



Moving Checklist

As you get ready to move, you have a lot to organize and plan. Before you begin, take a deep breath. Think about what you need to do to get through the move and what else you'd like to do before you move. Be realistic about how many friends you'd like to see and say goodbye to. And try to build in "down time" for yourself and your family—time for some relaxation together. This checklist is meant to be a rough guide, rather than a strict schedule, and don't get anxious if you seem behind. Just take it one week at a time and concentrate on the steps that are most important for you and your family.

As soon as you know you'll be moving

- **Think about your child care needs** if you have a younger child. You can begin to look for programs, referrals, and resources in the new town where you will soon be living.
- **Gather information about schools in the new community** if you have a school-age child. There may be a number of different options to choose from.
- **If you have older relatives who will be affected by your move**, begin to plan what steps you need to take to be sure your relatives have the support and services they need. Talk with other family members.
- **If your company is moving you, talk with your human resources representative to find out what help you will be receiving.** Keep in close touch with your company's relocation service throughout the move to be sure you know what is expected of you.

Eight weeks before you move

- **Get estimates from several moving companies.** (If your company is moving you, this may be handled as part of your relocation service.) Ask for a breakdown of costs so that you can make fair comparisons. How many people will be on the moving crew? How much of the cost is for the truck, for packing, for boxes, or for overtime? Find out what the policy is for loss or breakage. (You may want to purchase additional insurance if the mover's coverage isn't sufficient.) Ask if there is anything the movers won't move. Find out how the moving company is to be paid.
- **Start a file to collect estimates, receipts, and records of all moving expenses.**
- **Contact an accountant or the IRS to find out which moving and travel expenses are tax deductible.**
- **Order packing boxes and shipping materials.**
- **Begin to clean out hard-to-pack areas like the attic, basement, garage, and other storage areas.** Pack seasonal items that you will not be needing right away, such as holiday decorations, clothes, and seldom-used items.
- **Donate or sell those items you will not be taking with you.** Consider having a yard sale.
- **Photograph or videotape valuable possessions for insurance purposes.** Make sure to record the value of these items in writing.
- **Make a list of friends, relatives, schools, doctors, businesses, newspapers, and others who should be notified that you are moving.**
- **Ask your health care provider, dentist, veterinarian, and others for referrals in your new community.** Your eye doctor, for instance, may be able to recommend someone in the town where you will be living. A hospital in the new community may be able to help, too. Many hospitals offer physician referral services.
- **If you have a school-age child, contact the school in your new community and find out what steps you'll need to take to register your child.**

Six weeks

- **Choose the mover.** If you are considering a mover you are unfamiliar with, call your state's Consumer Protection Agency or Better Business Bureau to find out about any history of complaints.
- **Write for information about the new community.** Begin to collect brochures and pictures to help your children get a sense of where they'll be living.
- **Ask your realtor for a floor plan and photograph of your new home.**
- **Send your new address and the date of your move to:**
 - friends and family
 - banks
 - businesses with which you hold credit cards or charge accounts
 - insurance agents
 - magazines and newspapers to which you subscribe.
- **If you are moving out of state, you may need to arrange new insurance coverage for a car or home.** Ask your insurance agent to recommend an agent in the new community. Call and make arrangements to have policies in place when needed.
- **Check with your lawyer to see if your will or trust documents need to be rewritten.**

Four weeks

- **Go over the floor plan of your new home with older children.** Encourage them to help in planning how bedrooms will be set up and how furniture will be arranged.
- **Hold a tag sale.** Let older children decide if any of their toys and belongings can be sold. Help them spend the money from those sales to buy something for their new rooms—such as a poster or other decoration. If older relatives will be moving with you, have them join in the sale, too.
- **If you will be moving yourself, reserve a truck or trailer.** If you are counting on friends or family for help, ask them to mark the moving day on their calendars.
- **Begin packing.** If the mover will be doing the packing, call now and confirm a packing date two or three days before your move. Wrap all fragile items in newspaper or bubble wrap.
- **Arrange for children's school records to be forwarded to the new school.**
- **Fill out change-of-address forms at your local post office.**
- **Collect birth certificates, passports, titles, and other important documents in a file or envelope.** Mark it clearly and keep careful track of it throughout the move.
- **Get copies of the family's medical records from your doctors or health plan.** Put them in the same file or envelope.
- **Send notice of your new address to your state Motor Vehicle Department and your town or city clerk.**
- **Make your travel plans for the moving trip.** Make plane reservations if flying, choose your route if driving, make motel reservations if you'll be stopping overnight along the way. Remember to make any special arrangements for pets.
- **Make arrangements to clean drapes, carpets, and upholstered furniture before the move.**
- **Before packing, take snapshots of your child's room and other places he will want to remember.**

Two weeks

- **Make arrangements for someone to watch younger children on moving day.**
- **Arrange for utilities (electric, gas, telephone, cable TV) to be disconnected in your current home and connected in your new home.** Make sure these utilities will be connected through moving day.
- **If you will need an apartment elevator at either end of the move, reserve it now.** Make sure it will be available for a sufficient window of time, allowing for unexpected delays.
- **Subscribe to the newspaper in your new community.**
- **If the move will involve a long drive, have your car serviced.** Check tires, oil, brakes, etc.
- **Dispose of any items too dangerous to move—such as flammable liquids.** Your town or city's Department of Public Works can tell you how to do this safely.
- **Talk to younger children about the move.** Show them pictures of the new home.

One week

- **Consider buying traveler's checks** for the trip and for expenses during the first few days in your new home. Arrange to pay the mover.
- **Call to discontinue newspaper and other delivery services.**
- **Get any prescriptions refilled.** Have prescriptions transferred to a pharmacy near your new home.
- **If you will be moving yourself, remind anyone who will be helping of the moving date.**
- **If the movers are packing your belongings, have them do it now.**
- **Complete as many errands as you can.** Pick up dry cleaning. Return library books and videotapes. Return things you have borrowed to friends and neighbors.
- **Remember to pack a local phone book to bring with you to your new home.**
- **Give away plants that you can't take with you.**

One or two days before you move

- Empty contents of your safe deposit box.
- Set aside valuables and important papers to carry with you during the move, or ship by insured carrier.
- Pack personal items that you and your family will want on moving day. Have your children choose their own things to bring on moving day.
- Pack a first aid kit to bring with you on the trip.
- Defrost your freezer and clean out your refrigerator.
- Confirm arrangements with your moving company.

Moving day

- Set aside your children's favorite toys and belongings, as well as any games, activities, or snacks you will need for the trip. Make sure security items, like blankets and teddy bears, are close at hand.
- Get young children settled with someone who can supervise them during the day.
- Be available when the movers arrive. Walk them through the house to inventory your belongings.
- Fill out the bill of lading (the official document that records the contents of the shipment). Give the driver careful written directions to your new home. Let him know where you will be and how you can be reached during the move.
- Before the truck leaves, walk through each room of the house with the driver to make sure nothing has been missed. Be sure you have copies of the inventory and bill of lading.
- Record utility meter readings (gas, electric, water).
- Take a final walk around the house with your child to say goodbye.

After you arrive

- Meet the movers at your new home. Supervise unloading until everything is inside.
- Check for damaged or missing belongings (refer to the inventory list). If anything is missing or damaged, be sure to note this information on the inventory—both your copy and the mover's.
- Celebrate your arrival. Order a pizza. Take a walk in your new neighborhood. If an older relative has moved with you, find a restaurant she would enjoy and take her out for dinner. Help her find social activities she might enjoy, at a local senior center, church, or synagogue.
- Spend some time with your family getting to know the new neighborhood. Take your child to a local ice cream shop. Visit the new school when classes aren't in session. Go for walks together. Explore a local park. Arrange play dates with other children who live nearby.
- If possible, unpack your child's things first, together with your child.
- Check your new home for safety. Make sure you have a smoke alarm on each floor, and that you have two exits from each floor in case of fire. Unpack your first aid kit and make sure everyone knows where it is. Check for local emergency numbers—fire, police, ambulance, poison control—and post them near the phone.
- Transfer your driver's license and vehicle registration after you have settled in.
- If you've moved away from older relatives, make an effort to call or write. Tell them how the move is going and find out how they are.
- Make some time for yourself. This is especially hard when you're unpacking and settling in to a new home, but it's as important now as ever. Order takeout food occasionally. Take some time off from unpacking to go for a walk by yourself, read a good book, or rent a movie you've been wanting to see.