

Prepare to Move

- Post Office** - File your change of address with the Post Office at least 30 days prior to the date of the move.
- Records** - Get copies of your existing records (transcripts from schools, medical records from doctors, etc.) while you're notifying the changes of address.
- Referrals** – As you work through your change of address notices, ask for referrals in your new area.

Change of Address / Notice of Move (Ask for referrals for new location)

- Accountant/tax preparer; Alumni associations; Attorneys
- Babysitter/ child care provider; Banks (auto loans, checking accounts, credit cards, home equity, IRA's, mortgage, safe deposit box, savings account); Barber/
- Cell phone provider; Child care/ daycare; Chiropractor; Courts, especially for traffic tickets or local disputes; Credit bureaus; Credit card issuers
- Dentist; Department of Motor Vehicles; Diaper service; Doctor; Dry cleaning
- Employers (old and new)
- Family members and friends
- Hair Salon, Health clubs; House cleaning service; House of worship
- Insurance providers (auto, health, life, dwelling, other); IRS (form 8822), Investment Services
- Lawn care; Luggage tags (replace existing ones)
- Magazine subscriptions
- Newspaper subscriptions
- Orthodontist
- Passport; Pet sitter/ dog walker/ pet day care; Pharmacy (BONUS: get year-to-date expense summary for taxes); Physical therapist; Physician; Post office; Professional organizations
- Retirement plan holders
- Schools (BONUS: get copies of transcripts); Snow removal service; Social Security Administration; Swimming pool maintenance (pool cleaning, pool opening or closing); Swimming pool memberships
- Veterinarian BONUS get vet records and recommendations
- Water delivery service

General Packing Tips

- Pack a suitcase. For each person moving, pack suitcase as if you're all going on a 3-day vacation. Include clothes, medications, toiletries, etc. Keep the suitcases separate from all the other items to be moved, such as in your car, so you'll have everything you need for the first few days without searching through boxes.
- Create "Open Me First" boxes. Pick one or two boxes per room as "Open Me First" boxes. Put in the things you'll need first at your new location. Then mark the sides of the boxes so you'll know which ones are which.
- Pack one room at a time. Wherever possible, work on packing just one room at a time to keep things focused and organized.
- Don't pack what you don't want. Use packing as a way to clean out items you no longer need, want, or use. Donate, bring to a recycle center, or have a yard sale if you have time.
- Pack on a clear surface. Instead of packing boxes on the floor, use a completely cleared-off table top or counter in each room for packing. Your back will thank you.
- Track small parts. When you take apart items to be moved, such as tables, securely tape screws and other small parts securely to the underside of the item. You'll always know where to look and you'll save time putting things back together.
- Criss-cross tape. Tape boxes along the seams where the flaps meet together. Then tape perpendicularly at the center of the first tape, forming a cross.
- Stacking safely. Stack boxes with the heaviest on the bottom and lightest on top to prevent crushing.
- Keep boxes light. Keep each box below 30 pounds whenever possible and absolutely below 50 pounds maximum. Heavier boxes lead to injuries, are much more likely to burst their tape or seams, and tend to get dropped.
- Double box. For especially fragile item, pack them first in a box with an excessive amount of biodegradable packing peanuts. Then pack that box in a larger box filled with biodegradable packing peanuts. This two-box system seems like a pain but will provide added protection.

Packing Electronics

- Take pictures of wiring connections. Use your cell phone to take pictures of complicated wiring (computer cords, video /entertainment systems) so it's easier to reconnect later.
- Wrap each cord carefully. Use cable organizers, heavy twist ties or heavy rubber bands. Never throw unwrapped cords into boxes they get tangled and caught on other items.
- Label cords. Consider getting a label maker and labeling the end of each. Then you'll know exactly where each end connects when you put things back together.

Box Inventory and Labeling

- Use the thickest, darkest marker you can find for labeling boxes.
- Label each box on the two broadest sides, opposite one another. That way if a box gets turned, you can still identify its contents. List major contents & location.
- Keep a Box Inventory. Write down each box's room, box number and major contents.
- Abbreviate room names. Start box labels with the abbreviated name of the room followed by a box number, such as "BTH2-6" for "second bathroom, 6th box."
- Mark "Fragile" where appropriate.
- Verify delivery. When unloading, check off each box as it gets unloaded at your new place. Then you'll know everything arrived safely.
- Stack with labels visible. Ask movers to stack boxes in your new place with the labels facing out so that you can easily spot a specific box.

Moving Day

- Start early. You want to have everything as organized as possible prior to the arrival of the movers.
- Use sitters. Recruit help watching your small kids and pets on Moving Day. Your attention will be needed for the nuts and bolts of the move.
- Have food ready. Whether you have professional movers or friends and family, having coffee, orange juice, and bagels or donuts available will make it easier for everyone to get started.
- Have your payment ready. Almost all professional movers will require payment in full and in cash before they will unpack a single box. Make sure you have payment ready.
- Have directions ready. Send a link via text or have a map for anyone who will be driving from your old place and your new place.
- Get cell phone numbers. Make sure you have the cell phone number of the driver of the truck entered into your cell phone, and that the driver has yours in case you get separated or have a problem.

Unpacking

- Make a plan. Prioritize Rooms. Focus on "Open First" boxes in the bathrooms and kitchen.
- Have trash and recyclable boxes handy in each room BEFORE you start unpacking.
- Use time limits. Set an objective of unpacking a certain number of boxes each day until all the boxes are all unpacked.