



Moving Guide and Checklist

Moving can be very stressful; however, the moving process can be less stressful if you come up with weekly to-do lists (scheduling, packing, and cleaning). In this post, we'll discuss the process starting 8-weeks before your move date. At the end of the article, you will find a download button to get a printable checklist to help you avoid common mistakes.

Eight weeks

1. Your first step in getting ready to move is to create a folder or binder for your checklist and all the papers related to your move. The folder will save you a great deal of time and stress. You will not have to search for paperwork because you will have all your documents in one place.
2. Next, you will need to print out a checklist to mark each item off as you complete it. You can use this link to print out the Southwest Moving and Transport's checklist, or you can find others online.
3. Start preparing a moving budget. It will need to be adjusted as you go, but you need to know how much money it will take to move.
4. After looking at your budget, you will decide if you should make a move yourself or hire a professional.
5. If you hire a moving company, you need to start searching for a moving company and get a few estimates. The moving company can provide information with regards to questions you may have about your move. You will want to find a company such as Southwest Moving and Transport, LLC making sure they are licensed, bonded, and insured. A good moving company will work hard for you, helping with the stress of moving. Diminishing stress begins with good communications and proper credentialing from your moving company.
6. You can get recommendations from friends, look for reviews online or check with the Better Business Bureau. Make sure the moving company is licensed, bonded, and insured. Of course, you should know your "rights and responsibilities."
7. You should contact at least three companies and compare their quotes. Due to Covid, you will want to see if the movers still perform an in-person survey of the move. Southwest Moving & Transport can perform surveys over the phone or in person. We request photos and inventory listing to help complete your "over the phone" surveys. Estimates are considered "binding or non-binding," make sure you understand the type of estimate. Binding estimates usually have a different, higher dollar amount. Not all estimates may be free; upfront charges may apply. Be sure to ask questions with regards to your estimate.
8. Before you move, you should read the documents from movers. If you don't want to be intimidated by contracts, make sure you ask questions.
9. Having an estimate signed by all parties will allow you to decide on the moving company that fits your budget.
10. Now is an excellent time to sort and pack valuables (jewelry, collectibles, or hobbies), documents (titles, marriage certificates, Dr's notes, banking information, etc.) that you do not need before the move.
11. Before you start packing, you should separate items that you do not need and either donate them or have a yard sale. Don't pay to move things you will not use.
12. Now is an excellent time to take a detailed room-by-room inventory.
13. As you inventory, make a note of items that will need special handling or loading.

Seven weeks

14. So you have decided to hire a mover. This week will be the time to schedule with your mover.
(Note: confirm this information with the companies you have estimates with, as each company

may schedule differently) It is essential to book as early as possible; quite often, they book out far in advance and limit how many moves they will accept at any given time. Southwest Moving and Transport does book on a “first come, first serve” basis.

15. It is time to gather supplies such as boxes, labels, tape, and packing material.
16. To save on the cost of moving material, you may be able to find some items from friends or a neighbor’s recent move. Due to Covid, it is not recommended that you secure your materials from a dumpster, behind stores, or places identified as “high risk.” The preferred method of obtaining moving supplies will be to purchase new...ie Amazon, Home Depot, Lowes, Walmart, or U-haul, to name a few. You may want your moving company to supply your moving supplies. Depending on the company, they may have used material available vs. new. Generally used material from a “mover” has been warehoused and is understood to be ok for moving.
17. Wherever you get the boxes, you should clean them and ensure they are in good shape. You don't want to get your stuff dirty
18. It is not too early to start packing those items that you will not use before the move.
19. It would help if you got all your “ducks in a row.” Go around your house – garage, attics, basements, closets, and storage areas. Sort out “non-essential” items and pack them first.
20. You will need to request your children’s school records to have them for the new school.
21. Make sure to keep your pet's toys and beds still accessible for use. (they sense change)
22. By now, you will probably need to add sections to your binder to keep everything in order.

Six weeks before you move

23. Now it’s time to start minimizing items in the house or shutting down rooms. It would be best if you began packing them early to reduce last-minute rushing. You may want to minimize house contents if you are showing the house to potential buyers. If no house showing is necessary, shutting down rooms is always best. Reserve space in the garage to store packed items or renting storage for a time might be an option. The idea is to make sure you have a timeline to complete the process.
24. Pack items of the same size together or items from the same room, keeping your packing more uniform and more organized for labeling - whatever works for you. The labeling of boxes generally needs to specify room location only; this allows for placement of the box back into the new house where it needs to be placed. Listing all of the box contents on the outside of the box is unnecessary and is generally discouraged as it may lead to putting the box in the wrong room at your new house. Numbering the box and then listing the box’s number and contents on a notepad, creating a “master list” will suffice the need to be detailed. You may decide to make your “master list” digitally on Google Drive or Dropbox. Note: fragile boxes need to be noted as “fragile.”
25. Use a labeling system like color-coding or the use of words...ie kitchen, living room, etc. allow for easy packing as you move room-by-room. You can use “Smart Move Tape” or different colors of duct tape to establish color labeling. Note: fragile boxes need to be noted as “fragile.” The goal is to streamline the placement of the boxes into the new house.
(Note: Not every box should be labeled “fragile”)
26. To ensure these items arrive safely at your home, you should use bubble wrap or newsprint. Sometimes using material already on hand.....ie dish towels, sheets, blankets, paper products, etc., will eliminate some of the cost of materials needed. You can start by checking your closets and arrange items room by room.
27. By now, you may have discovered items that you have not seen in a long time, items that you don’t want to move. Donate these items to charities or give to your neighbors or call your church to help your church families. You will want to get rid of unwanted items now before the actual move happens. Waiting to move these items usually ends up costing more or showing up at the new house being thrown away (handled twice).
28. If you have school-age children, you should work with the transfer of records to smooth transition. Any pet records should be collected and added to your file. I know that I have mentioned this before, but it is crucial.

29. Make sure your pets have ID tags for their collars.

Five weeks

30. You have made an inventory and checked room by room what should stay and what should go. It is now time to give your loved ones a heads up and start packing.
31. To be on the safe side, you should avoid buying too many groceries and use up any food in the refrigerator.
32. Unless you're planning to bring food on your move, you should donate non-perishables or bring them to the local food bank. This is also an excellent opportunity to check with your local church to assist families with any "food insecurities."
33. Now is a perfect time to go through all the stuff in your garage and give it away or throw it away. This another opportunity for you to support local charities or to help those with needs. The less you have, the better.
34. Reserve a storage unit. If you have to wait for a few weeks for the previous homeowners to get out, a storage unit can help. Why not reserve the space now?
35. If you're unsure whether old belongings will serve a new purpose in your home, then it may be time to sell them or give them away. You can sell your old furniture – either online or have a yard sale or send it off to a consignment store. There can be "pros" & "cons" to any option. Keep in mind that the end goal is to minimize your move.
36. Again, do you need to get records for your pets or get their shots up to date? Generally, it is easier to get pet records up to date before moving vs. waiting to set up with a new location.
37. Find a veterinarian, cable and internet providers, pest control services at your new location.
38. If you have small children, it is not too early to make arrangements to have them cared for or provisions laid out to ensure their safety on move day.

Four weeks before you move

39. You are at the official halfway mark, and it is time to review your finances to see if you need to make adjustments to your budget.
40. Change social security benefits information within 15 days of moving. You can notify the social security administration, the IRS, and the department of veterans.
41. Review your documents in your move binder. Make sure you have all the paperwork you will need for your move in one folder. Guard this folder; it will save you a lot of headaches.
42. If you have not already prepared change-of-address forms, you should get them ready. Let the Post Office know when they should start forwarding your mail.
43. If necessary and you are moving to another state, take some vacation time to visit where you are moving to and get familiar with the surroundings. Plan for a 3-day weekend and let the boss know that you'll be out of the office.
44. Notify your employer of the change of address. Your employer needs to know where to send important documents or your last check if you are also changing jobs.
45. Insurance. It is time to check on what types of insurance you need. Check on what coverage your homeowners or renters insurance covers related to a move.
 - a. If you are using a mover, they can advise you on the insurance options they offer.
 - b. Contact your Homeowners or Renters insurance company and see what they cover for your belongings during a move.
 - c. You may have coverage.
 - d. Be sure to talk to the provider to avoid any frustrations down the road. To be on the safe side, you should contact the insurance company and notify them of the impending move.
 - e. You should discontinue your Insurance coverage only after the new policies begin, allow for an overlap of insurance coverage.
46. Four weeks before the actual move, you should start to notify other businesses. It would be best if you also informed the landlord and other companies like:
 - a. Local schools

- b. Homeowner's insurance policy
 - c. Government agencies
 - d. Utility companies
 - e. Credit card companies
 - f. Doctors & Dentist
47. After notifying them about your move, you should give them the new address. Some landlords may require a 60-days notice of departure. Know your "terms & Conditions" of any/all rental or lease agreements you may have before making any moving plans.
48. How about servicing your car? If you're moving from one state to another, you should have the vehicle serviced for a long drive. You can get in touch with the local dealership or your mechanic to check everything to ensure it's in tip-top condition – "pre-trip" inspection" fluids, brakes, tires, hoses, etc.

Three weeks

49. Now that you've taken care of the basics, you should complete the pack out of the valuables and sentimental items. Mark the box or boxes and set them aside.
50. Plan how to move fragile or unusual items, such as guns, ammo, pianos, fine art, pool tables, safes, hot tubs, etc. The movers that you hire may not be qualified to move larger (or more expensive) items, so you may need to hire a specialty mover. Make sure you are aware of what the movers you hired will and will not move.
51. Don't forget to pack jewelry, legal or medical paperwork (birth certificates, marriage license, passports, dental & optical records, covid-19 vaccination card), medications, or family heirlooms. You can keep these items in a special box and make a shipping plan.
52. You can also take photos of high ticket items. More specifically, you should take note of the existing scratches or any pre-existing damage.
53. You should cancel all newspapers and any other home delivery and set up a new one for a new delivery address.
54. Notify your regular service providers (landscaping, housekeeping, and pool maintenance) about the impending move.
55. Schedule any/all service providers such as plumbers (to disconnect water lines), electricians (to remove all electrical items that go with the move... i.e., fans, fountains, or anything hard-wired that may be going with the move. (Note: schedule these services one day before the move)
56. If you have not yet notified the utilities, including internet and cable providers, electric, gas, satellite, phone, trash, and security systems, of your impending move, do so.
57. Set up a scheduled date of transfer for your utilities, including water, electricity, and natural gas.
58. Prepare a list of emergency service technicians and preferred providers. You don't want to be googling a locksmith while your keys are behind a locked door or a plumber while your toilet is overflowing at your new house.
59. Update your voter registration!
60. Check with the moving company again to confirm move information. (check to see what services they may be able to provide...ie disconnecting/reconnecting water lines, computers, electronics, electrical items, etc.)

Two weeks

61. The big day is almost there - you're now two weeks away from moving. It will help if you pretend you're going for an extended vacation by double-checking everything.
62. The best approach is to pack the remaining items one room at a time until you have little left during the last week—no last-minute stresses.
63. The kitchen and Garage areas are typically the hardest to pack. Use this time to pack all of the "non-essential" items for these areas.
64. You should also pay attention to the major appliances. You will need to defrost all freezers and schedule disconnecting of the gas and water lines.

65. Fill your prescriptions.
66. If any member of the family is using medications, you should pack them in a separate box. You can transfer your prescription to a pharmacy to where you are moving.
67. Forward medical records - contact your doctor and notify him of the new offices of the move. If you're yet to select new offices, you should request referrals from your doctor. You can also arrange the transfer of your medical records.
68. BACK UP YOUR COMPUTER. You do not want to risk losing pictures and vital information that you store on your computer to file corruption, loss, or damage during a move. I use GotBackup to protect my files. You can then access them from any computer.
69. The last thing you want is something to go awry during the move. When you backup your computer, you'll be thankful you saved everything in a safe place.
70. If you are going to tip your movers, now is an excellent time to plan how much and withdraw the cash you will need. You are paying them, but if you are extra pleased, a tip shows it. (tips range from \$20 per mover on up to \$100.00 per each mover)
71. Plan your last meals. You do not want a lot of leftover food. Shop only for what you can use.
72. Check your binder and prepare your last to-do lists. Final doctors' appointments and dates the utilities will be turned off and get your children enrolled in the new school.

One week

73. Your final week is here. Are you ready to get to your new home? Is everything checked off your to-do list?
74. The earliest time to shut off utilities could be the day of your "move-out" at day's end; Utility shut-off the following day is always best for your movers.
75. Recycle or dispose of all corrosives, flammables, poisonous items, or aerosol cans at the local hazardous waste facility. Make sure you are disposing of toxic items properly.
76. Return borrowed items from neighbors, family, and friends.
77. Clean outdoor furniture before you move it.
78. You should confirm the details of the moving company like contact number and estimated arrival time.
79. Be sure the house or apartment is clean to get your security deposit back if you are renting or ready to show if you are selling.
80. If you are moving into an apartment or gated community, find out if there are any moving day requirements.
81. Don't forget to patch and paint any holes if you don't want to get charged for simple repairs. If you need the carpets professionally cleaned, you should coordinate it before you move. Schedule carpet cleaning for the following day of "move-out."
82. Use white Ivory soap, toothpaste, or drywall patch to fill nail holes in walls.
83. Don't forget the last-minute errands like dry cleaning and gym locker.
84. You should conduct a final inspection with the current landlord. If there's a dispute, you should negotiate in person.
85. You don't want to wait until the moving day to pack your kitchen essentials. After boxing up the kitchenware, you should label it to avoid losing them during the moving process.
86. Kitchenware, coffee pot, and supplies should go into a box labeled "open first."
87. Make arrangements for the final trash pickup. If you plan to leave before the actual pickup date, you should ask the neighbors if they can help get the last trash bin to the street for pick up.
88. To ensure you have a stress-free moving day, you should:
 - a. Have all arrangements completed for any children
 - b. Hava all arrangements completed for any pets
 - c. Donate unopened food not making the move
 - d. Unplug the freezer and fridge
 - e. Make sure nothing is hiding on the shelves
 - f. Have all appointments completed for all service providers for the move...ie carpet cleaners, plumbers, electricians, etc.

- g. Take some photographs of your old home to ensure it's in move-out condition
- h. Please take a photo of the wiring on all electronics before unplugging them. This will help jog your memory when you reconnect things such as TV, stereo, or computer.

Moving day

- 89. Check your final inventory of all your belongings. This last inventory should be accessible since most of your belongings should already be packed and labeled.
- 90. Locate and set aside the one box that you started at the first of your move. This box should have your medications, legal documents, high-value items, or family heirlooms.
- 91. Have children and pets well taken care of as planned before move day so that no one gets hurt or lost.
- 92. When you use a moving company like **Southwest Moving and Transport**, you will have very little to do today except for watching and asking any final questions that you may have.
- 93. Identify with your movers doors that may be left open or closed, sinks, bathrooms, paper towels, hand-sanitizers for use during the move.
- 94. The inventory will help you keep track of what you have and what you don't have.
- 95. After the trucks are loaded, and the house is empty, you should conduct a final sweep of your home.
- 96. Don't forget to pay attention to the Your dryers, washers, and fridge. They should all be clean and ready to move if you are taking them. If not, you should prepare them for the new owners.
- 97. Do the final check of the kitchen cabinets— checking for cleanness and that you or the movers have left nothing behind.
- 98. Check all closets and behind every door.
- 99. After the trucks are loaded, do one more walkthrough to make sure you got everything.

I hope this guide has helped you and if you used **Southwest Moving and Transport**, thank you. Please leave a comment and let us know if there is any way to make moving easier.

Things You May Need

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