

Tips and tricks for moving into your new home

By Jennifer Mackay

I have moved many times over the course of my years and have gained some valuable tips and techniques that I pass on to my customers.

When first time home buyers have completed the closing, many times they are often overwhelmed by what occurs next, what to do and how to do it.

Moving into a new home can be a very confusing time for new home owners. Often times new home owners will focus on the immediate obvious tasks of moving and omit or not realize the importance of the little details.

Every one is different and their priorities tend to be focused on what they believe to be of importance. The finer details of a move and some of the tasks of making the transition from one home to another often sneak up on new home owners and make the transition a more tedious stressful affair than it has to be.

With that in mind, I present my customers with a short list of the necessary items they may not think of while they prepare to move into their new home. I provide this information as a service to all home buyers, and welcome additional insights and tips that others have used to make transitioning from one home to another easy, stress free and as enjoyable an experience as possible.

When I begin thinking about the move, I setup an outline and 2 task lists: list of physical items I will need to purchase or obtain for the move as well as a to-do list.

These lists provide me with an accurate measurement of what tasks are left to be accomplished prior to moving day and help me to remember items of importance.

Here is a list of some of the physical items needed for a move:

Boxes

You can never have too many boxes. You can either purchase them from a moving supply store, find them behind department stores, or some movers will also supply a given number of boxes. You will need various sizes and types of boxes for the move: small, medium and large boxes, Wardrobe boxes (these have a cross beam so you can hang clothing items within) etc. I also use boxes of various material types: Cardboard and plastic as an example.

Packing Material

Newspaper, bubble wrap, towels etc. Newspaper can be shredded to protect fragile items from impacts when moved. Bubble wrap I use for the more delicate items including fine

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china, art work and other fragile knick knacks. Towels I use as box stuffers. Towels are placed inside the walls of boxes to give fragile items such as dishes a cushion from impacts.

Packing and marking Tape and dispenser

It's always a good idea to seal the boxes. Interlocking the flaps of boxes does not provide enough lock for the box and may open during transfer. I will usually interlock the flaps, and then tape over the seams to secure the box further.

For marking tape I use either the blue painters tape, or white duct tape. I place a strip of tape on everything that is either boxed or wrapped and mark the room in which it belongs.

Twine or rope

I use this material for several reasons: to secure box flaps that may come undone and I always bind books in rope for easy movement. Books in boxes can get very heavy and often times the boxes break or are too heavy to transit. Binding books in rope gives everyone, even small children the ability to pickup a stack and place it in a vehicle. It also saves your back from trying to lift a box full of books!

Movers Wrap

Movers wrap is a large roll of saran wrap like material. I use this to wrap furniture, TV's and other large items that either don't fit in a container or require additional protection. It also allows me to add impact protection to the items. Example: I have a coffee table made of wood, I place rolled towels around the corners then wrap the table with movers wrap. This provides extra padding for the table which lessens the chance of it getting scratched or broke during the move.

Extra light bulbs

I pick up a few extra light bulbs just in case they're needed. Don't forget to have a flashlight on hand as well!

New Locks

For safety and security, I change all the locks in the house (front, back and side doors) either before moving day or on moving day. One never knows who has keys to the new home.

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You may require additional items on your physical list. Personalize the list to your requirements so you can have any necessary items readily available for your move.

My to-do list will include all the tasks needed to be accomplished before, during and after the move. This list includes:

Movers/Truck Rental

Some of my moves I have had friends and relatives help with the move. Others, I have hired professional movers. Either way, it is important to make sure all the necessary people and vehicles are scheduled for the correct day of the move.

A few years back, I hired what I thought was a professional moving company (a very well known company) for my move to a new home. The day before the move I had not heard from the company and telephoned to make sure all was well. They told me they had my move scheduled for the following week! I was livid! I had previously verified the date with the company 2 weeks prior! Now I had to rush to find a new moving company for my actual moving day since the family moving into my old home was due to arrive the day after I moved out! Needless to say, I'll never use that moving company again (nor recommend them) and I always confirm the day of moving with the company twice after my initial contact: 2 weeks before and then again 2 days before the move!

Packing

When packing, I always pack first in last out. What I mean is; if you think you are going to require an item quickly during or after the move, place it last in a box or container so it is on top and readily available as you open the container. Likewise, items on the bottom are those that won't be needed right away.

I always pack by room. I will place several boxes and packing materials in each room and Label the box by the room in which it belongs. In the case of personal rooms, such as children's rooms include their name on the box. If there are several of the same types of rooms such as offices, I mark them specifically as well. And don't forget to mark boxes for storage rooms and garages!

I bubble wrap all delicate items before placing them in a box. I also bubble wrap all electronic items to prevent and lessen damage to the item due to shock or impact.

I try not to mix rooms in the same box. It is much easier to unpack a room when all the items and boxes for that room are located right there.

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I try to move delicate and fragile items myself. Whenever possible, I move the fragile boxes and items prior to the big moving day. When that is not possible, I place these items in my car. I know that moving day will be a rush and to minimize the confusion that day, it's best for me if fragile items are not part of the rush.

I place comfort and hygiene items in their own small box, tooth brush and paste etc. for easy access.

I also am certain to have one small bag with paper plates, cups and disposable utensils for dinner and lunch the day of the move.

Contact Phone Numbers

I make certain I have called the necessary services prior to the move: Water Company, electric company, Gas Company, refuse management company (trash pickup) and have these numbers readily available the day of moving just in case. A real estate agent can and should provide these numbers to you.

Also, if obtaining a new phone number contact the Phone Company and schedule an installation date as close to moving day as possible.

Change of address

Many new home owners often forget or don't realize the importance of changing your address with the post office. The post office has a package you fill out and can leave with your post person or drop off at the post office. I always make sure this is done so my bills and correspondence can arrive at the new home in a timely manner. The last thing I want is to have bills show up at the new home after their due date!

Get Cash

Moving day is a very hectic day. The last thing I want to happen is to not have enough cash on hand for: tipping the movers, purchasing beverages, lunch and/or dinner etc.

Moving Day

Now that I've prepared for moving day, I am ready and anxious for the day to arrive. If you are like me, you are excited to start your new life in your new home.

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On or before (whenever possible) moving day, I go to the new home and place signs on the entrance to each room. The signs are the descriptions of the room (matching the box descriptions) so the movers will be able to place the appropriate boxes and items in their assigned rooms. Children's rooms get a sign with their name on it, living room, dining room etc. How I intend to use a room, may not be readily evident. It also allows me to direct the process much easier as the Movers don't have to ask where to put items.

Once moving day arrives, I am on top of my game. All items in the old house are packed and labeled and ready for the movers, all fragile items are loaded into personal vehicles or have already been moved to the new home. I then let the movers do their thing and load the truck. Most professional movers have a system for packing their trucks so I let them do what I hired them to do. Many reputable movers will examine and verify that delicate or fragile items such as televisions etc. are packed and protected appropriately.

For lunch and/or dinner I order something easy to be delivered and don't forget the drinks. I'll always pick up some bottled water and sport drinks to keep everyone involved hydrated.

Even though I had a home inspection prior to closing, when I arrive at the new home, I check and make sure every thing still works. I or someone I assign will go around the house and turn on all the lights, use the garage door opener, run the sprinklers (after the movers leave and there is nothing left outside on the lawn), run the dishwasher, dryer and clothes washer and check the pool or spa pump. If there is a problem, now is the time I want to find it.

I also go around the house and acclimate myself to all the various wall switches. Some of the switch uses may not be obvious. If there are allot of switches, I place blue painters' tape (it doesn't leave marks and is easy to remove) and mark the switches use until I become familiar with its usage.

If you're like me, you have pets. I always put the pets in the backyard during the move and while the movers are there. I let the pets get accustomed to their new yard and give them plenty of water and some chew treats to keep them busy. Once the movers have left, I let the pets in the house and give them some time to smell around the home and acclimate themselves. After all, pets are people too!

After moving day

Now that I'm all moved in and begin to unpack, I've learned a few handy tips that I hope will help you settle in to your new home with ease:

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Put out the welcome mat! If you don't have a welcome mat, consider getting one to welcome visitors to your new home. It helps your neighbors feel comfortable in welcoming you to the new neighborhood.

Assign weekly family project tasks for maintenance and general upkeep for your new home. Assigning family projects is a great way to motivate children to do chores and give the family some quality time together.

More tips

Here are some handy cleaning tips I've learned for the house:

To clean a lavatory bowl:

Pour a can of Coca-Cola into the bowl and... Let the "real thing" sit for one hour, then flush clean. The citric acid in Coke removes stains from vitreous china.

To clean the caulking around bathtubs and showers:

Fill a trigger-spray bottle with vodka, spray the caulking, let set five minutes and wash clean. The alcohol in the vodka kills mold and mildew.

Summary

Moving into a new home, if properly organized before hand can be a great day for everyone involved. Creating lists to prepare for the move, marking items and the rooms in which they belong assist the helpers and make the move much easier. Many times it can also save you money by reducing the time needed to use professional movers.

There are many more events and tasks that can occur prior to moving. Creating a list will help minimize the tasks and items that need to be completed for a move to a new home.

Oh, and don't forget... You are allowed to paint the walls, hang pictures and shelves and get new carpeting or other floor covering.

After all... It's YOUR home now!

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