

Moving checklist for renters

What should I do to prepare for my move?

Moving can be an exciting but stressful process. Staying organized and preparing for your move early will help you avoid last-minute chaos. Here are some moving tips and checklists to keep you prepared from start to finish.

8 weeks before moving day: planning early and avoiding last-minute costs

- ☐ Set a realistic moving budget (include movers, truck rental, deposits, utility setup and potential overlap in rent)
- ☐ Review your lease for:
 - ✓ Required notice period
 - ✓ Move-out cleaning expectations
 - ✓ Security deposit terms
- ☐ Decide how you'll move: professional movers, truck rental or help from friends
- ☐ Start decluttering and packing a little each day
- ☐ Collect free boxes from liquor stores, grocery stores or office supply stores
- ☐ Pick up packing supplies (tape, labels, mattress covers)
- ☐ Make a private list of valuables and where they're packed
- ☐ Research your new neighborhood:
 - ✓ Grocery stores, medical providers, transit, schools (if applicable)
 - ✓ Nearest police, fire and emergency services
- ☐ Make time to see friends and family before the move
- ☐ Create a moving playlist to make packing more fun

6 weeks before moving day: locking in your moving plan

- ☐ Research and compare moving companies or truck rentals
- ☐ Get multiple estimates and confirm:
 - ✓ What's included
 - ✓ Insurance coverage
 - ✓ Extra fees or deposits

- ☐ Book your mover or reserve a truck
- ☐ Begin planning electricity for your new apartment
- ☐ Continue packing non-essential items
- ☐ Take note of building rules:
 - ✓ Approved moving hours
 - ✓ Elevator reservations
 - ✓ Parking or loading zones

4 weeks before moving day: addresses, records and services

- ☐ Pack items you don't use often
- ☐ Update your address with:
 - ✓ Banks and credit cards
 - ✓ Insurance providers
 - ✓ Subscriptions and memberships
- ☐ Organize important documents:
 - ✓ Lease agreements
 - ✓ Renter's insurance
 - ✓ Medical and school records (if needed)
- ☐ Schedule utilities:
 - ✓ Electricity for your new address
 - ✓ Water, gas or trash if required
- ☐ Secure internet and cable service for move-in
- ☐ Back up computers and important digital files
- ☐ Submit a USPS change of address request

3 weeks before moving day: downsizing and logistics

- ☐ Sell, donate or discard items you don't want to take
- ☐ Use or donate unopened pantry items
- ☐ Measure your new apartment and confirm furniture will fit
- ☐ Schedule parking, loading docks or elevators at both locations
- ☐ Confirm move-in instructions with your new property manager

- ☐ Request time off work if needed
- ☐ Confirm renter's insurance coverage for your new address

2 weeks before moving day: final arrangements

- ☐ Continue packing and label boxes clearly by room
- ☐ Set aside a week's worth of clothes for easy access
- ☐ Refill prescriptions and gather medications
- ☐ Plan meals to use up fridge and freezer items
- ☐ Schedule childcare or pet care for moving day
- ☐ Confirm electricity start date for your new apartment
- ☐ Arrange the date your current utilities should be turned off

1 week before moving day: damage protection and deposit prep

- ☐ Finish packing all non-daily items
- ☐ Pack an "essentials box" and keep it with you (not on the truck)
- ☐ Take photos and videos of your current apartment (every room, timestamped)
- ☐ Schedule your final walkthrough with the landlord or property manager
- ☐ Review lease requirements for cleaning and key return
- ☐ Donate nonperishables to a local food pantry
- ☐ Place screws and fasteners in labeled bags and tape them to furniture
- ☐ Hire cleaners if required by your lease

Moving day: tracking, access and safety

- ☐ Pack a bag of essentials for the first few nights:
 - ✓ Clothes
 - ✓ Toiletries
 - ✓ Chargers
 - ✓ Medications
- ☐ Pillows, blankets and basic kitchen supplies
- ☐ Keep trash bags and paper towels handy

- ☐ Do a final walkthrough before leaving:
 - ✓ Check cabinets and closets
 - ✓ Lock doors and windows
 - ✓ Turn off lights, fans and appliances
 - ✓ Return keys, fobs or garage remotes as instructed
- ☐ Tip movers if appropriate

Post-move checklist: settling in

- ☐ Confirm utilities are working properly
- ☐ Unpack kitchen and bathroom essentials first
- ☐ Go grocery shopping and restock basics
- ☐ Save move-in photos in case of lease disputes
- ☐ Change your address in remaining apps and services
- ☐ Get familiar with your new building and neighbors

What not to pack to keep these items close by

- ☐ Important documents (ID, passport, lease paperwork)
- ☐ Checkbook, credit cards and cash
- ☐ Jewelry and irreplaceable items
- ☐ Phone, laptop and chargers
- ☐ Medications and vitamins
- ☐ Toilet paper and essential toiletries
- ☐ A change of clothes for each person
- ☐ Snacks and water (plus food for pets)
- ☐ A child's favorite toy or comfort item
- ☐ Flashlight, tape measure and basic toolkit
- ☐ Cleaning supplies and trash bags