your other items, or sustain damage themselves. All associated parts and attachments should be packaged separately.

For your everyday tools (hammers, screwdrivers, etc.), these items can be left in your toolbox. If your tools are relatively new or of particularly good quality, you can wrap each one individually with packing paper. Otherwise, you should just put in some crumpled paper to keep your tools from moving around inside the toolbox. If you don't have a toolbox, you can simply gather a few tools of similar lengths and tie these together with some twine. Sharp items, like saws, should be wrapped in old towels or bubble wrap and covered in packing paper. Since these tools can be heavy, you'll want to put them in small boxes.

Long-handled tools, such as rakes, gardening equipment, and snow shovels, can be bundled together. You'll want to tie each group of tools together with some twine. Then, cover the bundle with a packing blanket. Using packing tape, secure the blanket around the tools. These things don't necessarily have to be packed into a box. Just make sure they are clearly labeled and are properly cared for.



Tip: Use the packing boxes properly. Never use a box which has been used several times before as it is likely to get damaged. You also should not overfill boxes which can tear or even under-fill which can get the box smashed.

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PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL MOVE

All the preparations you have done and all the time and effort you put into the move all lead up to one point - moving day. Though the day of your move may be chaotic no matter what, there are still many things you can do to make the day go a lot smoother.

Protecting Your Home

As you prepare to move out of your old home, the last thing you want is to cause some damage to the home on your way out. That's why it's important to [protect](#) the floors, walls, and doors during the move. If you hired professional movers, they will likely do this for you. Find out in advance, so, if they won't take all or any of the [proper precautions](#), you can take things into your own hands.

Here are a few tips on how to keep your home from sustaining any damage as you prepare to move everything out:

- Place plastic protectors on your doorways and any corners, which will protect your walls from getting nicked as your goods are carried out of your home.
- For tight corners or a stairway landing, you can attach moving blankets to the walls, so they won't get cratched.
- If you don't want your floors and carpets to get dirty, you will also want to lay out some runners or pieces of cardboard throughout the home for the movers to walk on.
- Should it rain on your moving day, you'll want to have extra rugs and towels on hand, so you and your movers won't track mud and moisture around the house.

By taking the above precautions, you can feel more confident on moving day. If you don't spend the time to prepare your home before the move, you might have to spend time during the move cleaning up soiled carpets or taking care of nicks in your walls and doors.

Packing

Packing your belongings into cardboard boxes is only part of the process. As mentioned earlier, you'll need to [label](#) these boxes appropriately. You should label the box on the top and sides, so your movers will clearly see the labels. Your labeling should include the following information:

- A description of each box's contents
- A general indication of the box's weight (light, heavy, or moderate)
- The location of where the box should be placed in the new home
- The word "Fragile" on any box containing delicate items

Tip: Make sure you are there at every step in the move process with the movers. You should know and understand the Bill of Lading properly as well as supervise the movers through the packing and loading process.

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An additional measure you can take to ensure your goods are well organized is to assign each box a letter or number. As you assign the boxes, keep a list matching the designated number or letter with the contents of each box. By properly [labeling your boxes](#), you can be more confident that they will arrive at the right place in your home.

Making a Schedule

Aside from having your boxes properly labeled, you can ensure a successful move by having a [schedule](#) of the day's events in advance. Your schedule should include a list of all the last-minute things you have to do, as well as the time frames for doing them. For example, your schedule should include time for cleaning your home and having all of your boxes near the front door and ready to be picked up by the movers. Be sure to include your movers' estimated time of arrival in the schedule.



Image by geri-jean, sxc.hu

Of course, you can't always stick to a schedule. Although it is good to have a basic framework to guide your moving day, keep in mind that unexpected events can pop up. As a result, it may be wise to overestimate the time it takes for each step, just to prepare yourself for possible contingencies.

Although moving can be a stressful and hectic time, [planning in advance](#) can help alleviate some of that stress. By preparing your home for the move-out process, properly labeling your goods, and creating a schedule for the day, you can guarantee yourself a more successful move.

MOVING WITH KIDS

As hard as an upcoming move may be on you, it can be even worse on your [children](#). Since they are likely to be very attached to their familiar surroundings, they probably won't be too excited about having to leave their friends, school, and hometown. Moving with kids can be especially challenging, since they might not understand your reasons for relocating.

Before the Move

One of the best ways to prepare your kids for the move is to get them involved in it as much as possible. Try as best as you can to explain why you need to move. Though they may not accept the reasons right away, it is still worth it to convey that the move is in the family's best interest. The following are some other tips to prepare your kids for the move:

Tip: Moving can be really taxing for the children. That is why you should present the news of moving to them in a way so that they can take it in a free spirit and as an adventure to explore a new place and friends.

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- Make sure your kids understand that just because they are moving away, they don't have to forget about their friends. They can keep in touch by phone, e-mail, instant messaging, and, even through old-fashioned, hand-written letters.
- Another way to try to get your kids on board for the move is to let them participate in the home-finding process. Bring them along and ask for their input. By letting them have a say in where you move, they will feel more in control of the situation.

Although it may be a tough sell no matter what, you really need to stress the benefits of your relocation. Your kids might not like the idea of moving, but, by following the tips above, the move might be somewhat easier for them.

During the Move

Getting your kids excited about your move can be quite a challenge; keeping them safe, entertained, and in good spirits on moving day might be just as challenging. Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to keep your children [safe and happy](#) throughout the move.

As you will have plenty of other things to worry about, you may decide to leave young children under the care of someone else as you pack up and get ready. You can drop them off at the home of a friend, relative, or trusted babysitter. If your kids are older, then you can let them help you with the move. They can help in packing the stuff in their rooms. Depending on their age, you may even let them help in lifting the boxes and bringing them into the moving van.

Before you get into the car to drive to your new home, create a box that will be traveling with you. This should include all of the things your kids will need, especially if you're undergoing a long journey. Pack some of your kids' favorite toys and games, a few snacks, any medications, and a change of clothes. Having these items on hand will be helpful as you drive to the new home, and this will allow your kids to have their favorite things on hand as you move in.

As you drive, you'll want to make several stops along the way. Aside from the usual bathroom and food stops, you might want to stop at local attractions. Your kids will probably be excited about the prospect of a special side trip or two as you drive to the new home. If you have an infant or very young children, you'll want to consider their feeding and sleeping schedules and keep this intact, if possible. Also, remember to build in extra time for diaper changes!

After the Move

Even after you get to your new home, the challenge of relocating with kids isn't over. Since they will be in an unfamiliar home in a new town, you'll want to do everything you can to help them get [adjusted](#). Below are some tips for doing just that.

Tip: The best way to make your children comfortable with the new home is to have a walk together before you start filling it with the household items. You can also confine the cat in a room to get it adjusted.

MOVING DAY

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- **Setting up the Bedroom** - Since the decision to move is mostly out of their hands, you can let your kids decide how they want their bedrooms to look. Since your kids' rooms are their refuges, letting them have a say in decorating them can help them adjust. Of course, using the same bed and other furniture from their old rooms may make the transition easier as well.
- **Routines** - Almost everyone, including children, takes comfort in routines. Try to reestablish the routines from your old home as much and as quickly as possible. After you have unpacked everything and things quiet down, try to return to normal mealtimes, bedtimes, and playtimes. Returning to a structured life will help both your kids and you deal with the move.
- **Exploring the Neighborhood** - Another way to help children get adjusted is to explore your new surroundings together. Search for places of interest in your new town, like restaurants, parks, ice cream parlors, and other attractions and check them out as a family. You can also take your kids along on daily errands, as this will allow them to become more familiar with their new setting.
- **Making New Friends** - The process of making friends can be hard for kids, but there are steps you can take to make it easier. You may want to set up play dates for younger kids by getting in touch with other parents, either those who have children in the same school or through co-workers or other contacts. For older kids, enrolling them in local sports teams and other activities can be a great way for them to meet kids with similar interests.



If you find that your child is having a particularly rough time adjusting to the move, it may be a good idea to seek help and guidance from a professional.

In addition to the above tips, one of the best things you can do for your kids after you move is to communicate with them throughout the entire move. Be sure to ask them about their feelings and how they're handling the adjustment. Since moving to a new home is a huge change for the entire family, you can share your feelings with them as well.

MOVING WITH PETS

Moving with pets can present a much different challenge than moving with kids. Though pets can't throw a temper tantrum and argue about your decision to move, they can still have a very rough time adjusting to a move. That's because animals tend to grow very attached to their surroundings. On top of that, you can't explain the move to them, so, with no warning, they are uprooted from their homes and brought to a new home.



Image by BeverlyLR, sxc.hu

Tip: Be aware that interstate moving may require special permit for your pet. Enquire beforehand with the state veterinarian or State Department of Animal Husbandry for the right and accurate information while moving.

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Your pets will undoubtedly experience some stress when undergoing a move. There are, however, plenty of things you can do to make the transition easier on your beloved pets, before, during, and after the move.

Before the Move

When preparing a [pet](#) for a move, there are many things to take into consideration. You'll want to be sure your pet is allowed to be brought into your new country or state, as some locations have restrictions on certain animals and breeds. Additionally, your pet should be taken to the vet to make sure it is healthy enough to make the transition. You should also have a folder containing the appropriate vaccination papers, registration, vet records, and other documents. On top of everything else, you should locate a vet in your new area before moving.

Once you have taken care of all the details above, you can focus on planning how you're going to move the pet. This will largely depend on how you are getting to your new home. Whether you are [driving or flying](#), you'll likely be taking your pet with you. Both options require different methods for getting your pet ready for the trip.

- If taking your pet by plane, you'll need to purchase a pet carrier approved by the [International Air Transport Association](#). Carriers that meet these standards are designed to allow for maximum airflow and to let your pet move around comfortably. You should also contact the airline you'll be flying with to find out more about their policies regarding animals. Thus, you can find out which documents you should bring and any other important information.
- If taking your pet by car, you won't need to comply with the strict standards for your animal's carriers. However, you should still get a carrier that is comfortable for your pet and gives it plenty of room to move around in. If your dog or cat isn't accustomed to traveling in a car, you can take it on short, practice trips before the big day.



During your trip, you may need to stay overnight at a hotel. Since you should never leave your pets overnight in a car, you can go petswelcome.com to find a list of pet-friendly hotels.

After you've decided how to get your pet to its new home, you can work on preparing it for the trip. If your cat or dog has never been inside a carrier, you'll need to acclimate it to one. You can do this by placing the carrier out in the open and putting your pet's blankets, toys, and treats inside. This will encourage it to explore the carrier and become acquainted with it.

During the Move

With all of the craziness that usually takes place on [moving day](#), it might be easy to neglect the needs of your pet. However, by following the suggestions outlined below, you can be sure that your pet receives the care and attention it needs on your moving day.

Tip: While moving get or create name tags for your pet dog or cat. You also need leashes and make your pet get habituated in wearing these before moving. In the tag along with name put phone number and new address.

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- Since your home will be pretty hectic, it makes sense to have someone watch over your pet as the movers go about your house. Doing this can free you up to take care of other things, and it will keep your pet safe and out of the way.
- If you can't find someone to watch your pet, you can set up a room for it to stay in as your goods are loaded into the moving truck. Simply designate a room, and, after everything has been removed from it, keep your pet inside, along with its toys, food, and water. It is a good idea to put up a "Do Not Enter" sign on the door, so no one will open it and disturb the pet.
- While you should give your pet the necessary food and water before the move, you'll want to hold off on doing so 2-3 hours before you depart. This will help to prevent the pet from getting carsick and from having accidents.
- If you have a long drive to your new home, plan to make several stops along the way. This will allow you to walk your dog, clean up any accidents, and give it some food and water every now and then.

These tips can help you keep your pet safe and secure during the hustle and bustle of your moving day. However, you'll still have another challenge on your plate: getting your pet adjusted to life in a new home.

Helping Your Pet Adjust

Your pet will probably get pretty [stressed out](#) by the move. What complicates everything is that it's impossible to explain to your cat or dog why it is being taken to an unfamiliar home and neighborhood. One of the most important things is to make sure your dog or cat is wearing a collar with your new address on its ID tag. Whether you have a dog or cat, your pet may try to run away to find its old home. Since the pet won't be familiar with the new neighborhood, it might not be able to find its way back.

When moving into your new home with a dog, walk it throughout the entire house to get it acquainted with its new surroundings. It is also a good idea to put your dog's bed and food and water bowls in places similar to where they were in your old home. Of course, you'll want to provide your dog with its usual blankets, toys, and treats. These familiar items can help the dog deal with the extreme change. Another important part of helping your dog adjust is to take it for walks around the neighborhood. This will allow it (and you) to become more familiar with your new area.

If you are moving with a cat, it is advisable to put it in a quiet room with the door closed as everything is brought into the home. Be sure to include the cat's litter box, bedding, food, water, toys, and anything else that will keep it calm and occupied. Once things quiet down, allow the cat to explore its new home on its own. If you have an outdoor cat, let it out for a small amount of time, supervised, until it gets to know its surroundings better.

Tip: You may need to vaccinate your pet in case you have to fly with your pet to move. Check with the airline about the requirements. If your pet is nervous, you have to talk to the vet regarding tranquilizers also.

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If your pet shows any signs that it's having a hard time adjusting to the move (such as no appetite, loss of fur, or aggressive behavior), seek help from a vet immediately.

YOU AND YOUR MOVERS

Your movers are an integral part of your moving experience. Sure, you likely have never met your movers before the big day and probably won't see them ever again after. However, these people are the ones responsible for putting all of your goods (valuable or not) into a truck and taking them to your new home. Therefore, you'll want to have a good relationship with them, even if only for a short period of time.

In order to foster a good relationship with your movers, it is important to know what their [responsibilities](#) are during the move. Keep in mind, though, that the actual duties they perform will depend on the services you require. For instance, if you hired full-service movers, they will do the packing for you. Aside from that, the responsibilities that your movers have should be the same for any type of move.

Before the Move - Your movers will have several things to take care of well before moving day. First, they will go to your home to perform an in-person assessment of your household, in order to create an estimate for the cost of the move. They'll also work with you to figure out the time and date of the move. Additionally, they should give you several documents regarding their various policies. These documents may include:

- A well-defined summary of the company's arbitration program
- An outline of its procedures for filing disputes
- A chart regarding all tariffs involved and a clear explanation of what they are
- The [booklet](#) "Your Rights and Responsibilities When You Move" (for long-distance moves only)

During the Move - At this point, the movers will be doing their main task - transporting your goods from your old home to the new one. This involves organizing all of the belongings to create the proper loading order. As they do this, they will also create an inventory list to keep track of all of your goods. Under the supervision of the [driver](#), the moving crew will then load everything into the truck. The movers will also be responsible for ensuring that your goods arrive at your destination safely and on time. During the delivery, your movers will be expected to maintain contact with you to let you know the status of your move. Additionally, the movers will be responsible for having you sign the appropriate contracts regarding the move.

Tip: Whenever you need to sign any documents from your mover, be sure you understand all the fine prints. Check carefully if they have mentioned all the agreements and relevant shipping information before signing it.

MOVING DAY

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After the Move - Upon reaching the destination, the movers will start unloading your goods off of the truck. They'll bring your goods into your new home and place everything in the right rooms. Again, if you went with full service, the movers will unpack all of your boxes for you. After everything is moved, they still have to collect payment and make sure that you sign the proper paperwork.

Throughout each stage of the moving process, you'll want your movers to be [happy](#) and comfortable, so they can do their jobs well. Here are a few easy things you can do to keep your movers in a good mood throughout the day.

- Have everything packed and ready to go before the movers get to your home. This way, they won't have to sit around as you finish packing.
- Make sure you keep the boxes you plan on taking yourself clearly labeled as such and stored away from the rest of your boxes.
- If you live in an apartment with elevators, make sure your movers will have access to these during the move.
- Provide your movers with all the appropriate information, such as the address of the new home, the time frames for when you need to be out of the old home and into the new one, and your phone number so they can remain in contact with you.
- Prepare to be at the new home (or have a trusted friend waiting there) before the movers arrive.
- Create a floor plan of the new home so your movers will know in advance where to put everything.
- Have your method of payment on hand, so you can pay your movers on time. You certainly don't want to have them wait as you search your boxes for that checkbook.
- Perhaps one of the most important, yet overlooked, ways to keep your movers happy is to offer them refreshments. Providing them with beverages, or even snacks or lunch, is a small way to show your appreciation and keep your movers in a good mood.



You don't have to give your movers a tip; it is not required or expected. However, if you feel they did an exceptionally great job, you might want to give them some money. Keep in mind, though, that some moving companies have policies against accepting tips.

Tip: Rent right sized truck and load it properly. Heavy items should go first and at the back of the truck. You should keep the items you use most at the front so that without any problem you can access them.

MOVING IN

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PREPARING THE NEW HOME

Your new home is likely going to be perfectly clean upon moving in, so you won't have to spend the time cleaning it up. However, there are other things you'll need to do to get your new home ready for your arrival.

The first thing you should do to [prepare your home](#) for moving in is to protect its walls, floors, and doors. By taking the time to do this, you can avoid damaging the interior of your new home. The last thing you want to do on moving day is worry about a scratch on a hardwood floor or a dent in one of the walls. If you've hired professional movers, find out if they will take these preventive measures. If they won't, or if you are performing a self-move, you'll need to prepare your home yourself.

Here are a few tips on how to protect your home from sustaining any damage as you prepare to move everything in:

- Place plastic protectors on your doorways and any corners, which will protect your walls from getting nicked as your goods are carried out of your home.
- For tight corners or a stairway landing, you can attach moving blankets to the walls, so they won't get Scratched.
- If you don't want your floors and carpets to get dirty, lay out some runners or pieces of cardboard throughout the home for the movers to walk on.
- Should it rain on your moving day, you'll want to have extra rugs and towels on hand, so you and your movers won't track mud and moisture around the house.

While the above tips will help you prepare the inside of the home, you also may need to prepare the outside. You should determine the best way for the movers to bring your goods inside; the front door won't always be the most accessible entry. At the same time, you'll want to clear away any bushes that might get in their way as the bring everything into the home. An overgrown shrub can hamper their moving efforts, and result in extra charges.



Image by Atlanta123, sxc.hu



Make sure the moving truck has enough room to get into your driveway or, at least, to park in front of your home.

Tip: In case you are delayed to reach the destination and claim the shipment, the moving company will keep your belongings in the storage for handling other shipments. This will cost you some extra charges as well.

MOVING IN

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ARRANGING FURNITURE

Perhaps one of the few enjoyable parts of the move is the opportunity to design your home by deciding where everything should go. It's your home and your furniture, so you can organize your home however you wish. Like most aspects of the move, though, it's best to have a plan for how you want to arrange it before moving day.

Before you begin to plan where everything should go, you should have the measurements of all your rooms as well as the dimensions of your large furniture pieces. This will make it easier to figure out how you want each room to be set up.

Once you have the dimensions, you can start planning. One way to do so is to use a number of online resources that allow you to create virtual rooms, letting you see what the finished product will look like. For instance, with Autodesk's Homestyler [site](#), you can create a virtual replica of any room you choose, or even your whole house. For those who are less technologically inclined, you can create your own method for pre-designing your home. Simply cut out pieces of paper, replicating the rooms and objects of your home. Though this may take some more work, especially since you'll need to get the proportions right, doing so will give you a hands-on method for designing your home.



If you are unsure about the best way to arrange your furniture, you may want to consult an interior decorator to get tips and advice on doing so.

Whichever method you choose, you'll want to create a diagram before moving into the new home. Give this diagram to your movers, so they will know where to put everything. Since many moving companies have policies dictating that they can only place your large furniture pieces once, they probably won't agree to moving everything around until you're satisfied. By planning in advance, however, you can be sure you'll get it right the first time. Thus, your movers can put each piece exactly where you want it, and you won't get stuck rearranging furniture on your own.



Image by ralev_com, sxc.hu

UNPACKING

Unpacking is perhaps one of the least anticipated aspects of the move. At least when packing up your goods, you'll have a deadline for when everything needs to be done. Once you are moved into your new home, though, you might feel that you have all the time in the world for the [unpacking process](#). Unfortunately, this method of thinking often results in boxes that never get unpacked. However, if you have a solid game plan for unpacking, it will be done before you know it.

Tip: Don't engage yourself in unpacking right after you have moved. Give yourself some time to adjust and plan accordingly. You should start by unpacking the most essential items that you need in your everyday life.

MOVING IN

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The first step toward a successful unpacking process takes place during the packing stage. As mentioned previously, you'll want to make sure all of your boxes are clearly [labeled](#) with their contents and destination room on them. By doing this, you and your movers will know exactly where each box should go and what it inside each one.



Image by geri-jean, sxc.hu

When unpacking, you'll first want to unload the boxes containing the items you'll need right away upon moving in. Such things can include changes of clothes, snacks, soap, towels, etc. Once you have unpacked these important items (and freshened up, if desired), you can begin unloading all of the large and bulky furniture. On your floor plan, you should clearly label where your beds, sofas, tables, and chairs should go, so the movers know where to put them. Once the large items are out of the way, you can focus on unpacking the contents for your individual rooms.

The Kitchen

Since the kitchen is often the central hub of any home, and because you will have to eat at some point, this should be the first room you work on. Though you don't have to get everything done in one day, you should at least unpack any necessities, such as eating utensils, and your most used appliances, like a coffeemaker. Then, you can take all of your pots, pans, and dishes and put them in your cabinets. If you packed any food, you can also begin sorting through these items and put them in



Image by geri-jean, sxc.hu

their proper places. Any infrequently used [fragile glasses](#) and [fine china](#) can be kept in the box and put away at a later date.

The Bedrooms

After a hard day's work of moving, you'll want (and need) a good night's rest. Accordingly, the bedroom should be the next room you unpack. You should first set up the bed frames and headboards. Since these components are large and heavy, make sure you know where you want them to go. Once they are set up, you can put your mattresses into place. Then, locate the boxes with your pillows and bed linens, since you'll definitely want these on your first night in the new home.



Image by cgarbiano, sxc.hu

As for your clothing, you won't need to unpack everything right away. Instead, you can put aside a couple changes of clothes for the first few days in your new home. You can worry about putting away the rest of your clothes after things settle down a bit. The same holds true for any additional bedroom items, like pictures, knick-knacks, and other decorative features.

Tip: Unpack the most essential kitchen items that you will need regularly. Now unpack toilet items like the shower curtain, toiletries, soap and toilet paper. Next, set up your bedroom with bedstead and clean sheets.

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The Bathrooms

Once you have unpacked the necessities in the kitchen and bedroom, the next step is the bathroom. While you should unload the essential items (toilet paper, soap, and towels) upon arriving, all of your other toiletries can be unloaded later in the day. Be sure you do this before you go to sleep; you probably don't want to dig through boxes to find your toothpaste after a long and tiring moving day.



Image by pepo, sxc.hu



If you can go to your new home before moving day, it is a good idea to drop off some of your toiletries beforehand, so they will be ready and available as soon as you move in.

Unpacking Everything Else

By the end of your first day in your new home, you should have all the necessities unpacked. In the following days and weeks, you can focus on getting all of your other items unpacked and put away. Although you certainly want to get the most-necessary items unpacked first, this doesn't mean that you should forget about your other items and leave them unpacked for months, or even until you move again. Instead, there are things you can do to keep those items secure until you have the time to [properly unpack](#) them. Following is some advice for each room of your home.

Kitchen - Items that you won't need right away, like china, wineglasses, and fine silver, should be left in their protective packaging. You can put these things into your cabinets or drawers as is. Then, when you have time, you can unwrap them and place them wherever they belong in your kitchen. Any appliances that you won't use in the immediate future can be tucked away into a cabinet, pantry, or closet until you find a more suitable and permanent place for them.

Bedroom and Living Room - There are bound to be plenty of items in your bedrooms and living room that aren't essential for your first few days. For instance, your mirrors and hanging artwork can be left against the wall until you have the time to put them up. The same goes for your lamps. For rooms that don't need additional lighting, you can put the lamps and lampshades in a corner until you are ready to assemble them.

Bathroom - No matter how hard you try, you might not have time to organize and put away all of your toiletries and other bathroom items. Any items that you use on a regular basis should be unpacked at some point on your moving day. The items that you won't need immediately can be stored in your bathroom cabinets or in the linen closet for the time being. When you have the time, you can sort through these items and organize them to your liking.

Tip: Living room should be unpacked and settled last and gradually. There will be a lot of electronic items which need to be hooked up. It should be a family or group effort rather than handling it on your own.

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Other Rooms - You will most likely have a wide variety of belongings that you won't use or need in the foreseeable future. These items can include decorative items, sports equipment, toys, books, etc. Since you'll want to unpack only the essential items first, these goods can be stored in a low-traffic area, like a garage, basement, or attic, until you have the time to unpack them.

It can be impossible to get everything unpacked in one day or even a week. However, by knowing what to do with your non-essential items on moving day, you can be sure that they'll be safe and protected until you have the time to put them away.

[YOUR LEFTOVER PACKING MATERIALS](#)

After you get everything unpacked, you're probably going to end up with piles of used [packing materials](#). Before throwing these things away, try to find creative ways to [reuse](#) your leftover cardboard boxes, bubble wrap, and packing peanuts.

Cardboard boxes - There are plenty of ways to reuse your post-move cardboard boxes. Any boxes that are still in good condition can be used as storage containers for almost anything. You could save them and use them for sending packages. Boxes that are ripped or falling apart can be shredded and put into your garden as compost.

Bubble wrap - Bubble wrap can be reused in an almost [unlimited](#) number of ways. For instance, it can be used to insulate your windows, as an extra layer of cushioning when you go camping, or as a toy (who doesn't love popping the bubbles?). It can also be used to wrap Christmas ornaments when they're not in use or even as a way to decorate your home by dipping the bubbles in paint and applying them to a wall. There are many, many more ways to reuse bubble wrap; just give some thought and see what ideas you come up with!

Packing peanuts - After protecting your most delicate goods, packing peanuts can take on a new life in a number of ways. For example, you can put the peanuts into a cushion cover to make a bed for a pet dog. Additionally, they can be used as a drainage system for your plants or in arts and crafts projects.

Although there are many ways to reuse your packing materials, it may be easier to just get rid of them. If that's the case, you'll want to know all of your options for doing so. Of course, it is best that you [recycle](#) these materials whenever possible.

Tip: Reuse packing materials instead of dumping them in the dustbin. For instance, you can use the bubble wrap for something that you have to send by mail. You can even use it as insulator on windows during winter.

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Cardboard boxes and packing paper can easily be recycled. Find out what your town's recycling policies are to make sure you [dispose](#) of them in the right way. For example, you might be able to leave these materials on the curb if your town has weekly or monthly recycling pick-up. Alternately, if you live in an apartment complex or other housing development, you might have to bring these items to the waste center yourself. Should neither of these two options be available to you, you can find the closest recycling center to your home and bring the materials there.

Other packing supplies, like packing peanuts, bubble wrap, and plastic bags and wrappings, aren't always as readily accepted as paper products. Contact your local recycling center to find out what its policies are for these materials. Even if the center doesn't accept them, they can let you know if there are any other places that will accept them.

Of course, there are some materials that you won't be able to reuse or recycle. These items should be disposed of properly, with the rest of your garbage. However, by taking the time to ensure you get rid of all your packing materials in the best methods possible, you can have a more environmentally friendly move.

CHECKING FOR CLAIMS

As all of your belongings get moved around during the relocation process, it is a real possibility that something can get damaged. No matter what precautions and measures you and your movers might take, accidents can still happen. That's why it's so important to [look over your shipment](#) for any damage. By doing so, you'll know right away if you need to file a claim with your moving company.

Looking for Damage

Upon receiving your shipment at your new home, carefully unpack each item and inspect its condition. If something doesn't look right, you can quickly pull up your photos or item list and compare its current condition to its pre-move appearance. Should you determine that one (or more) of your goods has been damaged during the move, you will want to start the claims process as soon as possible. While you will have nine months to file any claims after the move, the sooner you start the process, the better.

Filing Claims

When filing a claim, you should first make sure you have all the appropriate [documents](#) concerning your move. These should include:

- [The bill of lading](#).
- The inventory list
- The original retail invoice of the item
- A repair invoice or statement from repair technician (if applicable)

Tip: Though it varies from movers to movers, there would be dispute settlement program for loss or damage of your goods. You can obtain the complaint information on the mover under the Freedom of Information Act by paying FMCSA a fee.

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Most importantly, you'll want to have on hand any documents your moving company gave you detailing the claims process. This will help you figure out what to do and who to talk to.

Arbitration

If the moving company doesn't offer you enough compensation for your claim or completely disputes it, you might have to resort to arbitration. When you request arbitration, make sure you have the following information:

- Name and address of the moving company
- Pick-up and delivery dates of your shipment
- Addresses of old home and new home
- Name of the person in charge of the move
- Bill of lading number or claim number
- Total cost of the claim

Rejected Claims

As disappointing as it might be, sometimes claims are rejected, leaving you to replace damaged items yourself. There are a number of reasons why a claim might go unfulfilled. The following is a list of reasons why your claim of damages during the move may get rejected:

- Failure to provide proof that the item was indeed damaged during the move
- If you packed the item yourself, the moving company isn't liable for it
- The item was already damaged, according to the movers' description on the inventory list
- The item was damaged due to weather conditions
- You ask for more compensation than the item is worth

Inspecting your goods for damage once they arrive at your new home is an important part of the moving process. Instead of assuming that your belongings have arrived in good condition, it is well worth the effort to look everything over. This way, you can start the claims process as soon as possible and get compensated for any damages.

Tip: While moving you need to prepare a home inventory which is nothing but the list of your possessions. It helps in the event of claims if you find any of your items are missing, stolen or damaged after the move.

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UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

Even after you've arrived at the home and taken care of everything revolving around the move, there will still be some things to do. Although you have probably filled out plenty of paperwork at each stage of the move, you will still have some [paperwork](#) to take care of as you get settled in your new home.



Image by xaila, sxc.hu

Changing Your Address

So you've just moved into your new home; now you have to let everyone know your [new address](#). The United States Postal Service offers a couple easy ways to go about [changing your address](#). You can just go to usps.com and click on the "Change of Address" link at the bottom left of the page. If you don't wish to do this online, you can go to any post office and pick up the "Mover's Guide: Official Change of Address Kit." After filling out this form, just drop it off at any mail collection box, and you'll be well on your way toward completing a change of address.

Driver's Licenses and Vehicle Registration



Image by riakim, sxc.hu

Perhaps most important, is updating your driver's license, especially if you moved to another state. In order to update your license, check out the website of your state's motor vehicle department; each state has different processes for doing so. Whatever the individual procedure is, every single state requires that you apply for your new license in person at the local motor vehicle department. Make sure that you bring all required documents and forms necessary for getting a new license.

If you have moved to a new state, then, in addition to applying for a new license, you'll have to update your vehicle's title, registration, and license plates. The process for doing so will be different for vehicles that are leased rather than owned, so be sure to call the motor vehicle department's office or find the applicable instructions online. Once you have transferred the appropriate documents for your vehicle, you must also have it inspected. Finally, check that your auto insurance is registered in your new state. If it isn't, then contact your insurance provider and find out the next steps.

Voter Registration

Each state requires that you update your [voter registration](#) upon moving. If you move to a different location in the same state, you'll still need to fill out a voter registration form, making sure to check off the box that says "address change." If moving from out of state, though, you must re-register to vote as though registering for the first time.



Image by ProLife, sxc.hu

Tip: Changing your address is very important task when you move. So first notify the post office of the change of address and with the new address. You also need to notify other utility services of the new address.

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You must be a resident of your municipality for 30 days and be registered for 30 days before becoming eligible to vote. While you can only be registered to vote in one municipality, you don't have to cancel your previous registration. Voter registration forms for your municipality can be found on your state's website, usually labeled as "Elections" or "Board of Elections."

If an election is going to occur before you have been a resident of your new town for 30 days, you won't be eligible to vote in your new district. Instead, you should be able to cast an absentee ballot in your former district. Check your state's board of elections website for more information.

Pet Licenses



Image by Renesj, sxc.hu

Every state and most municipalities require that you obtain licenses for any dogs or cats that you own. This involves paying an annual fee, which is usually under \$25. Some municipalities might even lower this fee if you can provide documentation that your dog or cat has been spayed or neutered. Though it may take some time to research the rules, and it will probably cost some money, getting the proper licenses for your pet is an important step in the moving process.

These are the most common licenses and paperwork that you'll need to take care of after a move. Anything else you might need can usually be found online. You could also always contact the township office or a county clerk to find out if there is any additional paperwork you need to fill out.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Trying to become familiar with a new town can be one of the most challenging parts of any move. There is likely to be a thriving [community](#) in your area, and you will probably want to be a part of it in one way or another. Below are some tips for getting involved with all of the things going on in your new town.

Local Government - An easy way to get involved in your new community is to seek out and attend local government or town hall meetings. This can be a great opportunity to learn more about your town and how it is run. Attending these meetings will also allow you to meet other residents who share your interests and concerns.

Sports and Other Clubs and Activities - One of the common factors that tie people together is a love of sports. Many towns have sports leagues for kids and adults alike. Again, joining one of these leagues can be a great way to meet new people with the same passion. And if you don't like sports, your new town is likely to have several other types of clubs and organizations looking for new people to join.

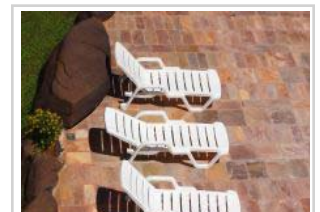


Image by mterrazza, sxc.hu

Tip: Introducing your children and the pet with the neighbors as well as the new locality helps a lot while settling down. Take time out and explore the locality with your children which will put them at ease soon.

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Volunteering - In addition to building new relationships with like-minded people, volunteering gives you the chance to make a positive impact on your community. There are a countless number of organizations that are always looking for additional volunteers. To find such a place, you can use an online resource, such as volunteermatch.com, to help you find a volunteering opportunity.

Religious Groups - Religious groups can help people achieve their spirituality and give them a sense of community. In addition to the religious aspects, these organizations host social events and can provide a means for getting involved in the rest of the community. You can easily search online to find a place of worship in your new town.

The above tips are just a few suggestions on getting involved in your new community. By participating in local organizations, finding volunteering opportunities, and joining religious groups, you can get to know people in your new town and become an integral part of the community.

GETTING ADJUSTED

Moving is one of the biggest challenges and one of the biggest changes you'll make in life. Though it involves so many factors that have to be taken care of before you move, there will still be some challenges after that last box is unpacked. Indeed, getting adjusted to life in a new town can be a difficult task. However, there are quite a few ways to get better acquainted with your community and to become more comfortable with your new surroundings.

Finding Your Way Around

One of the best ways to familiarize yourself with a new neighborhood is to simply [drive around](#). This will give you a first-hand perspective of what's in town. If you want a less random method, you can explore the area on an online map service. Online maps also allow you to plug in whatever you're looking for, like restaurants or parks, so these features will pop up on the map. Using this information will give you a much better idea of the layout of your town and help you find places of interest throughout.



A GPS unit can be a huge help as you try to find your way around. Having one in your car can make it almost impossible to ever get lost as you explore an unfamiliar area.

Another way to learn the ropes of getting around in your new town is to ask friends, neighbors, and co-workers about their experiences. This way, you'll get an insider's point of view about local traffic patterns, any bad parts of town to avoid, and other tips for navigating around an unfamiliar area.

Tip: Settling into the new home should be a group effort. Don't make unnecessary compromises and involve all the family members in the tasks so that when all is done they can feel proud of their contribution too.

GETTING SETTLED

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Finding Common Services

Once you know your way around town a little better, you'll want to locate some [necessary services](#), like banks, hospitals, libraries, and post offices. You can find this information online by simply typing "library in [your town]" into a search engine. Many of these services have their own websites, so you can easily go to your bank's website to find the branch closest to your new home. Again, you can always ask your new neighbors or anyone else familiar with your area for help with locating these common services.

Finding Local Hotspots

After you have found the most necessary establishments, you can focus on finding [places to have fun](#). Your town probably has a wealth of restaurants, shops, and other interesting places; you just have to find them. As usual, an online search will bring up plenty of results for hotspots in your town. You can also read reviews about these places to find out what other people think of them.

Your new town will have plenty of places to explore after you've moved in. An online search can help you locate these places. Before you know it, you'll be an expert in all your town has to offer. You might even end up helping other newcomers find their way around town.



Tip: Getting adjusted with the new locality needs you to get going with your neighbors. You should find out what organizations nearby could satisfy your needs and make you a part of the community you have moved in.

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AUTO TRANSPORT

Getting a vehicle to a new home during a move can present its own share of challenges. But, when moving a great distance, it may be necessary to ship your auto. Maybe you are going to be driving a rented moving van to your new home and need a way to get your car there. Or maybe you don't have the time to drive your car across the country. Whatever the case may be, shipping an auto is a common aspect of the moving process.



Image by mn-que, sxc.hu

Types of Auto Transport

Before you go about [finding](#) an auto shipping company, you'll need to figure out what [type of service](#) you need. Your vehicle can be shipped in either an open-air trailer or an enclosed trailer. Open-air transport is the cheapest option, but it means that your vehicle will be exposed to the elements. Enclosed trailer transport is more expensive, but, with this method, your vehicle will be better protected. Since shipping your auto in an enclosed trailer is much more expensive, it is a good option for antique or luxury vehicles.

Finding a Shipper

Once you know the type of service you desire, you can work on finding a company specializing in auto transport. If you have a family member or friend who has recently shipped a vehicle, ask if he or she would recommend that company for you. You'll want to do your own research as well, by looking up the company with the Better Business Bureau to make sure it is reputable. Of course, you could also find an auto shipper at Movers.com, which will connect you with the most reputable auto transport companies in the business.

Insurance Options

Since your vehicle will be out of your hands for the time it takes the shippers to deliver it, you're going to want to make sure it is protected during the trip. That's why it's important to get the proper [insurance](#) for your auto. Although your auto shipper will have some insurance in place, it might not cover all contingencies or forms of damage. Therefore, you may need to get additional coverage.



Image by piovasco, sxc.hu

First, find out if your current auto insurance provider will cover your vehicle during transport, and to what degree. If you are satisfied with this level of coverage, it makes sense to just go with it. If you want additional coverage, beyond what your insurer or the auto shipper provides, you may want to purchase short-term insurance from an independent provider. For example, if your vehicle won't be covered for water damage, and you wanted to be extra safe, you could purchase just water damage insurance, while leaving the rest to your shipping company or current insurer.

Tip: Choose an auto-mover with solid track records, sincere customer care and with good values. You need to give them all the information like the exact pick up and drop destinations, car type to get the right services.

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It is a good idea to take pictures of your vehicle before it is shipped. When you get it back, compare the pictures to the auto to see if any damage occurred.

Preparing the Vehicle

No matter what level of insurance you get to protect your auto, you'll still have to take several precautions [to prepare it for transport](#). By taking these appropriate measures, you can be sure that your vehicle will be ready for its trip.

Wash the car - Your vehicle will likely be inspected at some point during the shipping process. Make sure it is nice and clean for accurate inspection.

Remove personal items - The shipping company won't be responsible for items left in the auto. Remember to remove any personal or valuable items from the interior, including the glove compartment and the trunk.

Leave an almost-empty gas tank - Extra gasoline can leak out during transit. It will also increase the weight of the vehicle, making the job more expensive. Your shipping company may dictate to you the actual level the gas should be at.

Remove or protect any loose parts - Remove the antenna and any other detachable parts. For parts that can't be removed, like spoilers, fog lights, and side mirrors, you might want to wrap them with protective covering.

From finding the best shipping company, to getting the right insurance policy and preparing your vehicle, auto transport can be complicated. However, by following the above [advice](#), you can be more confident that your vehicle will be shipped to your new home safely and smoothly.

STORAGE FACILITIES

There are a number of reasons why your move might necessitate the use of a self-storage facility. Maybe your new home isn't ready to move into yet, and you need a place to keep your belongings. Perhaps you are downsizing to a smaller home that doesn't have enough room to keep all of your things. Or maybe you're moving to another country for a [short period](#) of time and want your goods to be safe until you return. There are plenty of other reasons why you might need to use a storage facility; if so, follow the tips below.



Image by [lac, sxc.hu](#)

Tip: When availing storage make sure you have the right information about the insurance. If the company is not offering any, work with your insurance agent for the safety of your belongings and get proper insurance.

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Finding the Right Self Storage Facility

In order to find the best [self-storage facility](#) for your needs, you should make a list of several facilities in your desired area (which may be closer to your new home, closer to your old home, or somewhere in between). It is a good idea to visit each facility in person, so you can personally see whether the facility is well maintained or not. If one were not in the best condition, then you probably wouldn't want to keep your goods there.

As you check out potential facilities, ask staff members about their security policies. You'll definitely want to know what measures they take to keep their storage units safe from theft. Aside from security, find out what other methods they use to protect people's goods, like climate and moisture control and keeping vermin out of the units.

Prohibited Items

Before you settle on a particular storage facility, you should also find out which items are [restricted](#). There are plenty of items that are considered unfit to be kept in a storage unit, as they can be dangerous or otherwise negatively affect the conditions of the facility. These prohibited items can include, but aren't limited to:

- Any illegal objects or substances
- Explosive materials
- Medical items (includes drugs and medical equipment)
- Animals
- Plants
- Items with strong odors
- Hazardous materials
- Aerosols and pressurized materials
- Firearms

Keeping Your Storage Facility Clean and Organized

Once you have found out all the appropriate information and have chosen your storage facility, you can get to work on putting your goods in your new storage unit. By [organizing](#) it right at the beginning, you can save yourself some headaches later on.

Before you start loading up your unit, you'll want to make an inventory of everything you plan on putting in it. These items should be photographed so you have documentation of their conditions before going into storage. If you have a bunch of small items that you plan on putting in cardboard boxes, you might want to consider putting them into clear plastic containers. Doing so will allow you to see what is inside each container and better protect your goods.

Tip: There are some "Don't Dos" while availing storage facilities. Don't pack food items that are perishable. Plastic covers should also be avoided as they retain moisture and can harm items. Flammable and toxic items are a strict no too.

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As you pack up your belongings into your new storage unit, you'll want to do it the same way you pack up a moving truck. Large, heavy items should go in first, and lighter items should go on top of these. If you have finished furniture, you might not want to put anything on top of such items. Should you need the space, though, cover the furniture with moving [blankets](#).



Place any item or container of items that you would need to access more frequently at the front so you don't have to stumble through your other goods to get to them.

As you bring each item inside, check it off on your inventory list. This way, you'll know that everything has been accounted for. You could even draw yourself a little map of your storage unit, showing where each item is located. By taking these little steps, you'll have a very neat and organized unit. And, whenever you need to visit it, you'll know exactly where everything is.

SMALL MOVES

A small move is a move of less than 2,000 pounds worth of goods. There are a wide variety of reasons for why you might need to undergo a small move:

- You might be moving into or out of a studio apartment or other small living space and don't have many items.
- College students moving to a dorm most likely won't have a great deal to move.
- If you need to move just a large item or two, this would be considered a small move.

The concept of small moves may be unfamiliar to many people. With a small move, the movers will use a small truck to transport your load to wherever it needs to go. The benefit is that you won't have to go through the trouble of renting a truck and having to drive it yourself. On top of that, since the movers will be using a smaller truck to accommodate the small volume of your shipment, the move will be less expensive than a regular move.

Many companies that provide small moving services are able to transport your goods to anywhere in the country, or even internationally. No matter what you need to move, as long as the total weight is less than 2,000 pounds, you can rely on small movers to do the job for you.

Now that you know what a small move is, you may be wondering how to find a small mover. Many moving companies may offer small moving services. You can search online for moving companies in your area. When contacting them, ask if they handle small moves. Another way is to go to Movers.com and click on the tab for "[Small Moves](#)." After filling out the free quote form, you can get quotes from up to seven small moving companies.



Image by Gastonmag, sxc.hu

Tip: You may not have a lot to move sometimes. Availing full time movers can be a total wastage of money. Therefore, find out the small move specialists who can help you with your apartment or dorm or your condo.

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SPECIALTY MOVERS

You may have certain items in your home that require special handling to get them from place to place. These items can include bulky and fragile items like pianos, grandfather clocks, [artwork and antiques](#), and trees and plants. You might even have the need to move your entire house. If any of these situations apply, finding specialty movers may be your best bet.



Image by konr4d, sxc.hu

Though you will likely be hiring movers to move everything else in your home, some items, such as those listed above, may require a little extra attention. Additionally, your moving company might not know the proper way to [move a piano](#). Household movers won't even consider [moving a tree](#) or a house, so you'll definitely need to find specialty movers if a tree or [house move](#) is in your future.

If you have determined that you need to hire specialty movers, there are a couple different ways of finding them. If you know someone who has used specialty movers to transport a piano, delicate artwork, or anything else, ask this person if he or she would recommend using that same company. You can alternately perform an online search to find specialty movers near your home.

Of course, the easiest way to find specialty movers is to go to Movers.com. By filling out the quick quote form, you will be connected to up to seven [specialty movers](#). Movers.com only includes licensed and insured moving companies with solid reputations in its network. Thus, you can be sure that your specialty item, whatever it is, will be handled with the utmost care and attention as it is brought to your new home.

Tip: Before you hire a mover, make sure you have all the information about them for the safety of your own items. With some honest movers you can even avail flexible or full refund which will eliminate your fear of pre-booking.

CLOSING

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This eBook has been the result of hours and hours of research backed up by Movers.com's extensive experience in the moving realm. We understand that relocating is never easy. It is an emotionally difficult change requiring a lot of time and planning. And that is exactly why we put this together - to help people have a smoother move.

The information here provides top-notch advice and insider tips from the top moving resource website. If you can't find the information you're looking for, then you can surely find it on Movers.com. If you are still confused by anything regarding your move or have any questions or concerns, please give us a call (1-866-343-1243) or send us an e-mail (contactus@movers.com). One of our highly trained professionals will be happy to assist you.

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