

An Introductory Guide to Stress Free Removals

Most people have little to no experience in moving. Families generally tend to stay in one particular home for extended periods of time, unless work or other commitments impel them to relocate. As a result many people are unwittingly ill prepared for the complexities of a home move.

It may not necessarily be a simple matter of moving items from one building to another. Various logistical aspects must be considered. The most obvious of these is the amount of items that need to be moved. With this, you should also consider what kind of items you need to move. Are the goods bulky or are you moving lots of small items. If you are moving lots of small items it may be better to pack them together in bundles or in boxes.

Thought should also be given to access issues. Can you park your proposed removal vehicle near the property or is the access tricky requiring specific timing. If you live in a unit or apartment, building management may only allow lift access at certain times of day. There may even be penalties involved, such as parking fines if proper reconnaissance is not carried out. Also, when considering your access at your pick up location, you should also consider the same for the drop off. You may even need specialized lifting equipment in order to move some items such as pianos and billiard tables. Some companies simply refuse to move such items (and for good reason) so you may have to organize an additional specialist to fulfill your requirements.

As a result, proper planning is essential. The last thing you want is to get to the day of your move and all of a sudden realize that certain items will not fit out the door or that you simply need more manpower to accomplish a task.

Read on, to discover an exhaustive guide to stress free removals.

Preparing For Your Move

The best way to keep track of and make an assessment of your total items is to write up an inventory. This is relatively simple and you will be surprised at how quickly it can be accomplished. Once you have a list of items, you will be able to judge the difficulty of your move at a glance. A list will also make it easier to communicate the volume of household goods with third parties such as removal firms; if you decide not to take the do-it-yourself approach. Your list will also make it clear what items should be packed together, and what should be kept exclusively separate. If your list reveals that you mainly have small items, you may need to obtain boxes or perhaps even a packing service. Keeping an accurate list will also assist you in estimating the volume in cubic meters, of your items. This will assist in determining the size of vehicle you will need to hire. Clearly, this will reduce the possibility of disappointment on the day when you discover that several trips will need to be made in order to complete the task, adding to fuel costs, which tend to outweigh the extra cost of hiring a slightly larger truck. In some cases though, due to maximum clearance levels in loading docks, hiring a large truck may not be feasible. Proper reconnaissance is therefore vital to avoid distress.

Access to the pick up or drop off location can often be one of the most frustrating aspects of moving. Parking directly out the front of a house may not be possible due to various other residents of the street occupying parking spots. In this case, it may be worthwhile having a chat to your neighbour's and politely notifying them of your move, and diplomatically asking them to find other parking options for that one day. If you are genuine and open, it is surprising what people will do for you, especially if they are keen to see the back of you.

Also, remember that the front door may not always be the best option to enter or exit a house. Research all vantage points and thoroughfares and it may turn out that a back lane or a side gate may be ideal for the operation.

In most cases, houses tend to have less access issues than units. As several residents use a common entrance/exit, to avoid disruption or resident dissatisfaction, building management may only allow

removal activity to take place at specifically preordained times. Potentially, there could be competition for lift access with other moving residents, or possibly even with tradesmen and maintenance staff. Therefore, it is crucially important to liaise with building management and obtain an approved time to avoid nuisance. Contact details for building or strata management can usually be found in the lobby/entrance area of a building.

Often, low-rise apartments do not have lifts. As a result any number of stairs must be negotiated. To make this easier, a multitudinous variety of lifting aids such as 3 wheeled trolleys and dolly's can be employed. With these, a large amount of items, especially boxes, can be moved at once, with ease. Bulky items may have to be hoisted through windows or over balconies, as it may not be practical to man handle these up and down narrow stairwells. It is therefore important to take measurements of anything that you think has the potential to give you grief during transport.

White goods, such as fridges and freezers should be defrosted around a week before the move. You don't need to leave them disconnected though. Fridges can be kept running until the moment they need to be moved. Defrosting simply gets rid of ice build up, and will prevent the fridge from leaking when you attempt to move it. There is nothing worse than tilting a fridge before lifting to have torrents of foul tasting freezer water gush forth, giving rise to the need for a shower and dry clothes. Another similar water hazard is the humble pot plant and should not be watered up to a week before the move. Mops should also be dried and hoses drained of any fluid. Likewise, dishwashers, washing machines and any other water operating machinery should be drained and dried in preparation for transport.

Next, it needs to be decided in what order the goods are to be loaded. If you have prepared a list, now is the time to re-write and categorize your items. This will give a clearer view of how to prepare the packing hierarchy. This is the most practical sequence in which the items should be packed into the truck. Boxes and or rectangular or cubic furniture are the generally accepted first choice in professional removalist circles. Secondly, large rectangular, square or oblong furniture such as couches, cabinets, dining tables and chairs

should be loaded. Smaller, miscellaneous items can then be used to fill the unused spaces. Fridges are usually left until last and secured to one side of the rear. The other side can be used for bundled artworks or glassware. This list is not exhaustive, however, and nothing beats common sense when packing a truck. Clearly, sturdier items should support less weighty products and we should always take care not to stack too high. You don't want to be there when the Leaning Tower of Pisa gives way. All jokes aside though, a top heavy or incorrectly packed truck has the potential of tipping, to the detriment of its occupants.

Packing For Your Move

By now, you should have a relatively sound understanding of your inventory. Knowing exactly what you have to pack will make it vastly easier to choose your packing equipment. If you're not lucky enough to have an acquaintance or family member who works in a warehouse and is able to supply you with a galaxy of boxes, you may have to consider buying or hiring boxes. But it's always worth asking around if someone you know has some boxes stashed away from their last move. If you have specific needs though, they may not be able to accommodate you.

Removal boxes come in 2 general varieties, although other variations are not unknown. Teachest boxes have the dimensions of approximately 435 / 410 / 600mm, whereas the smaller book and wine boxes are 405 / 300 / 430mm, give or take. Portable wardrobes, or Port-a Robes are an invaluable resource to transport clothes and fashion accessories. If you are unable to find Port-a-Robes for your clothes, you may consider using large garbage bags as an alternative, however, boxes and virtually any other packing accessories are readily available at storage centers and packing facilities and through removal firms.

There are also various companies that offer reasonably priced packing services. These services can save a lot of time, and as they are professionals, will often have the skills to pack efficiently and safely, affording maximum protection for fragile products.

When packing, make certain that the box being used is appropriate for the goods being packed. Labeling is also very important. Simple labels indicating that a particular box should go to a specific room will save removalists double handling as well as embarrassment when they place things in rooms where they should not be.

Beware of packing large boxes full of books, magazines or even vinyl records as the accumulated weight may induce hernias and bad backs. When packing wine, and are unable to procure traditional wine boxes with partitions, ensure that proper padding is placed between bottles to prevent heartache. This also applies to glassware and

dining equipment. Bubble-Wrap and Butcher's Wrap can work wonders in this regard. Although these things can be expensive, there are several wholesale suppliers who are happy to deal with the public. Regardless, the protection that Bubble-Wrap and the like offer, can far outweigh the cost, especially if certain belongings are particularly valuable; whether that value be pecuniary or merely sentimental.

Protective wrappings are highly recommended for precious furniture. This can be done with bubble or shrink-wrap; however, removals companies and storage facilities amongst others sell specialized furniture covers. If they do not have exactly what you need, special orders may also be placed.

Loose items that cannot be packed such as brooms, mops and gardening equipment should be bundled together and tied securely. When packing the garage or shed, try to avoid packing in irregular vessels such as buckets or tins. It is always best to secure these types of items in a box. Milk crates are an excellent option as they are easy to carry and stack well. Make sure that sharp objects do not stick out. Any sporting paraphernalia should either be in a sporting bag or bundled similarly as mops and brooms. Rugs or loose floor coverings can be rolled up and fastened with tape or rope. Leads on electrical equipment should be coiled and taped to prevent inconvenience or possible injury.

Proper packing can do wonders to simplify a move. The best idea is to have everything together in a neat little package. It's always easier to carry a box full of items than having to move each individually. If you are doing the move yourself, you will thank yourself for packing with forethought. If you are hiring a removalist to assist you, they will be able to do their job more efficiently, saving you money.

The Day of Your Move

With meticulous preparation, you should be ready for the day of your move; however, there are some hidden pitfalls to avoid. If you are taking the DIY approach make sure you have sufficient food and drink to keep you going through what is an extremely strenuous activity. If you are hiring a removalist to do your dirty work, make sure you do everything you can to assist them. This does not necessarily mean carrying anything yourself, but making sure everything is properly prepared and all paths clear to assist the workers in their duty. Sticking to the points previously mentioned, not only will you make the removalist's job easier, but by doing so; you will have also reduced your costs.

Make sure you start early in order to secure a location for the removal vehicle. At this time some items can be moved towards the exit, or if possible, to a car port/ loading dock closer to the transport.

Lifting can be a tricky business and if you are not completely comfortable lifting something that feels too heavy or too awkward, don't be afraid to ask for help. If friends are helping, try to make sure that no one is carried away in bravado; no heroics. When carrying large items down stairs never rush, the person walking backwards is the most vulnerable if they are inexperienced, so the lift should be carefully planned to avoid injury.

Sometimes it may be worth calling in a professional, particularly with pianos and billiard/pool tables. As these things require specialized lifting aids to move, it is often not even worth trying to move it with your hands. Similarly, if hoisting is needed, unless you are adept at such ventures, once again, the assistance of an expert may be desired to avoid embarrassment or even catastrophe.

As moving is rather demanding physically, regular breaks should also be taken to avoid over exertion. Depending on fitness levels, some may have to have breaks more regularly than others. May sure you don't over extend yourself.

Unpacking and Unwinding

Unpacking should be relatively simple if you have planned carefully and packed properly. If the packing of the truck was done systematically, unloading should take around half the time of the load. Try to have a member of your crew arrive at the drop off location before the main party arrives. Once again, this can assist in inspecting the lay of the land and securing parking.

As items come out of the truck, have someone directing the movements of the workers. This is useful even if you have clearly labeled boxes and furniture. Try to get boxes and furniture in its final destination without delay. It's not worth rushing by bringing in everything at once just to get it off the truck. If things are placed in rooms without consideration, it will take a lot more work to move them to their final position later on.

When cutting the tape from a box, take care not to damage the goods within. This applies especially to books. No need to destroy Dr. Johnson's dictionary though wanton recklessness. On the other hand, if you are transporting such jewels, more fastidious packing would be recommended. Also, as you are removing fragile items, do not rush and make sure to check for broken material before pulling things out in a great haste.

It is generally accepted that a fridge should not be turned on until at least an hour after its arrival at its destination. Some claim this to be a myth and there have indeed been cases noted where impetuous people have broken this rule with no ill consequence, however, it is certainly not recommended by the manufacturer.

All these aspects should make for a successful unpacking experience. On the other hand, if you can't be bothered unpacking, you could crack open the celebratory Champagne and leave it all to a professional unpacking service.