

House moving checklist

By John F. Smith

- Seven to Eight Weeks Before Move
 - Set your move date.
 - Contact moving companies for estimates and information Tip: book well in advance because it can be busy at key times of the year.
 - Make a budget for moving expenses.
 - If your move is business-related, ask your employer which moving expenses they will pay.
 - Begin taking an inventory of each room in your house Decide what to bring and what to sell, donate or throw away.
 - If you are selling items, make arrangements (online, yard sale, etc).
 - If you are donating items, deliver them or arrange for pickup Save receipts for tax records. Find a tax consultant if you need help.
 - Get packing materials like boxes, cartons and labels or investigate packing services.
 - Begin packing as soon as possible.
 - Speak to your insurance agent in case you need to transfer or cancel your insurance coverage (medical, property, fire, auto) Find a new insurance agent if necessary.
 - If you are moving to a foreign country, be sure your documents (passport, visa, inoculations) are up to date.
 - If you're moving to a new country, research financial and insurance options.
 - Book transportation to your new home.
 - If your children will switch schools, research new schools and contact them for enrollment.
- Four to Six Weeks Before Move
 - Check with current utility companies (gas, electric, water) to either switch or cancel services If cancelling, check for deposit refund and find new utility companies.
 - Cancel or transfer telephone numbers and services (including mobiles), as well as cable and/or internet connection.
 - Cancel or transfer home services (landscaping, snow removal, etc.)
 - If you're moving your pet, investigate pet relocation services.
 - Make plans for moving special items like a piano, grandfather clock, plants, etc.

- When packing, be sure to separate cleaning materials, tools and garbage bags so they are handy on moving day.
- Think about where you'd like your furniture to go in your new home Create a floor plan.
- Three Weeks Before Move
 - Collect everything you have loaned out, had repaired, stored or cleaned and return everything you have borrowed.
 - Make hotel reservations if you'll need them.
 - Gather your important documents (insurance, medical, finance, legal, school records, etc).
 - Get your automobile serviced.
 - If you need to ship your vehicle, find a transportation company.
 - If you are not taking your car with you but are renting, then find a car rental agency at your new destination.
 - If you have newspaper or magazine subscriptions, notify them of your upcoming address change.
 - If you have a pet, check with veterinarian for pet records and immunizations.
 - Have a farewell party.
- Two Weeks Before Move
 - Find storage options for those items you cannot move immediately and may need to store temporarily.
 - Transfer or close bank accounts.
 - Make sure you have home insurance coverage from the day you move in to your new home.
 - If you drive, find out if you'll need to convert your driver's license or get a new one.
 - Make backup copies of important files on your computer before packing everything away Scan paper documents so you have backup electronic versions.
 - As you pack, label boxes with helpful descriptions such as 'Fragile,' 'Load First,' 'Load Last' and 'Do Not Load.'
 - If you have any hazardous material you aren't taking with you, dispose of it properly (batteries, computer equipment, paint, chemicals, etc).
 - If you are transporting a lawn mower or power tools, be safe and empty the oil and gasoline.
 - Find a cleaning service to do a final clean of your home.

- Notify your friends and/or family of your new address and phone number(s).
- Alert health care providers of your change of address or find new health care services.
- Consider moving your jewelry and other valuables (wills, stock certificates, etc) to a safe deposit box or other secure location to prevent loss or theft during the move.
- Arrange to keep important items close to you during the move (passports, documents, jewelry, collectibles, photos, etc).
- One Week Before Move
 - Separate and label items you will take so that the movers don't transport them.
 - If you have children or pets, arrange for someone to look after them during the move.
 - Pack a suitcase with the clothes and toiletries you'll need during the first few days in your new home.
 - Go to the post office to arrange for your post to be forwarded (there is usually a fee for this service).
 - If you have any prescriptions, transfer them to a drugstore or pharmacy in your new town.
 - Alert your realtor and neighbors that the house will be empty.
 - Research your new neighborhood (city council, crime rates, parks and public spaces, transportation, shops, banks, leisure and cultural activities, nightlife, etc).
 - Make arrangements for payment to your moving and/or packing company, either in advance or on moving day.
 - Empty, defrost and clean your fridge and freezer.
- Moving Day
 - Caution the packers, movers and/or driver about fragile or precious items.
 - Oversee inventory as it is being loaded.
 - Read the Bill of Lading and Inventory carefully before signing and keep them in a safe place.
 - Double check that the driver has the proper delivery address and scheduled delivery date/time.
 - Give driver relevant phone numbers to contact you in case of a problem or change.

- Do a final check both inside and outside of the house Do not leave your old house until after the movers have gone.
- Turn off all lights, heating, air conditioning and water Lock all doors and windows. Check security systems, alarms, etc.
- After The Move
 - Don't feel stressed to have everything organized immediately Give yourself a few weeks to get settled.
 - Upon moving in, change all locks and get a security/alarm system.
 - Read architecture and design magazines and websites for inspiration on how to personalize your new home.
 - Visit a home show to get decorating ideas for style, design, floor plans, etc.
 - Make sure your new home is environmentally friendly. Go green!
 - If you will remodel your new home, see our 'Renovate a House' checklist.
 - Hire an interior decorator.
 - Find painters.
 - Inspect the areas outside your home and remove poisonous plants.
 - Once you are settled in your new home, have a housewarming party!