

How to pack for the big move?

Here are just a few simple packing tips that can help make moving faster, more efficient, and maybe even save you some money—what’s not to love about that?

1. Make a plan

This is the most important part of packing—and it’s also where most people go wrong. You know how the saying goes: If you fail to plan, you’re planning to fail.¹

Once you know what date your mover is coming, you’ll want to plan your packing days. (If you haven’t hired a mover yet, then now is the time to start shopping around). And don’t expect to pack up your whole three-bedroom house in one day —it always takes longer than you expect.

Block out two or three full days on your calendar. List the rooms you need to pack up and assign a few of them to each day.

Pro tip

Pack up a big central room first so you can use it as a “Packing Zone” where you keep all of your supplies and finished boxes. *For-the-love-of-organization . . . Label Your Boxes* as you bring them into this Packing Zone.

2. Measure absolutely everything

There’s a right time to measure your furniture, and then there’s a wrong time.

When the exhausted movers are trying to force your five-piece sofa through the front door of your new house, guess what time it is? You guessed it—that’s the wrong time to be measuring.

It's best to take the measuring tape to your big appliances and furniture pieces before you pack them away on the truck. Measure your furniture, then measure the door you'll be carrying them through to make sure they'll fit. Watch out for those clunky coffee tables, large paintings, and oddly-shaped shelves.

Another benefit of accurate measuring is that you know what size you'll need for your [truck rental](#) or [moving container rental](#) if you're doing the move on your own. And if you find that something won't fit in your new place, that's just one less thing to pack! Which brings us to . . .

3. Purge!

Organizing guru Marie Kondo said that “the question of what you want to own is actually the question of how you want to live your life.”² Well, what better time to get rid of your excess baggage (and change how you live your life) than when you're about to lug it across the country?

Got a bunch of pants that no longer fit? Donate them to a thrift store. What about that grill that you used once four summers ago? Ask the neighbors if they want it. You might even get some tax write-offs if you donate the old clunker in the garage to a charitable cause.

4. Use high-quality materials

There's only one thing between your prized possessions and the dangerous elements: a thin layer of cardboard. So make it count.

You might be able to reuse old boxes that survived your last move, but if they're not in tip-top shape, you risk having whatever's inside end up on the sidewalk—or worse. Likewise, you can use newspaper to pack fragile items, but you risk smudges and breaks.

If you don't already have quality supplies, why not just spend a few extra bucks for new boxes, packing foam, and a roll of strong packing tape? You can buy these supplies from your local moving company.

5. Label your boxes

If you only remember one tip from this list, let it be this one: label, label, label! When your stuff is sitting in a stack of identical brown boxes, it's nearly impossible to remember where you put that Phillips-head screwdriver or that very important tax document.

There are many ways to label. Some use colored tape to signify where each box belongs. Others just write "kitchen" or "living room" in Sharpie. I prefer to use stickers. Slap one on each box and write out the individual contents—you'll thank yourself later!

6. Switch your utilities

When we think about what we need to pack, we tend to think about things that fit into boxes. But, given the choice, most of us would "unpack" a high-speed internet connection long before we worried about getting our Tupperware organized in the kitchen cabinets.

If you want your new place to be Netflix-ready on day one, then start contacting internet service providers in the area at least a few weeks before your move. While you're at it, you can call the gas and electric companies, and check your cell phone carrier's reception in the area.

Speaking of things that don't fit into boxes, have you figured out how your car is going to get to your new home? Now's a good time to map out the route on Google or just hire an [auto carrier](#) to do the road trip for you.

7. Ask for help

A few extra hands (and brains) make packing less boring and more efficient. I like to order pizza and put on some tunes to try to convince my friends it's a party.

Whatever your style is, now's the time to call in favors from old pals. While you're at it you should pick up some ice cream to bribe the kids into helping. And maybe ask your partner to forgive you preemptively for being cranky on moving day!