

Moving Tips

Research shows that moving is one of the most stressful events in a person's life. There are many things to consider: packing, storage, timelines when events need to happen, and selling your home. Whether you're moving across town or across the country, you owe it to yourself - and your family - to make the entire moving process as easy as possible.

How to Improve the Appeal of Your Home

Selling your home? Put yourself in the buyer's shoes and ask what you can do to give a buyer the ability to visualize his or her own belongings in your home. That means keeping things as neutral as possible. For instance, if you're going to give the place a fresh coat of paint, choose a neutral hue and keep it consistent throughout the house. Now is not the time to experiment with trendy wall treatments or colors. That could turn a potential buyer off. Don't forget to take care of the obvious. You live there, so you don't really notice certain clutter that has accumulated over time. Be sure that you check the inside and do things like:

- Tidy up closets, cabinets and storerooms.
- Clean the floors and make sure they have a fresh appearance.
- Make sure the house doesn't look cluttered. Leaving a book out makes a house looked "lived in", but a stack of out-of-date magazines looks like clutter.
- Get that kitchen to sparkle. Clean every appliance, every door and the inside of all cabinets and pantries. Is the oven dirty? Is the refrigerator cluttered with old food? Don't forget that a potential buyer might look anywhere!
- Got leaky faucets or faulty-flushing toilets? A loose toilet seat? Fix them. You never know when a potential buyer is going to check out every aspect of your bathroom, including the medicine cabinet and linen closet. How about a new shower curtain and towels?
- Clean the windows, inside and out. A bright sunny room is more appealing.
- Make sure all light switches and light bulbs work.
- Take a tour of your garage and basement. Are they tidy and dry? If not, your potential buyer could be wary of a purchase.
- Take whatever steps you need to remove any unpleasant odors such as pet odors or tobacco smoke. There's nothing worse than a bad smell to turn a buyer off. Why not bake cookies right before the house is shown?

Outdoor Tips for Better Curb Appeal

It's frustrating if a potential buyer doesn't like the looks of the outside of your house. Stand on the curb and look at your house objectively. Walk up to the door and see if there is anything that would look unattractive or disturbing if you were considering buying this house. Take care of the following outdoor things:

- Landscape to enhance, not hide the property.
- Repair the driveway.
- Clean the garage and keep the door closed until the buyer goes to inspect it.
- Trim and edge the lawn and make sure to remove all debris.
- Replace damaged paving blocks on walkways and repair damaged fencing.
- Make sure the front entrance sparkles. Scrub it or paint it if needed.
- Take care of broken doorbells, creaky hinges, ripped screens, cracked windowpanes or chipping and peeling paint. These are signs of poor maintenance that might scare a potential buyer off.
- Remove any objects lying around the exterior of the home including children's toys and garden tools.
- Sweep the driveway.
- Trim the shrubbery. Even in winter it can start to look unkempt.
- If you can't afford to paint the whole house, give the trim and shutters a new coat.

Moving Checklist

Here's your moving checklist! Use this checklist to make sure you remember important moving dates and deadlines. We've taken the worry out of moving by thinking of nearly everything!

8 weeks before move

- If you are planning a garage sale, set a date.
- Arrange to transfer school records if you have children.
- Discover schools in your new community by visiting www.theschoolreport.com on the World Wide Web.
- Contact insurance companies to notify them of the move.
- Start a "Move File" for all receipts, papers and estimates related to your move.

6 weeks before move

- Select a van line or rental truck company you will use. Give them tentative pick-up and delivery dates.
- If you are moving to a new city, be sure and ask your attorney, doctor and other providers for referrals and any necessary records.
- If you have any pets, schedule a check-up and be sure and get a copy of their records from the veterinarian.
- Set schedules with real estate agents and/or landlords.
- Schedule a home inspection for your new home by calling Keystone Inspection Service at (800) 822-2720

4 weeks before move

- Schedule your disconnect dates with the local utility company.
- Notify new utility company of connect dates in the new home.
- If you have a lawnmower or any other power equipment, drain them of oil and gasoline. Moving companies will not move them if they are full.
- Cancel newspaper delivery and trash pickup effective on your move date.
- Give your carpet a good cleaning before all of the furniture is moved into the new address.

1 week before move

- Clean out refrigerator and defrost freezer.
- Have your car serviced if you will be driving a long distance.
- Confirm connect dates for utilities in your new home.
- Transfer or close your checking account.
- Be sure to get all items from your safe deposit box.

Moving day

- Spend the entire day at home with the movers.
- Carry any valuables or family heirlooms with you.
- Right before the movers leave, take a final tour of your home, making sure nothing has been left in drawers or closets and that all doors and windows are locked.
- Specify a "Do Not Move" area where you place items you do not want the movers to take with them.

At your new address

- Obtain numbers needed in an emergency such as the fire department and police.
- Check with post office to see if there is any mail that is being held for you.
- Register your cars. Also, register to vote in your new area.
- Enroll children in school.