Make Moving Easier

Spring and summer are busy times in the real estate market. Although many people look forward to having a fresh start in a new place, they may be anxious about the moving process itself. Here are a few tips to help make it easier.

1. Lighten up. Whether you're hiring movers or renting a truck and getting help with the heavy lifting, it pays to lighten the load of stuff you plan to move. Now is the time to go through your belongings and be intentional about your goal– if it's broken, underused or you don't see yourself needing it in the future, it's time to donate it. If you don't use it now, chances are you won't use it at all in your new home.

- **Sell or donate** unused items that are still in good condition. Sites like **Craigslist** and **eBay**, or apps like **Letgo**, allow you to sell your items easily. Start the process at least a month before your moving date. Similarly, look into local charities that accept donations and be sure to get a receipt if you plan to write it off on your taxes.
- **Recycle** items that are broken or worn out. Call a junk removal service to responsibly dispose of items that should not end up in our landfills.

2. Take breaks. One of the reasons people find moving so stressful is they're overwhelmed by all the tasks that need to get done. While trying to stay on top of everything, it's easy to forget to take breaks and eat. Taking a break will give you the energy you need to recharge before you tackle the next room or task.

- Pack a bag of snacks to munch on during the day, and don't forget to stay hydrated by drinking lots of water.
- Set an alarm halfway through the day to take a meal break. Order pizza or sandwiches, especially if you have others helping out.
- If you find yourself getting anxious, take a few minutes to breathe. Repeat a mantra that helps you focus and calms your spirit.

3. Pack smart. Be mindful of what you are packing and when you pack it to ensure your valuables are not lost or broken.

- **Start early.** The earlier you start packing, the better you'll be able to organize and prioritize your items. If you know you're not going to use it until after you move, pack it away.
- **Pack by room and number your boxes.** In a notebook or app, write what's in each box (e.g., Box 5 Kitchen: utensils, blender, crock pot). Take it a step further and pick up colored stickers from an office store to color-code each box by room.
- **Pack valuable items yourself.** After all, only you can give them the extra care they need to survive the move in one piece. Use bubble wrap or wrap the items in soft linens or clothing, such as pillow cases and bedding, towels and t-shirts.
- **Will you need certain items right away**, such as toiletries, work clothes or home office items? Pack them in clear plastic bins. This saves you from having to open all of your boxes to find what you need. Label as "open first."

More than 35 million people, or approximately 11% of the population, relocate each year.

Source: U.S. Census

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How to Move with Children and Pets

Moving with children and pets can be stressful. Since they thrive on routine, breaking it will often cause them to act out, especially when they're younger. Make it easier with the following tips:

1. Start preparing them ahead of time.
For children, have a question-and-answer conversation about where you're moving and why. While older children will understand right away, younger ones may not. For toddlers and younger school-aged children, discuss the move with them several times. For children of all ages, give them a time frame for the move so they can get used to the idea and prepare to wind down their school and athletic activities.

2. Visit the new area.
Take your children and pets to parks and trails located near the new house. Build excitement about the new area by visiting your children's future school to pick up flyers for activities on-campus or at the local recreation center. Visit the local dog park to meet your neighbors and fellow pet owners, and allow your pet to meet other dogs in the community, too.

3. Include the children in the moving process.
Give them age-appropriate tasks to help with the move, from moving light boxes to packing their own rooms. Getting them actively involved will give them some ownership of the move and make them feel more comfortable and in control of their circumstances.

4. Hire a sitter.
Having someone watch your children or pets the day of the move will ensure you can pack and load the truck safely and efficiently. Knowing your little ones and furry friends may be stressed, anticipate that your sitter's duties may be intensified and plan ahead. Provide plenty of meal options and treats to keep everyone nourished and happy. For after meals and during drives, make sure your sitter has favorite games and toys to keep the group entertained.

5. Reward everyone's hard work.
Give everyone something to look forward to after the move. Go out for a nice meal and take time to relax in your new home for the remainder of the day. Give your pet their favorite treat or take them for a nice walk.

Make Unpacking a Breeze

Although many people don't find unpacking nearly as stressful as packing, it can be tedious. Make the process less of a chore by following these tips before you move.

1. Clean before you move in. While the previous owners may have cleaned when they left, give your new home a thorough cleaning to ensure it is move-in ready for you. Also, take the time to stock the bathrooms with toilet paper and put snacks and paper towels in the kitchen. When it's moving day, you'll be glad you did.

2. Store hardware for furniture, curtain rods, etc. in sandwich bags. If you disassemble any furniture, this ensures you don't lose any screws or important pieces. Tape the bags to the underside of the furniture.

3. Take photos that show how your electronics are connected. If you've tossed the instructions to your gadgets, taking a photo of the back of your television, stereo or computer will help you match each cord to the correct plug.