

Moving Organising

Main things to consider:

- Budget
 - Not just how much you can spend on movers, but also how much you can spend on supplies.
 - But also, movers. Seriously. Figure out what it's going to cost to get the most horrible, bulky, heavy crap moved with movers. Boxes you can probably deal with on your own, but furniture is a different hateful beast. If it's even vaguely within your reach, just hire the movers.
 - Transport (assuming movers aren't happening)
 - Yes, you can rent a moving van, but they need to be booked in advance, and also have a limited amount of time which you can hold them. This means that you want to get the right sized van for your needs, for the amount of time that you'll need. It's cheaper to rent the van for longer than you think you'll need than to pay late penalties.
 - Generally a 2 bedroom home that you're moving like 5 miles or less is going to take at least 8 hours with the van if you're not hiring professional help for loading and unloading. If you ever hope to pause and grab lunch or you hit traffic, you'll end up needing 12 hours or so. Better to just book the damn thing for a full 24 hours or so than have to scramble at the last minute because the timer is running out on your van rental.
 - If you're working with a smaller space, then budget less time with the moving van, or rental car, as the case may be.
 - One more thing: the person who's going to be driving the van needs to be the person who pays for the thing. Venmo that person the money. Having two of the people who are moving your crap bounce for two hours in the middle of the moving in part because one paid the bill but was too nervous to drive, so the other one drove, so I had to move all our crap up 4 flights of stairs by myself. That was not my finest moment.
 - Temporary No Parking signs
 - If you live in a city of reasonable size where people rely on street parking, check with your department of transportation to see if you can reserve space for your moving truck to park while you're unloading the old place, and loading the new place.
 - Usually the cost of the temporary no parking is not even \$100, including the no parking signs, and it means that your moving van won't be blocking traffic like an asshole.
 - [Boxes](#)
 - All shapes, sizes, etc.
 - If you do need to get them for free from various shops local to you, do so at least three weeks before your move date, because you'd be surprised at how few places will have boxes on the schedule that you need them.

- It's also good to check your local Facebook Marketplace to see if anyone has boxes that they'll give you.
- Also, ask your local liquor store if they can spare any. Those boxes with the dividers are excellent for packing away drinking glasses.
- Consider plastic totes. I've used them for storage in my apartment, but they're also great for moving stuff that I can't afford to have damaged (picture frames, china, expensive electronics that I don't want bopping around in a cheap cardboard box that can get crushed or wet). Alexis likes this set of totes that she's had for years that she's used every time she's had to move (and it's a lot). I used them for my previous move, and it made it so that I didn't have to use any disposable boxes. They were also a LOT easier to carry than the cardboard boxes.
- Tape
 - It need not be the strongest stuff, but it should be strong enough to keep your boxes shut.
 - Definitely get a roll for every 20 boxes you'll need to tape up, if you want them to be taped up well. But also, tape isn't freaking that expensive, and you're probably going to lose the damn thing at least fifty times. Just buy at least [one roll for each person helping you pack](#).
 - Also, get [masking](#)/painter's tape for anything that needs to be labelled.
 - If you need tape to really strap things down together (those slats you need for your bed, a bunch of furniture pieces that you need to corral, etc), don't get duct tape. Duct tape is garbage crap. Get [gaffer's tape](#). Anyone who's done production of any type will tell you that gaffer's tape is worth its weight in gold. That stuff is magic, and doesn't leave a gross residue when you're done using it. It's also stronger than duct tape, and can hold damn near anything in place.
- Bubble wrap
 - If bubble wrap for your breakables is too expensive, you're going to have to go the route of wrapping in towels/socks/clothes when you pack
 - For glass and china, it might make sense to wrap in newspaper, and use bubble wrap as cushioning in between the pieces, so that you use less.
- Garbage bags
 - Get one colour for actual trash that gets dumped, and another colour for clothes, shoes, etc so that in the rush of confusion you don't throw out your winter coats, and take along the bag full of expired snacks that you're throwing out
 - Seriously. Garbage bags for shoes, clothes, linens, towels, cushions, pillows? It's super handy to have on hand. These

- are, of course, the pillows, towels, and clothing that has not been pressed into service to protect breakables.
- 13 gallon size is a good size for most tasks, like clothes or shoes, because much bigger than that, and you'll end up overfilling. This won't just be a weight issue, but also a bag ripping issue. Ask me how I know.
 - Markers, [painters tape](#)
 - You want to label things as clearly as you can.
 - Get some [FAT sharpies](#) so that you can label in big letters, as clearly as possible.
 - First word on the label should be what room the box/bag belongs to.
 - Then, write on there what that thing is. When you're unpacking, it'll make it easier to know which boxes to prioritise unpacking first.
 - Example: KITCHEN - Cutlery, serving spoons, measuring tools. BEDROOM - Towels, pillow cases, bedding. LIVING ROOM - Reference books, picture frames. LIVING ROOM - Fiction books. BEDROOM - Work clothes, socks.
 - The more detail you include when you label things, the easier it will be when it's time to unload everything.
 - Size of your space, both the one you're leaving, and the one you're going to.
 - The bigger the space you have where you're coming from, the more stuff you're going to discover that you own.
 - EVEN IF YOU'RE A MINIMALIST, you're still going to be shocked with how much crap has been hiding in your home. This is a thing that happens.
 - For packing up, budget about 45 minutes per cabinet in the kitchen, 1 hour per bathroom, 1 hour per other room, and 5 hours per bedroom. These are bare minimums that you want to give yourself.
 - In my experience, for a dish set where you have 6 of each thing (coffee cups, saucers, plates, drinking glasses, cutlery, bowls), the whole works with padding to prevent breakage should fit into two "[large](#)" Home Depot moving boxes. A drawer's worth of clothes is going to need at least one garbage bag. You can fit a lot of books into one box, but then the box becomes too heavy to carry. Spread them out as much as possible, and pack up the rest of the box with space filling crap that doesn't weigh a lot.
 - How many people can help you
 - If the answer is fewer than two, be prepared for a much longer process, or a much more expensive process, because either you're going to have to hire people to help you, or do it yourself.
 - There are apps out there that can get you in touch with people willing to help you do stuff for about \$50 - \$150 an hour. This is worth every penny, because these folks are good at what they do, and you're not going to go nuts trying to do it all yourself.
 - HOWEVER. If you are anticipating more than 2 rooms worth of furniture, boxes, etc, get a formal quote from an actual moving company. The amount of time it'll take the freelance people to do the job will be way too long, and you'll end up paying more.

- Your abilities
 - We all have different physical and executive abilities. If this is something that you have challenges in, ask for help, whether that means sending out the bat signal to everyone you know, or hiring people to help.
 - For example, I can lift some things, but not much more than 40 lbs, and not for long enough to get it in and out of the house more than a couple of times. For any furniture I'm moving, I am going to have to get someone to come do it for me, period the end.
 - However, I do know that I'm good at (and capable of) packing things up, and organising them myself. In fact, for the most part, I prefer packing my stuff up on my own, because I know it'll get done like I want to, and that I can do it more efficiently and quickly than having others do it for me.
 - Sometimes, you are a person who isn't able to do a ton of organising, or lifting, but you know that when you're around, you're good at giving company to your friends, or defusing situations that are getting tense. That person is also a very vital role, and if it's you, then let everyone know that you suck at the actual moving of stuff, but you're happy to provide your company, and keep things sane for everyone.
- Time before you have to be out
 - Time you have to pack (considering work, life etc), and get your stuff together
 - Time that you have between end of the old lease/mortgage/rent and the start of the new lease/mortgage/rent
 - If you have the luxury of affording a longer gap between the move out date and the move in date, for the love of eff, DO IT. You think you can get it done in a day or two, but then reality bites you in the butt. You don't want to be there standing around with crap in the old place when the new tenants are moving in the next day. It's too stressful. The longer a gap you can give yourself, the easier time you'll have to clean the old place so you can get your deposit back.
 - If you DON'T have that luxury, other things are going to have to ramp up big time:
 - The amount of boxes you'll need (there's no time to go back and forth to the store to get more)
 - The amount of help you'll need, whether it's professional movers or your family and friends
 - The amount of money it's going to cost you. Let's be honest. A thing that has to happen in a short time frame is always going to cost you way more than you anticipated.
 - Time you have to unpack
 - If you're facing a situation where you need to get unpacked quickly, and with the least amount of fuss, you're going to have to arrange for time off from work and other responsibilities so that you can have uninterrupted time to do the deed.
 - If you don't have the time, but do have the budget, there are professional organisers who will come to your house, unpack your stuff, and set it up for you in such a way that things are organised, and they'll show you where everything is, so that you're not lost in space.

It's not cheap, but depending on your time constraints, might be a thing to look into.

- Distance of the move
 - When you're moving really far distances, every single thing that you drag along with you is going to be really expensive to get from point A to point B. You'd better be prepared to justify the cost of dragging that 20 year old couch with the weird stains on it, especially when a new one would cost less than moving the old one.
 - When it's a closer move, you have the luxury of taking everything, even the frivolous stuff, because for fuck's sake, it's all right around the corner. However, don't fall into the trap of wasting time taking something that really could be better off getting tossed right now, rather than later. Every thing you take with you is a thing that you're going to have to unpack on the other side.
- Time of year
 - If you're moving in the height of summer, or on a very hot day, make sure you provide plenty of cold water for the people helping you out *on both sides*. So have a cooler in the trunk of your car with cold water and ice, so that when you reach the destination, you've still got cold water to pass around as needed. Make sure the A/C is cranking at full tilt, because moving is hot business, and nobody wants to go sweating from outside's swamp ass heat to come into your swamp ass heat indoors. Have some type of crap to snack on, because people will get hungry in between hauling all your crap out of your house, and it doesn't hurt to have something to nosh on to keep up your energy.
 - If it's cold out, still provide water, but maybe order a tub of coffee from the local doughnut shop, and some pastries or something.
 - Whatever the weather, offer some sandwiches or pizza or something to the people helping you out. Moving is stressful, and you want something easy enough to eat that'll satisfy your appetite, while not being so heavy that you need to take a nap after having it.
- Safety equipment
 - Straps to hold down your cargo in the moving van.
 - Back braces for anyone who's lifting heavy stuff
 - Heavy duty gloves, for anyone picking up heavy stuff
 - Make sure anyone moving heavy stuff is wearing closed toed shoes with some kind of reinforcement. This doesn't have to be reinforced toed shoes, but certainly not a pair of flimsy sandals. Accidents happen—they don't need to be injurious ones.
 - A central place to put your sunglasses, van keys, etc that everyone knows not to mess with, so that you go back to the same spot every time to find those things. Moving is chaotic, and things can randomly end up in a box, even when you're being careful.
- Takeout food/disposable dishes.
 - For the week leading up to the move itself, you're going to have to pack like most of your kitchen. This will not be fun or pleasant. However, if you don't want to be stuck running the dishwasher on moving day like an asshole, resign yourself to just sucking it up about the crap disposable dishes and crap takeout.

- Make sure that you get things settled in hand before moving day. You should have already paid the deposit on the place, and have your keys in your hands, and any other crap sorted before you book the van/call everyone over. Again, ask me how I know.