

TIPS ON PACKING TO MOVE

The best time to start thinking about packing for your move is when you start thinking about buying a house. Packing up all your worldly goods is never going to be fun, but organization and preparation are the keys to making it less painful. With careful planning, you'll be able to move everything safely, and find it once you've relocated.

- Before you start to pack, take a good look at everything you have. Moving time is a great time to get rid of things you don't want, don't use, and don't want to move. Set aside a specific area to put things you may want to get rid of, and add to it as you go along. As for the unwanted items, you can either give them away, sell them (yard sales or online auctions are options) or donate them to local charities. If you donate, make sure to get a receipt for tax purposes!
- **PREPARE TO PACK.** You'll need boxes, packing tape (or duct tape), heavy markers for labeling boxes, and packing materials. Start collecting these before you even start packing, and keep collecting more throughout the process.
- **MAKE A MAP!** Don't focus on where things are; think about where they're going. Draw a map of your new place with the rooms either named or numbered. On moving day, post the name or number of each room on a piece of paper over the door. Because...
- **LABEL EVERYTHING.** You might remember that the box with the purple stripe on it goes in the downstairs bathroom, but you can be sure that the mover or your friend who's carrying the box is not going to know. Label each box with the location (from your map) of where it should end up.
- **KEEP THINGS SAFE.** Every box label should specify how to handle that box. "Heavy," "Fragile," "This side up," etc. Keep your labels simple but clear to avoid loss, breakage, or injuries!
- **MAKE SPACE.** Set aside a room or an area of each room to store your packed boxes. This will keep them out of your way and make moving day easier if everything is organized in advance.
- **PACK IN REVERSE ORDER OF NEED.** Start with things you're not going to need for a while. Off-season clothes, the holiday serving plates, anything you're not going to use until after the move should be packed first. The last things to get packed should be the things you're using on a day-to-day basis.
- **BE EFFICIENT.** Some items that need to be packed can do double duty. Why use rolls and rolls of bubble pack or newspaper to wrap glassware when towels or clothes will do just as well, and will make for less trash when you unpack. Sweaters and sweatshirts make great packing material for mirrors, photos, and other fragile items. Be creative!
- **DUCT TAPE IS YOUR FRIEND.** Use it to seal boxes, hold folding chairs together, gather brooms and ski poles into manageable bundles, and anything else you can think of.
- **TAKE CARE OF THE BIG STUFF.** To protect them from damage, wrap furniture and appliances in movers' blankets or padding. You can rent these materials from moving or storage companies.

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