

# 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!