

Think Inside the Box-Packing Tips for Moving

When we live a long time in a house, we can accumulate a lot of stuff. This can make moving a big job. Follow these steps to help make it a smooth transition.

Sort it

When moving to a smaller place it is impossible to take all your things. The first step is to make decisions on what you will need and want in your new home and let the other things go to charity, to relatives, or in the garbage. It is a lot of work, so you may need a hand sorting through everything. Once you have decided what you will be taking with you, you are ready to pack.

Keep like things together- dishes with dishes, clothes with clothes, books with books. Don't start throwing things into the box just because you need to fill it. Pack things from the same room together. This will make finding what you are looking for easier on the other end.

Pack it

Keep the boxes light. Don't try to cram everything in as few boxes as possible. This will make everything harder to move. Even if you are getting movers, you may need to move boxes around when you are unpacking. Try to keep the boxes less than 50 pounds. Stuff socks, towels, pillowcases, etc into free holes in boxes. You will require less packing paper and fewer boxes!



Don't over-pack boxes. This risks damaging your items. Mark which end goes up to avoid any damaged goods. If you plan on putting items in garbage bags, make sure they are heavy duty so they don't rip. Avoid confusion with actual garbage by using clear bags. Use your luggage to carry other household items. Keep as much as possible in the proper place (i.e.: clothes in dresser drawers, silverware in tray) so you have less to unpack.

Track it

Write down what's in every box. Label the box by number and in a notebook write down everything that you put in the box. Be specific. Say coffee mugs instead of kitchen stuff. Label all boxes; small or large. If you have to take down and reassemble furniture, put all the nuts and bolts into a bag and tape the bag to the piece of furniture.

Color-code it

Color-coordinate your boxes. Use colored stickers, tape or sheets of construction paper and be sure to write down in a notebook what each color means. You can have a different color for each room, or have one color for your new home and another for things that are going into storage or elsewhere. You can color code boxes containing breakable items with a bright color so movers know to take extra care with these.

Move it

Moving day can be long and tiresome. Make sure you stick to your routine as best you can, including proper sleep, meals, and medications. Plan ahead to make sure you are able to eat and take your medications at the proper times.

Keep important items and records with you, this includes your list with what's in each box. If you can't afford to lose it, keep them separate from your moving boxes. You may want to take your more valuable or breakable items yourself by car. Make sure you save one suitcase to fill with everything you will need for your first night in your home without having to unpack anything else. This should include food for the evening, toiletries, medications, night clothes and clothes for the next day, a roll of toilet paper, bed linens and a pillow, a light, and something to entertain you. It is also a good idea to plug in a nightlight when you get there. If you get up in the night it can be tricky to find your way around in a new place.



Unpack it

Look at all the boxes! To make this task manageable take it one box at a time. Look at your list of boxes and pick the ones you'd like to open starting with the ones that contain the most important things to get you into a daily routine- frequently used kitchen and bathroom items are a good place to start. This is a great time to have a friend or family member come visit. They can help you set up things to your liking and keep you company as you unpack things. Don't worry, you can have them over again once you are all settled in. As you are finding a new place for your belongings you may realize some things you need to buy. Start making a list and take a break from unpacking to go to the store. Take it a few boxes at a time and make sure you take time to eat, take medication and sleep at your regular times.



A move is a lot of work, especially for one person, so be sure to get help with each step along the way. Friends, family members, cleaners, movers, and professional organizers can help make your move effortless and stress-free!

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