

Moving Checklist

Get ready for your big move with a checklist that takes you through the process week by week.

8 weeks

- Research moving companies with the Better Business Bureau <http://www.bbb.org/us/Find-Business-Reviews> and get recommendations from friends and family who have recently moved.
- Go to ProtectYourMove.gov <http://www.protectyourmove.gov> to learn more about your rights and responsibilities as you prepare to work with a moving company.
- Consider extra insurance coverage you may need for your move. Ask prospective moving companies what insurance is included and check your homeowners' policy to see what it covers.
- If you are moving to a new area, research banks, doctors, and schools. Gather all the proper paperwork you need to set up new accounts.

7 weeks

- Get estimates in writing from at least three licensed moving companies. If possible, have an estimator come to your home to do an inventory.
- Start a binder or folder where you can keep all of your moving estimates and moving-related paperwork.
- Make a list of businesses you will need to contact in order to change your address. Don't forget to list your online accounts too.

6 weeks

- Get the packing process started by assessing your closets and getting rid of clothing that doesn't fit or you no longer want. When the closets are done, start to assess items room by room.
- Do a first round of donations of unwanted goods to charity, sell items online, or have a garage sale to help pay for your move.
- If you have children, work with the current and future school to transfer school records and make plans for a smooth transition.
- Begin packing items that aren't used frequently. Seasonal items, rarely used gadgets, and items stored in the attic or basement are a good place to start.

5 weeks

- Use up food from the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry. Refrain from doing too much grocery shopping or buying in bulk before the move.
- Get the word out to friends and family members that you're moving. Send them an e-mail with your new contact information or consider sending a moving announcement.
- Purchase moving supplies including boxes, packing material, tape, labels, and box cutters. Remember to order specialty items like dish boxes, wardrobe boxes, and mattress bags if your mover is not supplying them.
- Get a box-labeling system in place. Numbered boxes, color-coding by room, and a master list with inventory are key elements.
- Make a room-by-room packing schedule and start packing!

4 weeks

- Fill out an official change-of-address form with the U.S. Post Office <http://www.usps.com>
- Consult your list of businesses and services and make address changes on all accounts.
- Put in for vacation time at your job for the days surrounding your move and schedule a babysitter if needed.
- Confirm all paperwork with your chosen mover and double check that the proper insurance is in place to cover your valuables.

3 weeks

- Cancel all newspaper home delivery and set up delivery in your new neighborhood.
- Gather valuable paperwork, jewelry, and small family heirlooms. Keep these special items separate from your moving boxes and make a plan for transporting them by hand or via a trackable shipping service with insurance.
- Do an inventory of high-ticket items and videotape or photograph these items. Note any existing scratches, dings, or damage to your furniture.

2 weeks

- How's the packing going? Keep plugging away and don't leave it all until the last week.
- Tie up loose ends. Confirm that you've changed addresses, have all the proper moving insurance in place, and are ready to make your move.
- Put together a packet for the new owners of your home with any warranties, vendor recommendations, and a note with your contact information in case they have questions or need to forward you mail.
- If you are moving major appliances, make sure that they're cleaned, unplugged, and ready to go. Freezers need to be defrosted and you may need a professional to disconnect gas lines on particular appliances.
- Fill prescriptions and make sure that everyone has packed medications they need in their suitcase.
- Withdraw cash to tip the movers and make sure you have enough cash, checks, or a credit card to pay for any unexpected expenses.

1 week

- Utilities should be turned off in your current home one day after your move-out date. It is helpful if utilities in your new home are turned on one day before your move-in date.
- Dispose of all flammable items that can't be transported (paint, chemicals, aerosol cans).
- See if you have accumulated anything else in your "donate," "pitch," or "sell" piles. After more packing, you may have additional items to donate and should have one last pickup by your chosen charity, if needed.
- Back up all computers and have a plan in place for checking e-mail and paying bills online while your computer is in transit.
- Get each family member to pack a suitcase like they are going on a two-week vacation. Remember all toiletries and comfortable clothes for unpacking.
- Check in with your moving company one last time and confirm that everyone is on the same page. Reconfirm the moving-day arrival time as well as cell phone numbers and last-minute details.
- Hire a cleaning company to come in and do a quick clean after the movers leave or schedule a day that you will come back and make sure that everything is clean and in place for the new owners.
- Celebrate the memories you've made in your home and get ready to start a new chapter in your life.