

HOW TO

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**ULTIMATE GUIDE FOR A RESIDENTIAL
— MOVE —**





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INTRODUCTION

Excellent packing during a move is the cornerstone of successful relocation. The goal is to get all of your possessions safely to your new home.

It's important to take every step of the packing process seriously. Many homeowners incorrectly pack their belongings and end up with damaged and broken items.

Make your move a hassle-free success using our in-depth guide on how to pack your residence for an upcoming move!



CHAPTER 1

PACKING MISTAKES

Before we delve into how best to pack, we should probably cover the biggest packing mistakes first.

Here is a list of the top 5 mistakes we see families make when they need to pack their house.

PROCRASTINATION

No one wants to spend time packing. It's a long process that leaves people completely drained. Regardless, your moving day is set and you'll need to have your belongings packed before that date. Rushing to meet your deadline at the last minute leads to broken items and frustration.

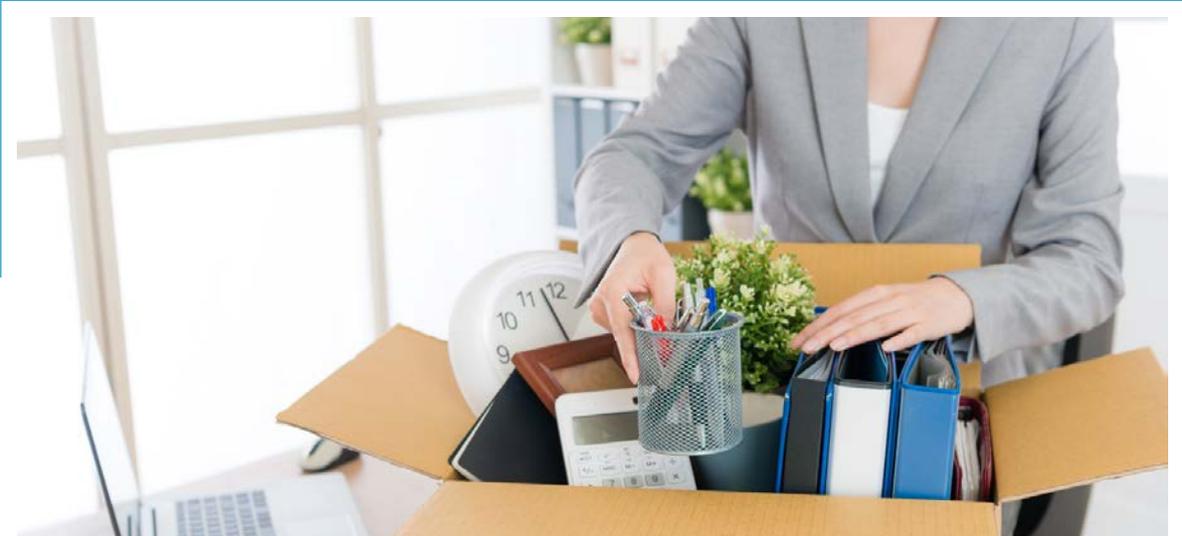
If you are packing your own belongings, spend one day packing per room in your home. Your best bet is to plan ahead and pack on the weekends. Otherwise, you'll end up using your PTO to play catchup as the big day arrives.

NO PACKING SUPPLIES

Packing starts with getting enough supplies. You'll need to buy packing tape, bubble wrap, and moving boxes. Sometimes you can get lucky and take unwanted boxes home from work or nearby grocery stores.

If your moving company offers [packing services](#), your problem is solved.





NO PACKING STRATEGY

You may think local moves don't require as much planning as a cross-country relocation. You'd be wrong.

Even if you're only moving down the street, it takes one bump of a poorly packed box to become history.

UNWANTED CLUTTER

If you're packing stuff you don't want or need anymore, then you're wasting your time and resources. Use your move as a means to decluttering your life. As you are packing, separate the things you don't use anymore from the things you cannot live without.

We recommend disposing of unwanted items into trash, donation, and recycling piles. Regardless of how you get rid of clutter, moving is the time to purge.

DIY PACKING

Packing yourself may seem like a cost-effective method, but it isn't. DIY packing without knowing how ends in frustration and error. Things will get broken. If you've never moved before, or you've only moved a few times then we already know you aren't going to properly pad or insulate your items to take a beating. **DIY packing is a surefire formula for damage.**

CHAPTER 2

PURGE

When you are going through your belongings, you want to ensure that only the essentials make their way into your new home. Over the years, it's easy to accumulate clutter and things that you really don't need.

Start life in your new home with a clean slate and follow the one-year rule for what makes it to your new home. Essentially, **if you haven't used an item in a year, it's likely not going to get used in your new home and should be slated for donation, trash, or a garage sale.**

Planning for a long-distance move is everything. It's not going to take mere days to get your family ready for a long-distance move. It could take weeks and even months. We suggest creating a [moving checklist](#) of everything that needs to be done and setting a specific deadline for each task. This will help ensure that nothing is forgotten and that you aren't playing a stressful game of catch-up in the days before the actual move.

DOWNLOAD CHECKLIST



DO NOT PACK

- Family photos
- Important papers and personal records (wills, insurance policies, deeds, stock certificates, etc.)
- Prescription drugs
- Children's toys

ITEMS YOU CAN'T MOVE

For safety reasons, never pack the following items:

- Flammable fluids such as lighter fluid or gasoline
- Chemicals including auto maintenance fluids
- Fireworks
- Paints and paint thinner
- Combustible objects such as oxygen bottles or propane tanks
- Firearms
- Live plants

CHAPTER 3

SUPPLIES

MANDATORY:

- Labels
- Plastic Wrap
- Moving Boxes
- Thick Black Markers
- Packing Tape
- Bubble Tape
- Newspapers, Tissue Paper or Packing Paper
- Painter's Tape
- Trash Bags
- Nice-to-have's
- Dish Sleeves
- Wine Bottle Sleeves
- A Dolly
- Old blankets



BOXES

Get the right boxes (professional quality), packing materials, tape, scissors, and permanent marker.

Each filled box should weigh no more than 50 pounds. However, you want to make sure that each box you use is sturdy enough to carry its weight when moved between your old home, the moving truck, and your final destination.

Moving boxes range in strength based on what you're packing, so ensure you have the right boxes for the job:

- 1.5 cubic foot boxes – Perfect for books, children's toys, kitchen items, or small/medium-sized board games
- 3.0 cubic foot boxes – Larger boxes that are a good fit for electronics, pans, pots, and other larger household items
- 4.5 cubic foot boxes – Ideal for linens and folded clothing
- 6.0 cubic foot boxes – Pack your heavier bedding, artwork, or couch cushions in these boxes

STUFFING AND PADDING

Use wadded, packing paper to provide cushion in your boxes. Wrap fragile items in paper before placing them in boxes. Don't over pack. Keep boxes and cartons to 50 pounds or less.

Be sure your boxes are filled to the top to ensure they do not get crushed when stacked. Pack items you won't need until after you are settled in your new location first.

Go room by room to stay organized. As you complete a room, sort boxes and cartons by weight to make the loading process easier.



MARKERS

Label boxes clearly with your name, room, where the box should go in your new home, and a brief description of contents. If your moving box has writing on it already, use white index cards. Clearly and largely write what room that box belongs and tape the index card to box.



PACKING TAPE

There are a variety of packing tapes available at your local hardware store. Choose a tape gun and tape that you feel comfortable with. That said, make sure you tape all seams of your box, both top and bottom.



CHAPTER 4

HOW TO PACK

PICTURES AND PICTURE FRAMES

Pictures and Frames are large, breakable and odd-sized items. To prevent chipped corners or broken glass, follow these rules for packing.

Box selection – You box should be slightly bigger than the item

Secure one end – tape one end of the box really well with packing tape

Bubble Wrap – Wrap the frame really well, as if it is a gift you will be opening.

Box up – Slip item into box carefully and secure box with packing tape.

Label – Write “Fragile” and the room this item will go in on the box in large lettering.

Moving tip – Picture items should always be packed on its side.

Purchase Cardboard Corners for pictures.

Use a Wardrobe box to pack a few pictures together, be sure to use soft items around them.

Have movers put pictures on their edges for the move.



MOVING YOUR BOOKS

The first step to moving books is to separate books you no longer want or need from those that are absolutely making the move. Divide your books into three stacks. One stack is for the books that you want to move with you. The second stack is for books you can stand to pass on to someone special. The third stack is for books you are willing to resell at a yard sale or donate to charity.

Old Books

If you have antique books, it is essential to prepare them for moving. Put a piece of cardboard on top of the book and underneath it to protect it from dents or damage. This helps protect the book's spine, which is often the weakest part of old, vintage books. Then, wrap the book in cling wrap. Safely stow these books in a secure location so the professional movers can further protect them.

Photo Albums

If you decide to pack your own things instead of hiring movers to do it, then you need to take special precautions with precious photo albums. Wrap each album in acid-free paper so the ink used in certain papers does not accidentally loosen off on your photos. Unlike hardcover books, photo albums are usually best put in boxes flat. This eliminates any possibility of images slipping while boxes are in transit.

PACKING LAMP SHADES

Lampshades are expensive and fragile. It is worth it to take the extra time and effort to pack them properly. Do not pack anything else with lampshades, unless you want to spend money buying new lampshades.

For packing normal lampshades, begin by getting large boxes, clean packing paper, and bubble wrap. Put bubble wrap on the bottom of the box. Line the sides of the box with clean packing paper. Put the lampshade top-side-down in the box. Crumple paper in the empty spaces within the box and inside the shade. If you are going to nest smaller shades within the larger shades, then use bubble wrap as a buffer. Top the shade with bubble wrap.

For packing glass lampshades, real care is required, since it is often the case that much of the value of the lamp is in the shade. Get a box that is somewhat larger than the shade, but not overly large. Place a pillow in the bottom of the box. Tape packing paper tightly on all of the glass. Then wrap the shade with bubble wrap. Place the wrapped shade in the box on the pillow. Take crumpled paper and fill in the corner spaces. Then place another pillow on top of the glass shade and fill-in top corner spaces with crumpled paper.

MOVING THE REFRIGERATOR

Your refrigerator is one of the most important appliances in your home. If you are preparing for a household move with major appliances, you'll need to prepare your refrigerator for a successful relocation. Follow these steps to ensure that perishable food and your refrigerator fridge arrive safely at your new home.

Place the food and condiments you want to keep on ice inside coolers about 24 hours before your move. This ensures that the items stay safe as you travel to your new home. Check the ice regularly.

Use vinegar and water to clean out the inside of the fridge. While cleaning, remove any photos, notes, and magnets from the outside of the fridge and [pack them safely](#). Remove the refrigerator shelves and produce bins. Like luggage in an overhead compartment, shelves and bins will shift (and possibly break) during the move. Wrap anything that might get broken and pack it with other fragile items.

If your refrigerator has ice or water in the door, disconnect the plumbing. Follow the instructions in your owner's manual. Be careful that you do not lose any of the small parts from the water line spigot.

If you do not have a frost-free refrigerator, you need to unplug the refrigerator the night before your move. Block the freezer door open so that it will melt any ice faster. Cover the floor near the refrigerator with towels so you do not have a giant mess underneath. Once the fridge defrosts, check if there is a water drip pan under it and dump it if necessary. Use paper towels to wipe the inside and outside of the refrigerator one more time.

It is best to place a chain around the refrigerator and place a padlock on the end of the chain. This helps ensure that a small child does not get shut in the refrigerator. Then, cover the fridge with blankets or moving pads so that your refrigerator does not end up scratched while moving it. Use a dolly to load the fridge onto the moving truck.

Once you get to your new home, unload the refrigerator and plug it in. Wait 24 hours to give the refrigerator time to cool before putting your stuff back in. Do not forget to check the ice level inside your ice chest. You will need to hook up the plumbing to get the water and ice features in the fridge door to work.





MOVING PLANTS

Moving plants is one of the last things that many homeowners think about when they relocate their belongings to a new home. However, some people love the beauty of their indoor and outdoor plants and may want to move them with the rest of their things. Unfortunately, most movers can't move plants. So, getting plants successfully moved is all upon the moving family themselves.

MOVING YOUR SMALL HOUSE PLANTS

So, if you decide to move your small house plants, follow these tips.

Keep them in their pots and place the pots in an uncovered plastic bin for transport. This prevents any lasting messes if your vehicle hits any bumps in the road. Stuff the gaps between plants on the box with old newspaper to prevent as much wiggling as possible.

Move your plants in a personal vehicle that has excellent temperature control and air circulation. If you are going on a long-distance move, and do stop for the night somewhere, take your plants in with you. Left alone in the car, any prolonged hot or cold temperatures can damage your plants.

HYDRATE PRIOR TO UPROOTING

The uprooting process is one of the most dangerous parts of a move for your plants. You want to ensure they have enough moisture in the surrounding soil to survive the trip. So, the night before your move, thoroughly water the soil around the plants you're relocating so they have water to thrive off of while they are uprooted and moved.

UPROOT CAREFULLY

When uprooting, it's best to dig a wide area around your plant that ensures no roots are damaged in the process. Have a pot ready, because the instant you uproot the plant it will need to be transferred to the pot for your move.

PLANT QUICKLY

Before your move, make sure you've planned out where each of your plants will go on your new property. If possible, have the holes for your plants already pre-dug, because the instant you arrive, you'll want to get your plants into the ground and watered.

From here, give them time to acclimate to their new surroundings and water them every day for the first few days so they regain their strength after the move.



CHAPTER 5

FINAL THOUGHTS

Taking some time to properly organize and pack your belongings will work to your advantage after your move. By clearly identifying the contents of your boxes and which room they belong in will help make unpacking effortless.

Set time aside to pack in advance and cut your stress level in half by making this phase of your upcoming move an important task. Examine the rooms in your home, and make an efficient calendar that gets you packed up days before your scheduled move-out date.

CREATE A PACKING ZONE IN YOUR HOUSE

Your packed boxes need to wait somewhere. Leaving them around your home is a recipe for confusion and an injury on your moving date.

Set aside space in each room where you'll set your labeled boxes. If you have enough room, you could even use your garage as an easy-access storage space for your moving company on the big day.

THE THICKER THE BOX, THE BETTER

Flimsy boxes are never anything you want to use for any move. However, when it comes to your breakable valuables, you definitely need thicker boxes to maximize the odds of safe transportation.

Before you pack your box, thoroughly inspect it. If it easily bends or shows any sign of giving without anything inside, it's time to upgrade to a thicker box.

SMALL BOXES ARE GREAT FOR FRAGILE ITEMS

Small boxes are some of the best places to safely store fragile items during a local or long-distance move. Not only are they easier for people to handle with care, but they also reduce the amount of wiggle room in the actual storage space.

So, if you have a lot of small cups or smaller, heavier jewelry boxes, start looking for smaller cardboard boxes that will ease the stress of moving your breakable goods.



NEVER GO LIGHT ON THE TAPE

You always want to tape the bottom of your cardboard boxes for extra reinforcement. Remember, there is no such thing as overusing packing tape in this part of the moving process. So, tape away to ensure that your box bottoms remain intact.

It is also helpful to use packing tape to secure bubble wrap around other fragile items. This will keep the wrapping where it belongs and prevent dangerous shifting during your move.

STUFF YOUR HOLLOW VALUABLES

Vases, ceramic cups, china, and other hollow delicates should always be stuffed with packing paper. Packing paper will fill in the hollow spaces of these belongings and help prevent unnecessary vibrations that could cause devastating cracks or shatters.

LABEL FRAGILE ITEMS

If you are asking your friends to help move or hire a value mover for your move, you want to make sure that your message is read loud and clear. Not only should you clearly mark that specific boxes contain fragile items, but you should also set said boxes aside. This separates them from the rest of your belongings and lets those that are helping you move to remain more aware of the fragile status of specific boxes.

Mindful packing is an essential moving strategy. Some mindful packing tips we can offer are:

- Packing heavier items in smaller, tighter boxes (less shifting)
- Lighter items like clothing and bedding go together in larger boxes
- Invest in specialty boxes for dishes and glasses



HOW YOU PACK MATTERS, AND
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